

TO: PLANNING & REGULATORY COMMITTEE **DATE:** 20 July 2011
BY: PLANNING DEVELOPMENT CONTROL TEAM
MANAGER
DISTRICT(S) REIGATE & BANSTEAD BOROUGH **ELECTORAL DIVISION(S):**
COUNCIL Earlswood & Reigate South
Ms King

PURPOSE: FOR DECISION **GRID REF:** 528429; 149313

TITLE: SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL PROPOSAL RE11/00278

SUMMARY REPORT

Land at Brambletye Junior School, Brambletye Park Road, Redhill, Surrey RH1 6JX

Construction of single storey extension comprising classroom and meeting room, and creation of outdoor amenity area with 2 shade sails each 5m by 5m

Brambletye Junior School is situated in a residential area on the southeastern edge of Redhill. The school site overlooks residences and open countryside. This countryside and the school playing fields are within the Green Belt. The proposed development is located within the part of the site designated as urban area in the Reigate and Banstead Borough Local Plan 2005.

There are two components of the development, a single storey extension comprising a new classroom and a meeting room and two shade sails situated in a new amenity area proposed to replace two dilapidated demountable units. The proposed classroom is needed to provide space lost when these two units were demolished. The amenity area and shade sails have already been installed. The amenity area provides pupils with recreation and relaxation space adjacent to the existing playground.

Officers are satisfied that the proposed development would not harm the visual amenity of the adjoining Green Belt. The proposal has no adverse impact on local residential amenity or on retained trees. The development is considered compatible with the character of the existing buildings and the local area.

The recommendation is to PERMIT subject to conditions.

APPLICATION DETAILS

Applicant

Brambletye Junior School

Date application valid

21 February 2011

Period for Determination

18 April 2011

Amending Documents

email dated 1 March 2011 from the Applicant attaching a letter of the same date amending the proposal to add a series of 7 bamboo screening panels

email dated 2 March 2011 from the Applicant attaching a Site Plan showing the location and extent of bamboo fencing (screening panels) proposed to be attached to current chain link fence

SUMMARY OF PLANNING ISSUES

This section identifies and summarises the main planning issues in the report. The full text should be considered before the meeting.

	Is this aspect of the proposal in accordance with the development plan?	Paragraphs in the report where this has been discussed
Impact on the Character of the Site and the Surrounding Area	YES	18-22
Impact on Local Residential Amenity	YES	23-28
Impact on Trees	YES	29-31
Access Considerations	YES	32

ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL

Site Plan

Plan

Aerial Photographs

Aerial

Site Photographs

Figure 1: View facing east showing site of amenity area under construction

Figure 2: View looking east from amenity area during its construction

BACKGROUND

Site Description

- 1 Brambletye Junior School is located on the southern edge of Earlswood in Redhill. The school site is situated on the southeast side of the speed controlled Brambletye Park Road. On the opposite side of this road is a residential area consisting mainly of detached properties. There are mature lime trees along the road frontage and other trees including birches in a grassed area between the road and the main entrance. There is sheltered residential accommodation on higher ground immediately north of the site, the school buildings being screened from this development by a mature hedge. There are some mature trees and bushes along the southern site boundary, the trees being on the adjoining property. Beyond this boundary is an open field with single storey

residences along its eastern edge. The school playing fields are located southwest of the main buildings. The playing field and the open field are within the Green Belt.

- 2 The main flat roofed school building dates from the early 1970s and comprises a mixture of one and two storey structures clad mainly in buff coloured brickwork. The window apertures incorporate burgundy infill panels.
- 3 In the mid 1990s a 357 sq m sq m single storey extension was built, consisting of a teaching block linked to the southwest elevation of the main building by a covered way. The extension has a pitched roof and is faced with red brick. That proposal included the laying out of tarmac play areas adjacent to the northeast and northwest elevations of the new block.

Planning History

- 4 RE10/0216 Construction of a timber shelter and related hard landscaping and fencing to create a waiting area for parents (Permitted in March 2010)
- RE94/0954 Construction of a single storey extension comprising teaching space and adjoining hard surfaced play areas (Permitted in January 1995)
- RE86/250 Erection of a movable classroom (Permitted in May 1986)
- RE77P/226 Erection of a movable classroom (Permitted in May 1977)
- RE74P/33 Erection of a movable classroom (Permitted in June 1974)
- 5 A playground shelter was judged to be permitted development in August 2007. In January 2010 a proposal for three additional on-site parking bays, including one for disabled users, was allowed as permitted development.

