

**TO:** PLANNING & REGULATORY COMMITTEE **DATE:** 24 September 2014

**BY:** PLANNING DEVELOPMENT CONTROL TEAM  
MANAGER

**DISTRICT(S)** ELMBRIDGE BOROUGH COUNCIL **ELECTORAL DIVISION(S):**  
**West Molesey**  
**Mr Mallett**

**PURPOSE:** FOR DECISION **GRID REF:** 514075 167826

**TITLE:** SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL PROPOSAL EL/2014/2424

## **SUMMARY REPORT**

**Land at St Albans Catholic Primary School, Beauchamp Road, East Molesey, Surrey KT8 2PG**

**Construction of a two storey, 8 classroom detached teaching block with associated hard standing, following demolition of existing double demountable building; provision of PV panels on south facing area of existing small teaching block; alterations to internal fencing; widened access for emergency vehicles; provision of external canopy to south east of existing main building; increase in cycle/scooter parking.**

**St Alban's is a Roman Catholic Primary School lying within the urban area of Molesey. It has a single access point, from Beauchamp Road. The County Council is seeking to provide accommodation enabling it to expand from one form of entry (1FE) to 2FE. This would result in the number of pupils rising from 210 to 420. The two storey classroom block proposed to affect this would be built on the corner of the school's playing field on the site of an existing single storey demountable classroom unit, but with a larger footprint. The location is remote from the school's eastern, southern and western boundaries but is close to the northern boundary of the field, with St Joseph's House of Prayer, a religious retreat house.**

**The application has attracted twelve objections, mainly on grounds of traffic impacts on amenity and safety; the impacts of the proposed building on surrounding**

properties and, in particular, on the House of Prayer in terms of privacy and noise, both during construction and in the long term.

The proposal is for the provision of additional faith based school places, addressing both the overall number of places and choice of places on a site within the urban area. It is therefore acceptable in principle under national and local planning policies. Potential traffic impacts have been identified and mitigations proportionate to the nature of surrounding roads and the scale of impacts have been proposed. The development can be made acceptable in highways terms. The proposed building is acceptable in terms of design and its relationship to nearby properties. The development would not have any significant adverse environmental or amenity impacts. All relevant development plan policies have been satisfied and subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions, the development can be permitted.

The recommendation is to PERMIT subject to conditions.

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## APPLICATION DETAILS

### ***Applicant***

Estates Planning and Management

### ***Date application valid***

13 June 2014

### ***Period for Determination***

8 August 2014

### ***Amending Documents***

Brick and cladding samples received 26/08/14

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## 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.

	<b>Is this aspect of the proposal in accordance with the development plan?</b>	<b>Paragraphs in the report where this has been discussed</b>
<b>Principle of Development</b>	Yes	21 - 22
<b>Design and Impact on Visual Amenity</b>	Yes	23 - 28
<b>Impact on Residential Amenity</b>	Yes	29 - 37
<b>Traffic Impacts on Residential Amenity and Safety</b>	Yes	38 - 48
<b>Impact on Playing Fields</b>	Yes	49 - 51
<b>Sustainable Construction</b>	Yes	52 - 53
<b>Impact on Trees</b>	Yes	54 - 55

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## ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL

### Site Plan

Plan

## **Aerial Photographs**

Aerial

## **Site Photographs**

Figure 1 Site of proposed classroom block looking west, showing existing demountable classroom and northern site boundary

Figure 2 Site of proposed classroom block looking north, showing existing demountable classroom with House of Prayer beyond

Figure 3 View towards eastern site boundary from proposed location of classroom block

Figure 4 Site for proposed canopy on existing building

Figure 5 Beauchamp Road, looking east towards school entrance

Figure 6 Seymour Road looking south along eastern site boundary

Figure 7 Junction of Seymour Road with Molesey Park Road at southern end of school site

