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Higher Blackley Ward	Application Number 082189/VO/2007/N1	Date of Appln 14th Feb 2007	Committee Date 12th Apr 2007
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Proposal CITY COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT Re-development of school site to form co-location of 3 schools involving: erection of part 2, part 3 storey building on existing playing field to form a high school, including a replacement for Our Lady's RC Sports College with 14-19 centre and replacement for North Ridge High SEN School; remodelling and extension of existing building at the east of the site to form a replacement for Meade Hill School for children with behavioural difficulties; formation of sports facilities including playing pitches and all weather pitch; landscaping and car parking. (Demolition of existing school buildings and retention of sports hall and caretakers bungalow)

Location Our Ladys RC Sports College, Alworth Road, Higher Blackley, Manchester, M9 0RP

Applicant Dr Alan Irving C/o Agent, ,

Agent Mr Robert Plant Wellfield, Chester Road, Preston Brook, Runcorn, WA7 3BA

Description

Our Lady's RC Sports College occupies a site of approximately 6.88 ha (17 acres) in Higher Blackley, close to the M60 motorway. The surrounding area is predominantly low-rise housing, with farmland, the Convent of the good Shepherd and the M60 to the north. The school buildings are tucked away to the back of surrounding houses, not visible from the main thoroughfare of Victoria Avenue, but accessed via a close network of residential streets. The school does not have a major road frontage but the entrance is from Alworth Road. The site extends from Boothroyden Road in the west to Chain Road in the east. Properties on Howden Road, Alworth Road, Cooper Lane and Farnham Avenue back on to southern boundary of the site. A public footpath runs through the site from Alworth Road through the school and adjoining farmland and under the motorway towards Rhodes in the north. The footpath cuts the site in two, with buildings on the eastern side and playing fields to the west. The Hawsewater aqueduct runs east to west through the southern end of the site and a small pump-house building sits over the aqueduct close to the school's entrance. There is a significant change in levels at the southern boundary to the rear of properties on Howden Road.

The current school was built in 1958 and extended in 1961. The original building is a mix of one, two and three storeys, concrete frame construction with brick walls and felt flat roof. Over the years a number of additional blocks have been constructed, including the sports hall. The main vehicular and pedestrian access to the site is from Alworth Road. School buses, however, currently drop off at the end of Chain Road where there is a secondary entrance for vehicles and pedestrians.

The proposal involves the co-location of three schools on the site to create a campus incorporating the current Our Lady's School (750 places), North Ridge Special Educational Needs (SEN) School (110 places) and Meade Hill School

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for students with Emotional, Social and Behavioural Disorders (ESBD)(25 places).

The redevelopment involves a combination of demolition, retention and refurbishment, and new build. The majority of buildings on the site would be demolished, leaving the caretaker's bungalow, the sports hall and the building known as the Sister Philomena block at the north eastern corner of the site. The new building would accommodate the mainstream and SEN schools and would be located on part of the existing playing fields. The EBSD school would occupy the retained and extended Sister Philomena building.

The new school building would comprise two main accommodation blocks with a central 'hub' joining these together to form a roughly V-shaped footprint, with the apex forming the main entrance. This would front on to a hard landscaped area leading to an improved Alworth Road. The northern block would be three storeys, the southern block would be two storeys, and the central hub would be three storeys, increasing in height to the front to give more impact where the building meets the main piazza.

The three-storey atrium would house the central stair and lift and provide links to all floors and both wings. Further vertical circulation would be provided at the end of each wing in the form of stairs and lifts. The larger 'hall' type spaces would be located together within the southern block on the ground floor creating a double-height volume. The Learning Resource Centre would be shared with the community, so it is proposed at the front of the building accessed directly from the atrium overlooking the triple height space. The chapel and prayer area would also be in a prominent location, over the main entrance and within the central 'hub'. The main courtyard would be located between the two wings and available for all the pupils. However, for those SEN pupils more comfortable in a secluded environment, there are garden areas specifically for SEN pupils only. These would be located immediately adjacent to the SEN rooms on the ground floor.

The EBSD school would be located in a separate facility of the east side of the site. The accommodation would be housed in an existing building that will be substantially refurbished and extended. Although part of the campus, it is proposed that the EBSD facility should be able to operate separately from the other parts of the school site. This existing building - the Sister Philomena block - is a part two, part single-storey building of domestic scale with a pitched roof. The proposal involves the retention of the central footprint of this building and the demolition of the wings and the erection of single storey flat roof extensions either side.

Sports pitches would be located to the west of the main school building, adjacent to Boothroyden Road. An all-weather pitch is also proposed in the south eastern corner of the site, bounded by an acoustic barrier to reduce the impact on nearby residents. A smaller sports area and landscaped garden for SEN use would be located to the north of the main building in the triangular area formed between the building and the northern boundary of the site. The area in front of the main entrance would be treated with a mix of hard landscaping and tree planting to form an entrance feature. A strip of tree planting and landscaping would run across the site east to west, forming a green route through the site. A 'habitat area' is proposed to be developed to the south of the site along the boundary with the rear of properties on Howden

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Road. Planting in this area would form a buffer between the school and residential properties. Tennis courts would be located next to the all-weather pitch. There would also be a hard court laid out within the boundary of the ESBD school and smaller landscaped gardens for ESBD use.

The proposals include the provision of two secure car parking areas - one for staff and one for visitors. The car parks will be accessed via Alworth Road. It is proposed that the existing car park at the north east corner of the site be retained to serve the ESBD facility. Access to the visitor car park would be via a new entrance and one way access loop, which would also incorporate a drop-off / pick up point. Secure and covered cycle parking would be provided adjacent to the sports hall.