THE PROPOSAL

- 6 There are two parts to this proposal. The first is a single storey extension comprising a classroom and a meeting room on the southeast (rear) elevation of the main school building. The floorspace of the new classroom would be about 25 sq m and that of the meeting room approximately 24 sq m. The new rooms are proposed to have access to a link area which is presently covered by a canopy. This link area would be enclosed as part of the proposal, providing safe and convenient access to the two new rooms including in inclement weather. Double doors and some windows along the southeast elevation of an adjacent classroom would be removed.
- 7 The proposed extension would extend a single storey classroom area situated between the dominant two storey classroom and the 1.5 storey gymnasium block. The extension has been designed to be lightweight and subservient to the main school building. This is achieved by the choice of materials and the scale of the extension, respectively. The external walls are proposed to be timber frame clad with vertical tongue and groove weatherboarding. The window apertures would have double glazed windows with burgundy infill panels matching those on the adjacent part of the main building. The new doors would have white powder coated aluminium frames and would be partly glazed with infill panels as above. The extension would have a flat felt covered roof to match the roof on the main building.
- 8 The extension is needed to replace two timber demountable units which until recently were situated along the southeast boundary of the site and used as a library and a resources block. Each of these units measured 9.5m by 6.5m and has approximately 58 sq m of floorspace. Both structures were dilapidated and had decaying timber window

frames. These buildings have been demolished because they were considered unsuitable for refurbishment.

- 9 The second component of the proposal has already been installed. It consists of two 5m by 5m shade sails, located behind the main school buildings in a new amenity or recreational area approximately 24m by 9.5m, where the two demountable buildings were situated. This area comprises a mat of porous artificial turf edged on the three sides by timber sleepers. The sails are of dark green material and are supported by six posts. The sails have a maximum height of 2.4m and are situated approximately 3.5m from the southeast boundary of the site. The purpose of the new amenity area is to improve the external facilities for the pupils by providing a recreational and relaxation area as a natural extension to the existing playground facilities.
- 10 In response to input from two neighbours (contained in the single representation), the applicant has independently proposed an additional element to this scheme, that is, attaching a series of seven 2m high bamboo screening panels to an approximately 30m length of the existing chain link fence along the southern school site boundary adjacent to the amenity area where the shade sails are located. The applicant has submitted a plan showing the amenity area and the extent of the bamboo screening, as well as a letter indicating that the panels are needed to provide visual screening from neighbouring residential properties.

CONSULTATIONS AND PUBLICITY

District Council

- 11 Reigate and Banstead Borough Council: No objection

Consultees (Statutory and Non-Statutory)

- 12 County Highway Authority –
Transportation Development Control: No objection
- 13 County Arboricultural Officer: No objection

Parish/Town Council and Amenity Groups

- 14 None

Summary of publicity undertaken and key issues raised by public

- 15 The application was publicised by the posting of 2 site notices. A total of 53 owner/occupiers of neighbouring properties were directly notified by letter. One representation was received, raising the issue of visual impact of the proposed development.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 16 The development area is within the urban area of Earlswood on the southeastern edge of Redhill. The school playing fields and adjoining land to the south of the school site are within the Green Belt. The proposal is to be assessed in terms of impact on the character of the site and the surrounding area, impact on local residential amenity, impact on trees and access considerations.
- 17 Pursuant to Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, a planning authority must determine a planning application in accordance with the provisions of the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

In this case the Development Plan comprises the policies of The South East Plan May 2009 and the Reigate and Banstead Borough Local Plan 2005.

Impact on the Character of the Site and the Surrounding Area

The South East Plan May 2009

Policy BE1 – Management for an Urban Renaissance

Policy LF5 – Urban Areas and Regional Hubs

Reigate and Banstead Borough Local Plan 2005

Policy Cf2 – Design and Layout of Community Facilities

Planning Policy Guidance Note 2: Green Belts (PPG2)