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## **BACKGROUND**

## **Site Description**

- 1 St Albans Catholic Primary School accommodates children aged 4-11 years and is a 1FE (form entry) school with capacity for 210 pupils. The application site is located within the urban area of East Molesey. The existing school buildings are located in a backland position to the rear of houses on the south side of Beauchamp Road. Vehicular and pedestrian access to the site is via an access road running between the flanks of nos. 22b and 24 Beauchamp Road. To the west of the school are the rear gardens of houses in Nightingale Road. To the east is a large, three storey 19th century building, the St Joseph's House of Prayer. This sits in extensive grounds, but the buildings, which are three storeys high, extend right up to the school's boundary alongside its access road. This is a retreat house offering a 7 day a week retreat programme, with residential accommodation and offering spiritual help and counselling.
- 2 To the south of the school buildings are the school's hard play areas and games courts. To the south east is the school's playing field, which is bounded to the north by the House of Prayer, to the east by Seymour Road and to the south by Molesey Park Road. There is a line of mature conifers along the northern boundary in the grounds of the House of Prayer, and a belt of mainly deciduous trees along the other two boundaries. There is no access to the site from either Seymour Road or Molesey Park Road. The northern part of Seymour Road, as far as the entrance to the House of Prayer, has a tarmac surface. The southern part is an unmade, private road.
- 3 There are three principal existing buildings on the site. The main school building is of panel construction dating from the 1960s/70s, single storey (although the school's hall is taller than a typical single storey), and with flat roofs. Immediately to the south east is a detached single storey classroom building which is finished in brick with a shallow pyramidal roof with artificial pan tile roof sheets. To the east of that, in the north west corner of the playing field and about 7m. from the northern boundary, is a demountable classroom building comprising two classrooms.
- 4 The school is currently a one form of entry (1FE) primary school, for children aged 4 to 11, so provides for 210 pupils.

## **Planning History**

- 5 EL 2013/3823 Construction of a children's' adventure play space on the school playground

EL2008/2047	New 1.8 metre high entrance gates and railings to replace existing wooden fence.
EL2006/2860	Retention of steel storage shed.
EL2006/1595	Retention of steel storage shed permitted for five years under planning permission 2001/1497.
EL2001/1497	Renewal of planning permission 2000/1502 for a steel storage shed for a period of 5 years.
EL2000/1502	Steel storage shed,
EL 1998/1081	Single storey extensions to form additional classrooms and new main entrance,
EL1998/1080	Single storey mobile classroom for a period of 7 years to accommodate increase in pupil numbers,
EL1997/1484	Two storey linked extension to form additional classrooms and two single storey side extensions to form classroom extension school and head teacher's office,

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## THE PROPOSAL

- 6 The proposed development is to facilitate the expansion of the school from 1FE (210 places ) to 2 FE (420 places) in response to rising demand for school places in the Molesey area and in particular, demand for catholic places in the eastern part of Elmbridge Borough. To achieve this, 7 new classrooms and additional hall space are the main accommodation requirements. It is proposed to achieve this by converting an existing classroom block into a secondary hall space and to construct a new classroom block containing 8 classrooms.

- 7 The proposed classroom building would be sited in the north west corner of the playing field, in approximately the same position as the existing demountable classroom unit, which would be removed. The new building would have a larger footprint than the existing and be slightly closer to the northern boundary. It would have two storeys, incorporating four classrooms, junior resource room, WCs and store rooms on the ground floor and four classrooms, staff room, WCs and store rooms on the first floor. The building would have approximately 890m2 over two storeys and would be finished in brick at lower levels with horizontal, weatherboard – type cladding above and a mono pitched standing seam metal roof sloping down to the north. Additional hard standing is proposed around the new building.
  
  - 8 Vehicular access is proposed to be maintained from Beauchamp Road with the provision of new cycle / scooter parking. It is also proposed to alter some of the internal fencing to allow for widened access within the site for emergency vehicles.
  
  - 9 Solar PV panels are proposed on the south facing roof pitch of the pyramid roofed teaching block and a small canopy is proposed to the south east of existing main building.
  
  - 10 The application is accompanied by an Environmental Noise Survey, Arboricultural Assessment and Method Statement, Transport Assessment, School Travel Plan and Construction Management Plan.
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**CONSULTATIONS AND PUBLICITY**

***District Council***

- 11 Elmbridge Borough Council: Object unless Sport England are satisfied there is no loss of playing field.

***Consultees (Statutory and Non-Statutory)***

- 12 County Highway Authority

(Transport Development Planning):  
secure

No objection subject to conditions to

provision of onsite cycle parking and off site highway works to junction of Seymour Road and Beauchamp Road identified in application documents; implementation of proposed construction traffic management measures; and updating of School travel Plan

13 County Arboriculturalist:

No views received (04/09/14)

14 County Environmental Noise Consultant:

Considers limits proposed on noise emissions from proposed building to consistent with relevant guidance.