Consultations

Local Residents and Businesses - 12 residents have made objections to the proposals. They are from Boothroyden Road, Gildersdale Drive and Germain Close to the west of the site; from Howden Road, to the south of the site backing on to the playing fields, from Cooper Lane backing on to the eastern boundary of the site and from the farm to the north of the site.

* The scale of the scheme is out of proportion to the site and places an unfair and excessive burden on local residents during the construction phase in the form of noise and increased traffic.

* In operation, the scheme would place an unacceptable strain on the access roads to the site, namely Alworth Road, Boothroyden Road, Howden Road and Cooper Lane which are already excessively congested with vehicular traffic during peak times.

* The scheme does not make appropriate provision for improvements to access roads which are narrow and always lined with parked cars. Accordingly, there is a serious road safety threat to local resident children and school pupils.

* The number of parking places provided for is excessive and fails to encourage staff and other users to make appropriate use of public transport in accordance with public policy objectives.

* The scheme would place an unacceptable burden on local bus services on Victoria Avenue, which are currently inadequate.

* The scheme would tend to exacerbate existing problems of underage drinking, youth crime and vandalism which are already out of control on Victoria Avenue.

* The scheme moves the children closer to properties on Boothroyden Road and will result in problems of increased noise.

* Increased amount of children.

* Large proposed three storey building on playing field which is higher than the properties at the bottom end of Boothroyden Road.

* Loss of views from properties on Boothroyden Road and Howden Road

* Difficulty in sleeping whilst working shifts.

* Dust or mud during construction.

* Damage to property as foundations may not withstand the heavy weight of delivery vehicles.

* Boothroyden Road is the only access road onto the Litchfield Park Estate, providing both vehicular and pedestrian access to over 90 houses. The road is already extremely busy because of this traffic and also extremely congested at many times of the day and night, because of parking by people who live in the properties on both Boothroyden Road and Alworth Road, visitors to St Clare's RC Church and the adjacent St Clare's School.

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- * The road surface is already in a poor state of repair because of the heavy volume of traffic with which it has to contend. If lorries or other HGVs attempt to use this road as an access to the site they will present a real health and safety risk.
- * Any increase in the size and scope of the present premises will add to the continuing unsociable behaviour and littering problems already endured by the residents in this area.
- * Why can't the new school be built on the site of the existing?
- * Loss of privacy for residents of Howden Road
- * School will take away playing fields, encroach on the local community and take away peace and privacy.
- * The proposed sports pitch to the rear of properties on Cooper Lane could result in potential disturbance from noise and floodlighting
- * Why has the site entrance have to be Boothroyden Road? Why not put a school entrance on Chain Road and have the lorries using Cooper Lane then down Alworth Road that would be safer for the children at both schools.
- * No details of the wind turbine and this has a potential for noise and visual disturbance
- * The scale of the proposal is excessive and would be oppressive when viewed from Light Alders Farm
- * There will be problems of access to the farm during construction and operation.

Therefore the main issues would appear to be: potential vehicle congestion and disturbance during construction; traffic congestion and parking problems on surrounding streets during operation; disturbance from noise and lighting on the all-weather pitch; loss of views; and anti-social behaviour of pupils

Chief Executive's Landscape Practice Group - Is supportive of the approach, requests retention of one of the trees proposed for removal in the car park and comments that there is scope for refinement of some of the details.

Environmental Health - Has requested further information in relation to the acoustic barrier to the all-weather pitch, and recommends standard conditions in relation to: hours of operation, noise break out, extraction of fumes and odours, storage and disposal of refuse and hours of deliveries/servicing.

Contaminated Land Section - The initial comments made recommends the standard condition relating to desk study, site investigations, remediation etc. Further comments have been received: The desk study information and site investigations submitted appear to be adequate, but further information is required in relation to nearby landfill sites and the potential for ground gas. The final risk assessment to date appears to be adequate. After completion of any site works a verification report is required to validate that the work undertaken conforms to the remediation proposals received and agreed by the Contaminated Land Section.

Environment & Operations (Trees) - The proposed development will require the removal of a large number of trees, most of which are in good to fair condition. It will not be possible to retain any of the trees listed for removal and proceed with the development. Fewer trees are to be planted in the proposed scheme than will be removed. However the quality of the replacements will compensate for the tree losses. As such there is no objection to the proposed development. All work should be implemented in accordance with BS 3998 'Recommendations for Tree Works' and BS5837 'Trees in Relation to Construction' 2005

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Greater Manchester Ecology Unit - The ecological survey and assessment has been undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced surveyors and to an appropriate standard. The findings of the survey report generally agree with our own assessment of the site, and there is no reason to disagree with the conclusions of the report. The development will not significantly affect: any sites designated for their nature conservation value; any specially protected or priority species; any specially protected or priority habitats. Therefore there are no objections the development proposals on nature conservation grounds. The proposals to retain the wet grassland area to the south of the playing fields and establish this as a 'habitat area' are welcomed. If this area is to be developed (as stated on dwg. OL_PLI_DR_G_91_AZ_NS_6007) then details of the proposed development and management of this area should be submitted for approval prior to implementation. The proposal to establish a wildlife corridor to run east-west through the site, and proposals to plant additional trees and shrubs are also welcomed.

In the interests of protecting nesting birds any vegetation clearance and/or tree felling/pruning required by the scheme should be undertaken outside of the optimal period for bird nesting (March to July inclusive) unless nesting birds have been shown to be absent by a competent person.