- 18 Regional Plan Policy BE1 requires local authorities to use opportunities associated with new development to promote and support design solutions relevant to the local context and which build upon local character and distinctive and sense of place. Regional Plan Policy LF5 states that within the London Fringe Sub-regional Strategy Area (within which the site is located) improvements to the physical environment will be achieved by setting high design standards for new development and its relationship to existing buildings and spaces. Local Plan Policy Cf2 requires proposals for community facilities to be of a scale and form which respect the local pattern of development and to be designed to a high standard complementing local character.
- 19 The proposed extension would have approximately 49 sq m of new floorspace. The extension would be small scale in relation to the nearby two storey classroom block and 1.5 storey gymnasium block. The applicant has indicated that the proposed extension has been designed as a lightweight structure which would be subservient to the main school building, noting that this would be achieved by the scale of the extension and by the choice of materials: external walls of vertical tongue and groove weatherboarding, double glazed windows mounted above burgundy glazed infill panels closely matching those on the host building, doors with white powder coated aluminium frames and partly glazed infill panels, and a flat felt roof covering matching that on the main building. Officers consider that the design and materials of the extension would complement those of the host building, thus reflecting the local context and character.
- 20 Officers consider that the amenity area and the two shade sails are relatively unobtrusive, aided by the dark green material used for the sails and the sails being small scale in relation to the main school building (each sail has a footprint of 5m by 5m and is a maximum height of 2.4m). It is the view of Officers that the design and materials of the sails are in keeping with the context and character of the school buildings, the site and the local area.
- 21 PPG2 states that the visual amenities of the Green Belt should not be injured by development which is conspicuous from the Green Belt. The proposed extension would be partly visible from the open Green Belt to the south but the relatively small scale of the extension (see above), the existing trees and shrubs along the site boundary, as well as the bamboo screening panels attached to the boundary fence would minimise the visual impact of the extension when viewed from the Green Belt. Officers consider that the visual impact of the shade sails when viewed from the Green Belt is small. It is the view of Officers that neither the extension nor the sails would attract attention or be easily seen from the Green Belt. Therefore, it is concluded that the proposed development would not harm the visual amenity of the Green Belt.
- 22 The proposed development is considered to comply with the above mentioned Development Plan policies.

Impact on Local Residential Amenity

Reigate and Banstead Borough Local Plan 2005

Policy Cf2 – Design and Layout of Community Facilities

- 23 Local Plan Policy Cf2 requires the design and layout of new community facilities to not adversely affect the amenities of adjoining properties. There is a post and wire fence along the property boundary, some mature trees and bushes on the opposite side of the fence from the school site. Beyond the fence is an open field which tapers to a point about 7m from the eastern extent of the development area. Four single storey residences are situated to the east of the development area, the closest house being approximately 35m from the proposed extension and 25m from the nearest shade sail. The extension and the shade sails would be partly visible from the rear elevations of three of these dwellings, particularly in winter. These elements of the development are less visible than the demountable units which have been demolished. The visual impact of the sails is lessened by the use of dark green fabric for the coverings.
- 24 One resident whose property overlooks the part of the school site where the shade sails are proposed to be installed has expressed, for herself and two immediate neighbours, concern about the visual impact of the activities taking place in this area, now that the two demountable buildings have been removed. She suggests that securing 2m high larch lap fencing panels to the existing fence posts would resolve the issue.
- 25 Officers consider that neither the extension nor the amenity area containing the shade sails would have any adverse impact on local residential amenity, due to the distance between the development and residential properties, the colour selected for the shade sails and the reduced amenity impact of the proposed development when compared with that of the demolished demountable units.
- 26 In response to this concern the applicant has independently revised the application to include the installation of seven 2m high bamboo screening panels to be attached to the existing chain link boundary fence for a distance of approximately 30m. Officers have no objection to the proposed bamboo panels and consider them to be an acceptable measure to ameliorate impact on local residential amenity. There is some concern, however, with the longevity of the bamboo panels, which prompts Officers to recommend an informative relating to the maintenance of these panels in a reasonable condition.
- 27 There will be an increase in noise from the use of the amenity area in which the shade sails would be located. The applicant has stated that this area would be used as a recreational and relaxation area which would be a natural extension of the existing school playground facilities. These consist of a hard play area situated immediately to the northeast of the main school building and the proposed amenity area. Officers consider that the additional noise emanating from the amenity area would be minimal bearing in mind the existing use of the adjoining hard play area. Consequently it is the view of Officers that the proposed development would have no adverse amenity impacts in terms of noise.
- 28 Overall, Officers consider that the proposed development would have no detrimental impact on local residential amenity. Therefore the proposal is considered to comply with the Development Plan policy on amenity.

Impact on Trees

Reigate and Banstead Borough Local Plan 2005

Policy Pc4 – Tree Protection

- 29 Local Plan Policy Pc4 requires tree cover to be protected, conserved and enhanced through development control powers. The Arboricultural Survey and Method Statement which is part of the application identifies three mature trees (two English Oaks and one Common Ash) located immediately outside the school site and approximately 2m to 4m from the edge of the proposed amenity area. The Root Protection Areas of these trees range from 3m to 10m radius.
- 30 The County Council's Arboricultural Officer has advised that the amenity area and the shade sails which have been installed are unlikely to have had any major influence on the health, vitality and amenity value of these three trees. He comments further that despite the likelihood of these trees having sustained a minor degree of root loss and dysfunction, the area affected is relatively small compared to the remaining undisturbed rooting areas. He has also noted that the proposed bamboo screening panels are of no concern. This is because they would be attached to the existing boundary fence, their installation not involving any excavation. The Arboricultural Officer has concluded that the proposal is acceptable from an arboricultural perspective and that no remedial measures are required to protect retained trees.
- 31 Officers consider that the proposed extension would have no adverse impact on retained trees because of its distance (in excess of 15m from the nearest tree). It is also considered that the amenity area and shade sails as installed have no significant detrimental impact on the three trees along the school site boundary. Officers consider that the proposed development complies with the Development Plan policy relating to tree protection.