***Parish/Town Council and Amenity Groups***

15 None.

***Summary of publicity undertaken and key issues raised by public***

16 The application was publicised by the posting of 2 site notices and direct notification of 126 surrounding mainly residential properties. Twelve representations have been received, raising the following points:-

- Existing traffic conditions in Beauchamp Road and Nightingale Road, and at Beauchamp/Nightingale and Beauchamp/Seymour Road junctions; poor and inconsiderate parking behaviour; obstruction of drives and junctions
- Additional traffic congestion arising from significant enlargement of school; pupils at faith schools more likely to travel by car; pupils at all local primary schools should be encouraged to attend schools local to them to reduce travel
- The planning decision should be informed by a traffic assessment



- Unlike other local schools, St Alban's does not have a secondary pedestrian access point. There needs to be one, and the application makes no provision for one
- No provision made for controlled /patrolled school crossing points
- No provision made for parents parking
- Provision should be made for parking restrictions at junctions and across driveways
- Object to provision of an emergency access from Seymour Road; increased use by parents and construction vehicles of unpaved and privately maintained Seymour Road, and increased use of House of Prayer driveway as a turning point
- More pupils means more litter
- Visual impact of two storey building on amenity; loss of light to House of Prayer
- Loss of privacy to houses in Seymour Road as a result of two storey building
- House of Prayer is a public resource with particular qualities as a place of retreat; impact on amenities through noise from 8 proposed classrooms, electricity supply kiosk and construction works; House of Prayer would be unable to function during construction period with consequent loss of income, especially at weekends; hours of working should be restricted to weekdays only
- Noise from children at break times
- Noise and dust from construction activities
- Impact on privacy of House of Prayer of existing lighting on demountable classroom unit; greater impact if similar lighting is proposed on new 2 storey building
- Proposed protection for boundary trees may not be sufficient
- Alternative locations within site should be considered to reduce impact on House of Prayer; existing school is coming to the end of its life and should be rebuilt now within existing footprint
- Permission would be inconsistent with reasons given for recent refusal of permission for dormers on House of Prayer, that they would "not sufficiently take account of existing visual characteristics or the identifiable style of this 19<sup>th</sup> century property. It would not integrate sensitively and would detract from the appearance and character of the building and surrounding area"
- School has failed to act on requests to remove trees on western boundary
- The development is a money-making exercise by the church

## PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 17 The County Council as County Planning Authority has a duty under Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to determine this application in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) (1990 Act) requires local planning authorities when determining planning applications to “have regard to (a) the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, (b) any local finance considerations, so far as material to the application, and (c) any other material considerations”. At present in relation to this application the Development Plan consists of the Elmbridge Core Strategy 2011 and the saved policies within the Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000.
- 18 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was adopted in March 2012. This document provides guidance to local planning authorities in producing local plans and in making decisions on planning applications. The NPPF is intended to make the planning system less complex and more accessible by summarising national guidance which replaces numerous planning policy statements and guidance notes, circulars and various letters to Chief Planning Officers. The document is based on the principle of the planning system making an important contribution to sustainable development, which is seen as achieving positive growth that strikes a balance between economic, social and environmental factors. The Development Plan remains the cornerstone of the planning system. Planning applications which comply with an up to date Development Plan should be approved. Refusal should only be on the basis of conflict with the Development Plan and other material considerations.
- 19 The NPPF states that policies in Local Plans should not be considered out of date simply because they were adopted prior to publication of the framework. However, the guidance contained in the NPPF are material considerations which planning authorities should take into account. Due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies are to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight they may be given).
- 20 In this case the main issues are: whether development is acceptable in principle ; the quality of design proposed; the impact of the development on the visual amenity of the existing site and surrounding area, including impacts on trees; whether there would be significant impacts on residential amenity as a result of the size and location of buildings proposed or the traffic generated by the proposal; whether the development would adversely affect highway safety; and whether there would be any adverse impact on resources for sport and recreation.

### **Principle of Development**

#### **Elmbridge Core Strategy 2011**

#### **Policy CS1 – Spatial Strategy**

#### **Policy CS7 – East and West Molesey**

21 Core Strategy Policy CS1 directs new development towards previously developed land within the existing built up areas. Policy CS7 identifies the need for the Borough and County councils to work together to address the needs for education provision in the area, though with particular reference to secondary schools. Para 72 of the NPPF highlights that the Government attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. It continues by stating that Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. It states that Local Planning authorities should *inter alia* give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools.