United Utilities - No objection in principle. The Hawsewater aqueduct crosses the site and the applicants must comply with the conditions for work carried out on, or when crossing, aqueducts and easements. There are existing aqueduct easement conditions that will form part of any agreement on development adjacent to the aqueduct easement. Further detailed comments have been made about the requirements for drainage of the site

The Ramblers Association - The Ramblers' Association (Manchester & High Peak Area) will not object to this application. They note, in particular, that the existing public right of way crossing the site is to be retained, and commend this decision.

Greater Manchester Police - As long as the work is done to Secured by Design Schools standards - no problem.

Issues

Unitary Development Plan

Our Lady's is an existing use on a long-established site and therefore the UDP makes no specific reference to the site. However, the following policies are relevant to the proposal:

Area 1 Blackley, Charlestown and Moston

The proposals generally accord with Policy BM1 in that they contribute to the protection and improvement of formal and informal open space and contribute to the improvement of community facilities.

Policy H2.2 advises that the Council will not allow development which has an unacceptable impact on residential areas, including in terms of scale and appearance, noise and traffic generation. Policies E1.4 and DC26.1 also seek to protect residential areas from noisy developments.

The school buildings are not located directly adjacent to housing and therefore noise break out is not anticipated to be a problem. The proposal is two and three storeys in height, not out of keeping for this area of mainly low-rise

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residential properties. As the school building is proposed on the site of existing playing fields, there is no question that the building will be seen from nearby housing which currently enjoys more open views. However, the building would be located at least 90m from the closest properties on Boothroyden Road and over 120m from Light Alders Farm. Properties on Howden Road would be closer, but still at distances of 80-90m.

Properties on Cooper Lane and Farnham Avenue back on to the part of site designated for the all weather pitch and concerns have been raised about possible disturbance from noise and lighting. An acoustic barrier has been proposed to try to limit noise disturbance from activities on the pitch and it is proposed that the use of outdoor areas would not continue after 9.00pm. Further comments have been sought from the Head of Environmental Health in this respect.

There is likely to be some disruption to local residents during the construction period, but generally this is not an issue covered by planning legislation, but monitored and controlled by the Environmental Health Department. However, conditions can be attached to ensure a wheel wash and cleaning of surrounding streets and a phone number to be displayed on site for any queries or complaints. The route for construction traffic to the site will be controlled by the City's Operational Services Department and construction traffic will be separated off from student and staff traffic to the school.

Policy E1.1 seeks a substantial reduction in the levels of air pollution caused by traffic fumes. The BSF team have been working with Greater Manchester Transportation Unit to develop a Travel Plan which will not only improve safety but will also look to reduce car use on journeys to and from the school.

Policies E1.5 and E1.6 indicate that the Council aims to contribute towards energy conservation by ensuring, where practicable, that major new development is located where it can be easily served by public transport and encourages high standards of energy efficiency in new developments. A sustainability report has been submitted with the application and this demonstrates a commitment to sustainability and energy efficiency. The scheme has also been registered with BRE under the BREEAM 2006 assessment procedures with a target of 'very good'. Sustainability issues are covered in more detail later in the report.

Policy E2.3 advises that the Council will protect important wildlife habitats and Policy E2.4 states that the effects upon wildlife are taken fully into account when considering development proposals. Furthermore, should development be allowed, the Council will seek to protect existing features of ecological value, such as ponds and hedges, by requiring them to be incorporated into the development wherever this is possible. The applicant has submitted reports covering the ecological value of the site. In particular, surveys were undertaken to establish any presence of great crested newts, a protected species. The site generally provides a low diversity of habitats, with the grounds comprising mainly buildings, hard standing or amenity grassland. There was no evidence of bat roosting, but the school may support foraging and commuting, given the presence of mature/semi mature trees, lawns and playing fields. No great crested newts were revealed within 1km of the school, none were noted on site during the assessment and there are no waterbodies on site that could currently support successful and sustainable great crested newt breeding. Bird species noted on site were mainly common and widespread species typically associated with garden, woodland and urban habitats. The trees and shrub planting on site

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provide nesting and foraging opportunities for local bird populations. No other significant ecological concerns were identified. No evidence of badgers or water voles was identified and habitats at the school are largely unsuitable to support these species. No Japanese knotweed was observed.

Policy E3.5 indicates that the Council will promote measures that lead to a safer environment for all people living in and using the city, including ensuring that the layout of new development is designed with safety in mind and does not lead to the creation of isolated areas and locating community facilities where they can be easily and safely accessed. Greater Manchester Police Architectural Liaison Unit has been consulted throughout the development of the proposals and security recommendations have been incorporated into the design and layout. The Police Architectural Liaison Unit has indicated that it has no concerns about the proposal and it is anticipated that it can achieve Secure by Design accreditation.

Policy T1.1 seeks to improve public transport access to educational facilities (amongst others). Policy T3.4 seeks to develop safer routes to schools and T3.6 seeks to promote cycling and the development of a safe network of routes, particularly to educational facilities. Policy T3.7 encourages the inclusion of secure cycle parking facilities. Student journeys to and from the mainstream school are predominantly on foot and by bus. Clearly defined pedestrian routes are incorporated into the access proposals, secure storage for 120 bicycles is proposed and the school is working on a travel plan aiming to reduce reliance on the car.