Access Considerations

Reigate and Banstead Borough Local Plan 2005

Policy Cf2 – Design and Layout of Community Facilities

- 32 Local Plan Policy Cf2 requires new community development to incorporate facilities for disabled people and for the easy movement of perambulators, pushchairs and wheelchairs. The applicant has advised that the new extension would have level access to the upper level of the main school building and level access to the outside areas. The proposed amenity area would be fully accessible. Officers consider that the proposed development complies with the requirements of the Development Plan policy on accessibility.

HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

- 33 The Human Rights Act Guidance for Interpretation, contained in the Preamble to the Agenda is expressly incorporated into this report and must be read in conjunction with the following paragraph.
- 34 Officers consider that the proposed development would have no adverse impact on local amenity. It is the view of Officers that the proposal would not interfere with any Convention right.

CONCLUSION

- 35 Officers consider that the proposed development would have no adverse impact on local residential amenity and would not harm the visual amenity of the adjoining Green Belt. It is also considered that the scale and design of the proposal would be compatible with the context and character of the existing school buildings, the school site and the surrounding area. All relevant planning policy tests are considered to have been met. The proposal is recommended for permission subject to conditions.

RECOMMENDATION

That pursuant to Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992, application number RE11/00278 be PERMITTED subject to the following conditions.

Conditions:

1. The development to which this permission relates shall be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.
2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the terms of this permission and the following plans:

Location Map received on 22 February 2011
 Existing Ground Floor Plan received 12 January 2011
 Existing Site Plan received 12 January 2011
 Existing South East Elevation received 12 January 2011
 Existing North East Elevation received 12 January 2011
 Proposed Ground Floor Plan received 12 January 2011
 Proposed Site Plan received 12 January 2011
 Proposed South East Elevation/Section received 12 January 2011
 Proposed North East Elevation received 12 January 2011
 Site Plan received on 2 March 2011, showing location and extent of proposed bamboo fencing attached to current chain link fence

Reasons:

1. To comply with Section 91 (1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 (1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
2. To ensure the permission is implemented in accordance with the terms of the application and to enable the County Planning Authority to exercise planning control over the development pursuant to Policy Cf2 of the Reigate and Banstead Borough Local Plan 2005.

Informatives:

1. This approval relates only to the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and must not be taken to imply or be construed as an approval under the Building Regulations 2000 or for the purposes of any statutory provision whatsoever.
2. The attention of the applicant is drawn to the requirements of Sections 7 and 8 of the Chronically Sick and Disabled persons Act 1970 and to Design Note 18 'Access for Disabled People to Educational Buildings' published in 1984 on behalf of the Secretary of State, or any prescribed document replacing that note.
3. The applicant is advised of the need to maintain the bamboo screening panels in reasonable condition in the interest of local residential amenity.

**THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE)
 (ENGLAND) ORDER 2010**
Reasons for the grant of planning permission and development plan policies/proposals relevant to the decision.

The development

- 1 will have the following benefits: providing needed classroom space replacing two dilapidated demountable classrooms to be demolished and providing useful additional external recreational and relaxation space for pupils;
- 2 is in accordance with the development plan policies so far as they are relevant to the application and there are no material considerations which indicate otherwise; and
- 3 any harm can be adequately mitigated by the measures proposed in the application and the conditions subject to which planning permission is granted.

The proposal has been considered against the following development plan policies/provisions:

The South East Plan May 2009

Policy BE1 – Management for an Urban Renaissance

Policy LF5 – Urban Areas and Regional Hubs

Reigate and Banstead Borough Local Plan 2005:

Policy Cf2 – Design and Layout of Community Facilities

Policy Pc4 – Tree Protection

CONTACT

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

The deposited application documents and plans, including those amending or clarifying the proposal, responses to consultations and representations received as referred to in the report and included in the application file and the following:

The Development Plan: The South East Plan May 2009 and the Reigate and Banstead Borough Local Plan 2005