22 The information submitted in support of the application includes the following assessed of need for Catholic school places;

“Surrey County Council (SCC), as the Local Education Authority, has a duty to provide a sufficiency of school places. The SCC School Commissioning Team uses forecast data which broadly comprises of live births, new housing development trajectories and historic patterns of preferences for schools.

Generally, primary school places are planned in smaller primary planning areas within a borough or district and secondary places are calculated on a borough wide basis. Demand for primary school places has been rising steadily in the Moleseys over the past five years; and demand for catholic primary school places is equally high across the whole of Elmbridge Borough. This increased demand is due to the rise in the birth rate locally, some is due to housing development and the specific need for catholic places can be attributed to a mixture of births and the inward migration of catholic families from within the European Community into the borough. Catholic baptisms have increased in the Weybridge deanery by 10% over the past five years with the average number being 35 baptisms higher than the number for previous years.

There are four Catholic primary schools in Elmbridge: Cardinal Newman (Hersham parish), St Charles Borromeo (Weybridge parish) and St Paul’s (Thames Ditton parish). All are oversubscribed and all three have ‘space-restricted’ sites. St Alban’s is the only school that has the space to expand and is in the right location to meet the local demand for catholic places in the Moleseys and further afield.

In terms of Catholic school provision, the Weybridge deanery can be split into eastern and western halves. On the eastern side, the Catholic schools of St Alban’s (Molesey), St Paul’s (Thames Ditton) and Cardinal Newman (Hersham) serve the parishes of Molesey, Thames Ditton, Walton, Hersham, Esher and Cobham. The current combined published admission number of these three schools is 150 – a shortfall against the number of baptisms in the eastern half of the deanery (which has averaged 185 [per year] over the last five years). There is a similar shortfall of places on the western side of the deanery.

The requirement to meet this demand will be addressed by SCC commissioning a new eight classroom block at St Alban’s Primary School along with some internal adaptations to existing Early Years provision. A direct grant from the Department for Education has been obtained for this project through the Schools’ Targeted Basic

Need programme 2013. Under this scheme the new provision is required to be open for September 2014. The expansion will admit up to 30 additional Reception pupils in September 2014 and in every subsequent year until the school has incrementally expanded to two forms of entry in every year by September 2020.”

There is a clear need for additional school places, and the provision of catholic places widens educational choice. In accordance with the NPPF. This is a factor which should be given substantial weight. The proposal is for expansion of an existing school within a built up area and is therefore consistent with the spatial strategy for Elmbridge. There is therefore substantial support in principle for the proposed development.

## **Design and Impact on Visual Amenity**

### **Elmbridge Core Strategy 2011**

Policy CS1 – Spatial Strategy

Policy CS7 – East and West Molesey

Policy CS14 – Green Infrastructure

Policy CS17 – Local Character, Density and Design

### **Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000**

Policy ENV2 – Standard of Design

- 23 Core Strategy Policy CS1 requires that new developments be of high quality, well designed and locally distinctive. They should be sensitive to the character and quality of the area, respecting environmental and historic assets and where appropriate introduce innovative contemporary designs that improve local character. Core Strategy policy CS14 gives a high level of protection to green infrastructure assets. Core Strategy Policy CS17 requires that new development delivers high quality and inclusive sustainable design which maximises efficient use of urban land whilst responding to the positive features of individual locations integrating with locally distinctive townscape and landscape. Policy CS7 states that all new development will be expected to enhance local character.
- 24 Policy ENV2 states that in order to protect and enhance the appearance of the area and the local amenity, all new development should achieve a standard of design which is sensitive to the surrounding area. The policy includes criteria for new developments that they should respect its existing context in terms of plot and frontage sites, building alignments, views and space around the buildings; respect the surrounding environment in terms of scale, massing and height; and in terms of form and design should reinforce existing visual characteristics of the existing structures.