Policy T2.4 states that outside the City Centre, the City Council will expect developments to make adequate provision for their car parking requirements. In deciding whether the level of car parking associated with any development is acceptable, the Council will have regard to the environmental capacity of the site both in terms of the appearance of the car park and its effect on neighbouring activities and the ability of the local road network to accommodate the traffic generated by the development. Parking is proposed for 150 vehicles, including 18 spaces for disabled drivers. A drop-off and pick-up area has been incorporated into the design in front of main building for SEN taxis and minibuses. Balance has been sought between the provision of enough parking to reduce the impact on surrounding streets and provision of cycle parking and implementation of other measures in the Green Travel Plan to encourage more sustainable travel modes and reduce reliance on the private car. The comments of the Head of Engineering are important in this respect.

Policy L1.2 states that opportunities will be taken to improve the range and quality of sporting facilities, especially in the inner city areas of the city. The provision of all-weather pitches will be encouraged as a means to both extend and improve the quality of provision so long as this is consistent with the protection of residential amenity. New facilities should be located where they can be easily served by public transport. The proposal will provide both indoor and outdoor facilities that will improve provision for both the school and the local community.

Policy DC22.1 seeks to protect existing pedestrian routes and states that the Council will not normally allow development which would result in unacceptable inconvenience to local pedestrian movement. There is currently a footpath running roughly north-south through the centre of the site, linking to Alworth

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Road and heading under the motorway towards Rhodes. This footpath is to remain open.

The Strategic Regeneration Framework for North Manchester

Within the Education Strategy, Objective E2 aims to consolidate and invest in the physical infrastructure, and this emphasises the importance of high quality physical premises, stating that they can express and inspire confidence, aspiration, and achievement. Action E.2.1 seeks to continue investment to provide high quality, modern education premises and states that attracting more diverse new residents to the area requires high quality, modern educational premises. Objective E3 aims to broaden the spectrum of learning opportunities, and states that to attract new residents and retain existing aspiring students, North Manchester must offer a wider range of educational opportunities. The proposals support these aspirations.

Regional Planning Guidance 13 - The draft Regional Spatial Strategy provides a broad development framework for the North West region, concentrating on social, economic and environmental issues. Relevant policies include: Policy DP1 which advises that new development should be located so as to make the most effective use of land, promote appropriate mixes of uses within a site and its wider neighbourhood, make efficient use of transport facilities and assist people to meet their needs locally; and Policy DP3 (Quality in New Development) which states that new development must demonstrate good design and respect for its setting. The principle of the development is believed to be consistent with the aims of the RSS.

Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1) - Planning for Sustainable Development. This document sets out the Government's vision for the planning system. It is considered that the proposal would generally accord with the aims of PPS1 through the creation of a modern education facility of contemporary design incorporating playing pitches and activity areas. This will result in an aesthetically pleasing development and a safer environment both in educational terms and for the benefit of the wider community.

Planning Policy Statement 9 (PPS9) - Biodiversity and Geological Conservation. This document advises that the Government's objectives includes the promotion of sustainable development by ensuring biological and geological diversity are conserved and enhanced as an integral part of social, environmental and economic development, and the conservation, enhancement and restoration of the diversity of England's wildlife and geology. Furthermore, local authorities should take measures to protect the habitats of protected species from further decline and local planning authorities should ensure that these species are protected from the adverse effects of development. The document also advises that development proposals may provide opportunities for building-in beneficial biodiversity features as part of good design. The applicant has submitted ecology surveys in support of the application indicating that the site generally provides a low diversity of habitats and there are no great crested newts or other protected species present on the site and natural habitat areas would be included within the development proposals.

Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 (PPG17) - Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation. It is considered that the development accords with the policies outlined in PPG17 by providing a range of improved recreational and sporting facilities available to the school and local community.

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Planning Policy Statement 23 (PPG 23) - Planning and Pollution Control. This statement advises that in considering individual planning applications, the potential for contamination to be present must be considered in relation to the existing use and circumstances of the land, the proposed new use and the possibility of encountering contamination during development. The local planning authority should satisfy itself that the potential for contamination and any risks arising are properly assessed and that the development incorporates any necessary remediation and subsequent management measures. Particular attention should be paid to sites where there is a reason to suspect contamination, and to those for particularly sensitive uses. The applicants have undertaken desk-top studies and site investigations and work is on-going in this respect. It is therefore considered appropriate to attach a condition to ensure adequate remediation.

Design, Scale and External Appearance - The new school building would comprise two main accommodation blocks with a central 'hub' joining these together to form a roughly V-shaped footprint, with the apex forming the main entrance. This would front on to a hard landscaped area leading to an improved Alworth Road. The northern block would be three storeys, the southern block would be two storeys, and the central hub would be three storeys, increasing in height to the front to give more impact where the building meets the main piazza. As the school has no main road frontage, this approach would increase its visibility and presence. The materials proposed are from a simple palette. The ground floor elevations would be built in brick to give a robust construction that would be easy to maintain and be hard wearing. The upper levels would be constructed in metal cladding or rendered masonry. Roof planes are inclined and designed to allow natural light into the centre of the building through clerestory north lights. A product called 'kalwall' - an insulated translucent screen - is proposed for parts of the external walling, to allow daylight into the building whilst offering a degree of thermal insulation.

Disabled Access - An access specialist has been appointed who has recommended measures to ensure compliance with DfA2 and DDA. The proposal has been designed to ensure access and inclusion.