- 25 The existing school buildings are predominantly single storey, but the prevailing character of the immediate area is of two storey residential development, rising to the three storeys of the House of Prayer. The mass and height of the building would be consistent with the scale of surrounding development and officers do not consider there to be any reasons of design context to restrict the new building to a single storey. Single storey development also limits the sprawl of school buildings on to the schools playing field which is an important element of the green infrastructure of the immediate area.
- 26 The existing school buildings are a mixture of styles and there is no clear design cue to be taken from them in terms of maintaining local distinctiveness. The proposal is for a building clad in facing brick at ground floor level with blue weatherboard cladding above, using bricks which match the nearest existing school building. There is similar cladding on the existing main building around the entrance, although other parts of the building have beige / orange panels. This is considered to be sufficient to ensure compatibility of design with any identifiable local character. The applicants have provided samples of two alternative bricks – Olde Henfield Multi and Anglian Red Rustic. The applicant's preference is for the Olde Henfield, but officers consider that either would be a suitable match.
- 27 The school's backland location, the proposed location for the new building close to the existing group of buildings and the nature of the screening on the site's undeveloped boundaries mean that the proposal would have no significant impact on the street scene and townscape.
- 28 This proposal differs in nature from the Borough Council's refusal of permission for the addition of dormers into the House of Prayer referred to in representations. The latter involved alterations to the fabric of the building, which is a prominent one in the local landscape, directly affecting its architectural character. This application involves a building which is separate from the House of Prayer and because of its scale, location remote from surrounding roads and the nature of the site boundary does not impact on the character of the older building or its contribution to townscape. Officers do not therefore consider there would be any inconsistency if the current application were permitted.

### **Impact on Residential Amenity**

#### **Elmbridge Core Strategy 2011**

Policy CS17 – Local Character, Density and Design

#### **Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000**

Policy COM4 – Provision of Education Facilities

Policy HSG23 – Non-residential development in residential areas

Policy HSG16 – Design and Layout of residential development

- 29 Core Strategy Policy CS17 requires that new development delivers high quality and inclusive sustainable design which maximises efficient use of urban land whilst responding to the positive features of individual locations and protecting the amenities of those within the area. Local Plan Policy COM4 supports the expansion of education facilities subject to several criteria, including that there would not be a significant adverse impact on local residents.
- 30 Policy HSG23 states that when considering proposals for non-residential development within predominantly residential areas, the council will apply the same criteria as contained in policy HSG16 which states that new development should avoid overlooking and an unreasonable loss of privacy or amenity.

### **Day lighting, Overlooking and Privacy**

- 31 The proposed classroom block would be in approximately the same position as the existing demountable classroom block, but would have a larger footprint and as a two storey building would be significantly taller. The use of a single pitch sloping down towards the north would result in a building 6.3 m high nearest the northern boundary with the House of Prayer, rising to 7.7m on the south elevation, facing the school's playing field. The building would be approximately 5m from the boundary and a minimum of 23m from the nearest part of the facade south of the House of Prayer, which is a large 19<sup>th</sup> century building three storeys high with pitched roof. It would be 20m from the eastern site boundary and 45m from the front elevations of the houses on the far side of Seymour Road. Officers consider that without any intervening landscape features, and taking these dimensions into account, the proposed classroom would not be dominant in the local townscape or have an overbearing physical impact on the nearest buildings. There are in fact substantial trees on these boundaries. The northern boundary is marked by a line of tall conifers in the grounds of the House of Prayer which form a nearly continuous screen along the northern boundary. These trees are a minimum of about 5m high, taller than the proposed building. Several are substantially taller, approximately 7-8m high. The trees on the eastern boundary are mostly limes, large and deciduous. In winter these would break up, rather than completely block any distant views of the building.
- 32 The height and density of the conifers is such that any loss of sunlight for the House of Prayer is attributable to the trees. The building would have no impact on sunlight if these trees remain.
- 33 The classroom building is arranged such that the four classrooms on each floor are on the south side facing the playing field, with ancillary accommodation on the north side. The larger windows of the classrooms therefore face south, while the windows on the north elevation are mainly those of WCs, stores and stairwells. The one exception among the first floor windows is a staff room. Taking into account the existence of the conifer trees, officers consider that this arrangement would not result in any material loss of amenity for neighbouring properties as a result of overlooking and loss of privacy. At ground level, the conifers have been trimmed back to the chain link fence marking the boundary, such that the screen has some gaps in it.

However, these gaps are present for existing users of the demountable building and path which runs alongside it. The new classroom block would not make the grounds of the House of Prayer any more susceptible to overlooking than at present.