Layout - A number of options for the location and layout of the redevelopment were considered, including the potential for locating the new building on the site of the existing buildings. However, there were a number of disadvantages in this latter approach:

- * It would need temporary accommodation for the duration of construction which would add significantly to the cost of the scheme as well as cause significant disruption.
- * The building would need to be four to five storeys high in order to provide adequate accommodation space and this would have an adverse impact on nearby two-storey housing.
- * It would result in very little outdoor social space in the vicinity of the building.
- * All parking would have to cross the field footpath.
- * There would be poor access to quiet outdoor space of the SEN students.
- * It would result in the main school being very close to the ESBD block and a certain separation is required to avoid potential disruption.
- * There would be no room for the ESBD activity space, which needs to be adjoining the building.

The advantage of the layout proposed include:

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- * The location of the sports hall, all-weather pitch and parking area for out of hours use together.
- * The opportunity to create a large pedestrian area free from traffic at the air entrance
- * Good links between the existing sports and community uses and the new building.
- * Opportunity within the parking area to create a one-way loop incorporating a drop-off point for the SEN students (looping around the aqueduct valve house).
- * Allows a larger footprint to keep the height of the building to two and three storeys.
- * Ease of access for the ESBD students to the all-weather pitch, eliminating the need for them to go through the mainstream school or play areas.
- * Good pedestrian and vehicular separation.

Proposed All Weather Pitch - The external all-weather pitch is essential to the school's specialist sports college status. The positioning of the pitch is currently the location of two smaller hard play areas. The all-weather pitch would not only be used by the school, but by the local community and local sports groups. Therefore the pitch is likely to be in use outside school hours on some evenings and weekends. It is proposed that no outdoor activities would take place after 9.00pm. To help limit the noise generated by ball sports, rebound boards would be avoided and softer backing materials used to reduce the impact noise generated by ball sports. A 3.5m high acoustic barrier is proposed at the boundary of the site in order to reduce the likelihood of disturbance to residents. A 'living' barrier is currently being considered so that it would not only help to attenuate noise from the all-weather pitch, but also be aesthetically more pleasing.

Landscaping - A total of 61 individual trees and 10 groups of trees were identified within and adjacent to the school grounds. 36 trees are proposed for removal, the majority located within the proposed parking area. The landscaping proposals include the planting of 31 semi-mature trees, along with a wildlife corridor, hedge planting and sensory, habitat and ornamental planting. Following comments from the Landscape Practice it was considered that the landscaping proposals could be refined and therefore a condition is recommended to seek further details. The applicants have also been asked to increase the number of replacement trees to be planted and revised drawings are expected.

Sustainability

The Government's target is for all new BSF new-build and refurbishment projects to achieve a "Very Good" BREEAM rating or better and it is the intention that this development will achieve the standard by the specification of sustainable design and products. The development is registered with the BRE under the BREEAM for Schools 2006 method and is targeting a rating of 'Very Good'. A sustainability statement has been submitted, confirming that, with reference to the City's 'Guide to Development 2', sustainability and limitation of energy use form a fundamental objective of this project.

The sustainability report covers: energy efficiency, renewable energy, water, surface water run-off, waste segregation and recycling, construction materials, construction activity and ecology. Renewable technologies are currently being investigated and although the options are currently still under discussion, as grants and funding streams are being investigated, the most likely options are biomass heating, ground source heat pumps or small-scale wind turbines.

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The design philosophy of the scheme will be such that the scheme will meet Part L without relying on renewable energy strategies, by placing emphasis on utilising the building form and services. If a renewable energy source is installed it is to be made as visible as possible and will be used as a learning resource by the schools.

Access and parking - The area is well served in terms of public transport into Manchester City Centre, Middleton, Rochdale and Oldham, with frequent bus services along Rochdale Road and Middleton Road. East to west transport links are less well served and so access to neighbouring wards is restricted.

The nearest bus stops are on Victoria Avenue, approximately 250m from the school, providing services to Manchester, Middleton, Oldham and Moston. The site is highly accessible by pedestrians and there are a number of pedestrian routes to the school. The main access to the school from Alworth Road would be widened and upgraded. The proposals include the provision of two secure car parking areas - one for staff and one for visitors. The car parks would also be accessed via Alworth Road. Access to the visitor car park will be via a new entrance and one-way access loop to serve the SEN facility. This lay-by will allow two rear-loading minibuses to drop-off or pick up at any one time. The internal access loop road will be 6m wide and will allow for minibuses to queue in two lanes, reducing the potential for minibuses to queue back on to Alworth Road. Due to the number of needs of the pupils at the SEN school, staff levels are high and many professionals from other agencies need to visit. Pupils would be transported to and from school via minibuses. Staggered school start and finish times will ensure minibuses will not create congestion. The existing car park at the north east corner of the site, accessed from Chain Road, would be retained to serve the ESD facility.

Construction Methodology - The site consists of two parts, the school buildings and the school playing fields, divided by the footpath. The footpath must be kept operational at all times for both school access and pedestrian access for the public. The construction proposals aim to build the new school on the current fields, move to the new building and then demolish the redundant school buildings. The Sister Philomena Block within the existing school area would be retained, extended and altered following the new build. Finally, following demolition of the redundant buildings, the car parking and all-weather pitch would be created. A temporary entrance via Boothroyden Road is proposed for construction traffic for the first phase of works. This is considered necessary to separate the construction traffic from the school.

Access to the school for works on the eastern part of the site would be from Chain Road, as roads to that are wider than those to the footpath side of the site. Construction would be split into two phases: the first taking access from Boothroyden Road to build on the playing fields, and the second taking access from Chain Road for the works to ESD, all-weather pitch and parking. Access for Phase 1 is preferred on Boothroyden Road rather than Alworth Road for the following reasons:

- * The approach to Alworth Road is narrower and through residential streets.
- * The delivery point to kitchens, access to parking and sports hall and caretaker's house needs to be maintained through Phase 1 to allow the school to function normally before the new building is ready.
- * The public footpath leads from Alworth Road and needs to be kept open and accessible at all times.
- * This option also allows for the separation of users of the school from the construction traffic.

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* Access for Phase 1 via Chain Road is impractical, as construction traffic would then need to cross through the whole site.

Environmental Impact Assessment - The application has been screened to assess whether an Environmental Impact Assessment was necessary under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1999.

The proposal involves the redevelopment of an existing long-established school. The surrounding area is a mix of low-rise housing and farmland with the M60 motorway to the north. The site is not located in a 'sensitive area' or vulnerable location, and the proposal would not have unusually complex or potentially hazardous environmental effects. The proposal would involve a larger operation than existing, by accommodating two additional schools. But as these are relatively small schools (110 pupils and 25) the main impact is likely to be an increase in traffic. Parking spaces would be provided for staff and a drop-off area for visitors, mini-buses and taxis. The proposal is not of more than local importance. The site is a brownfield site and it is considered that in the light of guidance in circ. 2/99 an EIA is not required in this instance.

Human Rights Act 1998 considerations - This application needs to be considered against the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998. Under Article 6, the applicants (and those third parties, including local residents, who have made representations) have the right to a fair hearing and to this end the Committee must give full consideration to their comments.

Protocol 1 Article 1, and Article 8 where appropriate, confer(s) a right of respect for a person's home, other land and business assets. In taking account of all material considerations, including Council policy as set out in the Unitary Development Plan, the Head of Planning has concluded that some rights conferred by these Articles on the applicant(s)/objectors/residents and other occupiers and owners of nearby land that might be affected may be interfered with but that that interference is in accordance with the law and justified by being in the public interest and on the basis of the planning merits of the development proposal. He believes that any restriction on these rights posed by approval of the application is proportionate to the wider benefits of approval and that such a decision falls within the margin of discretion afforded to the Council under the Town and Country Planning Acts.

Recommendation APPROVE

It is considered that the proposal will generally accord with the policies contained within the Development Plan, specifically the Unitary Development Policies H2.2, E1.4, DC26.1, E1.1, E1.5, E1.6, E2.3, E2.4, E3.5, T1.1, T3.7, T3.4, T2.4, L1.2, and DC22.1 in that the development would improve the quality of educational facilities and will promote the use of open spaces, recreational facilities and leisure uses; there would not be any significant impacts on the residential amenities of adjoining occupiers; modern community facilities would be located within an easily accessible and safe location; additional sports facilities would be provided and generally the proposal would provide a high quality facility within the area to the benefit of the wider surrounding community allowing the continuing regeneration of the locality.

Conditions and/or Reasons

List No. 2/1

1) The development must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason -

Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the drawings numbered: AE(0-)001, AE(0-)B11, AE(0-)B12, AE(0-)B61, AE(0-)C11, AE(0-)C61, AG(0-)001, AG(0-)005, AG(0-)031, AG(0-)032, AG(0-)A11, AG(0-)A12, AG(0-)A13, AG(0-)A21, AG(0-)A31 A, AG(0-)A61 A, AG(0-)A62 A, AG(0-)A63 A, AG(0-)B11, AG(0-)B12, AG(0-)B31, AG(0-)B61, OL_PLI_DR_G_91_AZ_NS_6001 C, OL_PLI_DR_G_91_AZ_NS_6002 C, OL_PLI_DR_G_91_AZ_NS_6005 C, OL_PLI_DR_G_91_AZ_NS_6006 C, OL_PLI_DR_G_91_AZ_NS_6007 B, OL_PLI_DR_G_91_AZ_NS_6008 C, OL-GIF-DR-62-AZ-3600, OL-GIF-DR-62-AZ-3710, OL-GIF-DR-62-AZ-3711, Ellis Williams Design Statement ref 07-02-09, Acoustic Statement C/05/6W/40278/L10V03/UC, Construction Methodology stamped as received on 19 February 2007, Community Use Statement stamped as received on 19 February 2007, Access Statement ref 07-02-09, Sustainability Statement dated 9 February 2007, Transport Assessment dated February 2007 and stamped as received on 19 February 2007, Ecology Statement ref 1179.014A, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the City Council as Local Planning Authority.

Reason - To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans.

3) Construction of the works hereby approved shall not take place until samples and specifications of the materials to be used on all external elevations of the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as local planning authority. The development shall be constructed only using the approved materials unless otherwise agreed in writing by the City Council as local planning authority.

Reason

To ensure that the appearance of the development is acceptable to the City Council as local planning authority in the interests of the visual amenity of the area within which the site is located, pursuant to Policy H2.2 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester.

4) The car parking, including cycle parking areas, indicated on the approved plans shall be surfaced, demarcated and made available for use prior to the building hereby approved being occupied unless otherwise agreed in writing by the City Council as local planning authority. The car park and cycle parking areas shall then be available at all times whilst the site is occupied.

Reason

To ensure that there is adequate car parking and cycle parking for the development proposed when the building is occupied, pursuant to Policies

List No. 2/1

H2.2, T2.4 and T3.7 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester.

5) Before development commences a scheme for the extraction of any fumes, vapours and odours from any kitchen areas within the development hereby approved shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the City Council as local planning authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented prior to occupancy and shall remain operational thereafter.

Reason - In the interests of the amenities of the occupiers nearby properties, pursuant to Policy H2.2 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester.

6) The development hereby approved shall not be occupied unless a Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Methodology (BREEAM) rating of Very Good has been awarded by an assessor licensed by the Building Research Establishment in respect of all buildings comprising the development, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the City Council as local planning authority.

Reason - In the interests of minimising the environmental impact of the development pursuant to Policy E1.6 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester.

7) The development shall not be occupied unless accreditation, confirming achievement of the Secure by Design standards in respect of the development, has been issued by Greater Manchester Police, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the City Council as local planning authority.

Reason - To reduce the risk of crime, pursuant to Policy E3.5 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester.

8) Details of the proposed boundary treatment and 'acoustic barrier', including positions, design, materials, colour and finish, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council, as local planning authority, before the development commences. The boundary treatment shall be completed in accordance with the approved details before the buildings are occupied, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the City Council as local planning authority,

Reason - To ensure that the appearance of the development is acceptable to the City Council as local planning authority in the interests of the visual amenity of the area within which the site is located, pursuant to policies H2.2 and E3.5 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester.

9) No development shall commence until a scheme for the storage (including segregated waste recycling) and disposal of refuse has been submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as local planning authority. The details of the approved scheme shall be implemented as part of the development and shall remain in situ whilst the use or development is in operation.

Reason - In the interests of amenity and public health, pursuant to policy H2.2 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester.

List No. 2/1

10) A landscaping scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as local planning authority prior to the commencement of the development. The approved scheme shall be implemented not later than 12 months from the date the buildings are first occupied. Any trees or shrubs removed, dying or becoming severely damaged or becoming severely diseased within 5 years of planting shall be replaced by trees or shrubs of a similar size or species to those originally required to be planted unless otherwise agreed in writing by the City Council as local planning authority.

Reason

To ensure that a satisfactory landscaping scheme for the development is carried out, pursuant to Policy H2.2 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester.

11) All trees, shrubs and hedges within the site and/or trees whose root structure may extend within the site, which are to be retained as shown on the approved plans ref OL_PLI_DR_G_91_AZ_NS_6005 REV C shall be fenced off before any building or other operation approved by this permission is carried out within the vicinity in accordance with British Standard BS 5837. Thereafter, no excavation or other building or engineering operations shall take place and no plant, machinery or materials (including excavated material) shall be placed, deposited, stored or stacked within any such fence during the construction period.

Reason

In order avoid damage to trees/shrubs adjacent to and within the site which are of important amenity value to the area, pursuant to Policy E2.6 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester.

12) The wheels of all vehicles leaving the site during the construction period shall be cleaned and the access roads leading to the site swept daily in accordance with a management scheme submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as local planning authority prior to any works commencing on site.

Reason

In the interests of residential amenity, and pedestrian and highway safety, pursuant to Policy H2.2 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester.

13) The details of an emergency telephone contact number for the contractor shall be displayed in a publicly accessible location on the site from the commencement of development and shall remain displayed for the duration of the construction period, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the City Council as local planning authority.

Reason

To prevent detrimental impact on the amenity of nearby residents and in the interests of local amenity, pursuant to Policy H2.2 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester.

List No. 2/1

14) Before any use hereby approved commences, the premises shall be acoustically insulated and treated to limit the break out of noise in accordance with a noise study of the premises and a scheme of acoustic treatment that has been submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as local planning authority. The scheme shall be implemented in full before the use commences or as otherwise agreed in writing by the City Council as local planning authority.

Reason

To safeguard the amenities of the occupiers of the building and occupiers of nearby properties, pursuant to Policy H2.2 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester.

15) Deliveries, servicing and collections, including waste collections, shall not take place outside the following hours: Monday to Saturdays 7.30 am to 8.00pm. There shall be no deliveries or collections etc. on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

Reason

To safeguard the amenities of the occupiers of nearby residential accommodation, pursuant to Policy H2.2 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester.

16) The hours of operation of the school and associated facilities are to be agreed in writing by the City Council as local planning authority prior to occupation. The agreed hours shall be implemented for the duration of the use unless otherwise agreed in writing by the City Council as local planning authority.

Reason

To safeguard the amenities of nearby resident, pursuant to Policy H2.2 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester.

17) The development hereby permitted shall not begin until a scheme to deal with contamination of land and/or groundwater has been submitted and approved by the local planning authority and until the measures approved in that scheme have been fully implemented. The scheme shall include all of the following measures unless the local planning authority dispenses with any such requirement specifically and in writing:

1. A desk study carried out by a competent person to identify and evaluate all potential sources and impacts of land and/or groundwater contamination relevant to the site. The requirements of the local planning authority shall be fully established before the desktop study is commenced and it shall conform to any such requirements.

2. Site investigation shall be carried out by a competent person to characterise fully and effectively the nature and extent of any land and/or groundwater contamination and its implications. The site investigation shall not be commenced until:

(i) A desktop study has been completed satisfying the requirements of paragraph (1) above;

(ii) The requirements of the local planning authority for site investigations have been fully established; and

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(iii) The extent and methodology have been agreed in writing with the local planning authority.

3. A written method statement for the remediation of land and/or groundwater contamination affecting the site shall be agreed in writing with the local planning authority prior to commencement and all requirements shall be implemented and completed to the satisfaction of the local planning authority by a competent person. No deviation shall be made from this scheme without the express written agreement of the local planning authority.

4. If during the works contamination is encountered which has not previously been identified, then work shall cease in that area, the additional contamination shall be fully assessed and an appropriate remediation scheme agreed with the local planning authority.

5. Upon completion of the works, this condition shall not be discharged until a verification report has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority.

Reason - To ensure that the presence of or the potential for any contaminated land and/or groundwater is detected and appropriate remedial action is taken in the interests of public safety, pursuant to Policy H2.2 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester. The development is located on or adjacent to land that has had a previous industrial or potentially contaminative use.

18) Before the proposed use commences, details of the renewable energy options as indicated on drawing numbered OL-GIF-DR-G-62-AZ-3600 shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as local planning authority. The scheme shall be completed in accordance with the approved plans unless otherwise agreed in writing by the City Council as local planning authority.

Reason

In the interests of minimising the environmental impact of the development and in the interests of visual amenity, pursuant to Policies H2.2 and E1.6 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

The documents referred to in the course of this report are either contained in the file(s) relating to application ref: 082189/VO/2007/N1 held by Planning or are City Council planning policies, the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester, national planning guidance documents, or relevant decisions on other applications or appeals, copies of which are all held by the Planning Division.

The following residents, businesses and other third parties in the area were consulted on the application:

Chief Executive's Landscape Practice Group
Engineering Services
Head Of Valuation & Property Services
Environmental Health
Contaminated Land Section
Environment & Operations (Trees)

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Environment & Operations (Highway Authority)
Environment & Operations (Refuse & Sustainability)
Access Officer
Travel Change Team
North Manchester Partnership
Environment Agency
GMPTE
Greater Manchester Ecology Unit
United Utilities
The Ramblers Association
Sport England (NW Region)
Greater Manchester Police
Peak & Northern Footpaths Society
The Open Spaces Society
Greater Manchester Pedestrians Society
MEDC

1 - 11, 11A, 15 - 55 Gildersdale Drive
2 - 62 Gildersdale Drive
1 - 11, 11A, 15, 17 Hopcroft Close
2 - 50 Hopcroft Close
1A, 1B, Cooper Lane
1 - 11 Cooper Lane
13 - 47 Cooper Lane
49 - 55 Cooper Lane
Beehive Club, Cooper Lane
26 - 30 Cooper Lane
32 - 60 Cooper Lane
1 - 31 Boothroyden Road
2A, 2B, 2 - 36, 36A, 36B Boothroyden Road
49 - 119 Boothroyden Road
106 - 116, 122 - 130 Boothroyden Road
Lark Hill, 132 Boothroyden Road
38 - 58 Boothroyden Road
33- 63 Boothroyden Road
Light Alders Farm, Boothroyden Road
School Bungalow, Alworth Road
Our Lady's RC High School, Alworth Road
1 - 7 Alworth Road
2 - 60 Alworth Road
11 - 25 Alworth Road
62 - 76 Alworth Road
1 - 59 Howden Road
2 - 62, 38a Howden Road
1 - 19 Weldon Drive
2 - 20 Weldon Drive
1 - 17 Boothroyden Terrace
Boothroyden Cottage, Boothroyden Terrace
Boothroyden Boarding Cattery, Boothroyden Terrace
1 - 17 Windy Bank
1 - 15 Hargrave Close
2 - 6 Hargrave Close

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1 - 11 Germain Close
2 Germain Close
1 - 11 Moortop Close
2 - 14 Moortop Close
1 - 7 Catchdale Close
2 - 8 Catchdale Close
Chain Road Presbytery, Chain Road
Chain Road Lodge, Chain Road
90 - 106 Chain Road
1 - 29 Chain Road
31, 33 Chain Road
Ladyfield, 112 Chain Road
2 - 72 Northridge Road
11 - 75 Northridge Road
1 - 19 Royden Avenue
2 - 20 Royden Avenue
1 - 11 Farnham Avenue
6 - 12 Farnham Avenue
1 - 11 Glenthorn Avenue
2 - 12 Glenthorn Avenue
1 - 15 Kilburn Avenue
2 - 16 Kilburn Avenue
172 - 182 Victoria Avenue
Blackley Children's Centre, 160 Victoria Avenue

Representations were received from the following third parties:

Chief Executive's Landscape Practice Group
Environmental Health
Contaminated Land Section
Environment & Operations (Trees)
Greater Manchester Ecology Unit
United Utilities
The Ramblers Association
Greater Manchester Police
Mr Richard Purdy, 33 Gildersdale Drive, Manchester, M9 0SN
Mrs A E Whitehead, 116 Boothroyden Road, Manchester, M9 0SH
Mr Peter Brendan Clarke, 35 Boothroyden Road, Manchester, M9 0SJ
Ms Linda Carey, 49 Boothroyden Road, Manchester, M9 0SJ
Ms Carole Hangle, 3 Germain Close, Manchester, M9 0SQ
Mrs Jean Barry, 25 Gildersdale Drive, Manchester, M9 0SN
Mr Alan Goldstone, Light Alders Farm, Boothroyden Road, Manchester, M9 0SE
Ms Cheryl Booth, 11 Howden Road, Manchester, M9 0RQ
Mr Alan Scholes, 45 Howden Road, Manchester, M9 0RQ
Ms Fiona Matthews, 36b, Boothroyden Road, Manchester, M9 0RG
Marie Pearce, 27 Cooper Lane, Manchester, M9 0QN
Ms Annette Billington, 40 Boothroyden road
Leslie D Clegg Morgan & Co, 32 The Crescent, Manchester, M5 4PF

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Telephone No. : (0161) 234 4547
Email : p.mcGovern@manchester.gov.uk