## Noise

- 34 The application is accompanied by a noise assessment which identifies noise sensitive locations around the site in residential properties, and calculates from on site measurements the background noise levels in the vicinity. The main components of background noise are identified as traffic noise and a variety of domestic noise, but teaching noise from existing classrooms is also a component. The assessment proposes setting noise emission limits from the new building, made up of noise from plant and teaching activities, at no more than 5dBA above existing background during the day, and 5dBA below background at night. This is compatible with limits set by BS4142: 1997, 'Rating industrial noise affecting mixed residential and industrial areas'. The building could rely on natural ventilation, without plant providing mechanical ventilation, and meet those criteria. A condition requiring adherence to those limits would provide sufficient protection against unacceptable noise impacts from the building.
- 35 The noise assessment does not cover the potential noise impacts of children playing. Officers consider that this aspect of noise impact is best considered on a subjective level. The proposal does not involve any alterations to the areas on this school site which are used for outdoor play. These are the main hard play area, which is in the south west part of the site, directly adjoining houses in Nightingale Road and Molesey Park Road. These properties are already subject to the long established peaks of noise at break and lunchtimes from outdoor play activities and PE lessons. The school's expansion is unlikely to cause significant extension to the duration of these existing noise impacts, The impact of noise from children playing is based on the contrast between break times and intervening quiet periods, and the peaks generated by the larger number of pupils are not considered to be so much higher than existing peaks as to significantly affect the overall experience of noise levels.

## Construction Impacts

- 36 The Construction Management Plan (CMP) submitted with the application indicates that no temporary access points are proposed, and that the existing access to the school will be used for construction purposes, with appropriate safeguards to separate the construction site and access from the normal movements to and from the school. The CMP deals principally with traffic management, but does indicate that proposed working hours would be 07.30 – 18.00 on weekdays, 07.30 – 13.00 on Saturdays and that working on Sundays or public holidays would only take place with the prior agreement of the County Council. The noise assessment does not explicitly address construction noise, but it would be normal for excessive construction noise to be dealt with under environmental health controls.
- 37 It is accepted that the construction phase of a project will result in short term noise impacts and this is normally dealt with in planning decisions by regulating hours of



working. The hours proposed in the CMP closely reflect the limits which would normally be imposed through a planning condition, albeit that Saturday start time is often set by condition slightly later at 08.00. A condition would exclude Sunday working, and the County Planning Authority's explicit approval in advance would be needed any Sunday working. Officers consider that this offers an appropriate level of protection in most cases and do not consider that the nature of the project, or its relationship to adjoining properties would be so substantial as to justify more stringent limits.

## **Traffic Impacts on Residential Amenity and Safety**

### **Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000 Policy COM4 - Provision of Educational Facilities**

- 38 Paragraph 32 of the NPPF states that all developments that generate significant amounts of movement should be supported by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment; safe and suitable access to the site should be achieved for all people. Paragraph 35 states that development should be located and designed where practical to create safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians. Paragraph 36 states that a key tool to facilitate sustainable transport modes will be a Travel Plan and all developments which generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a Travel Plan.
- 39 Local Plan Policy COM4 allows extension of existing educational facilities provided the existing road network is capable of absorbing traffic generated, the site is accessible by a choice of means of transport and adequate provision is made for stopping and parking.
- 40 St Albans Catholic Primary School is currently 1 form entry with a total of 210 pupils. This proposal will double the size of the school to make it 2 form entry with 420 pupils. The additional children would be introduced incrementally at a rate of 30 per year until the school reaches full occupation, which will not be before 2022, assuming occupation commences in 2015. 40% of children have at least one sibling in the school. 21% walk, 4% cycle and 12% scoot with 61% arriving by car. This is a relatively high proportion of pupils travelling by private car, but not untypical for faith schools, which tend to draw from a wider area than community schools - 60% of pupils live more than 1km from the school. There are currently 28 staff members at the school. The staff car park has space to accommodate approximately 24 cars. When the applicant's consultants surveyed this car park, there was a minimum of 18 spaces free during the surveyed period in the morning. This would appear to indicate that there is adequate capacity on site already to accommodate the additional staff members. A parking beat survey was undertaken which determined that there were 268 on-street parking spaces within 5 minutes walk of the school and 308 slightly further afield. The parking beat survey further identified that there were 146 spaces available at peak times.



- 41 Using the current modal split applied to the increased number of children, the worst case scenario future trip generation shows that the number of cars arriving at the school during peak times could increase from 128 to 256. In view of the available 146 spaces (186 if those spaces further afield are included), this can be accommodated on local roads. This is very much a worst case scenario as it assumes that all cars arrived simultaneously. There is little scope for park and stride in the vicinity of the school and therefore there will be reliance on on-street parking. Officers do not consider this to have significant impact on highway safety or amenity. The local road network is such that trips to the school can be made without the need for turning. The roads in the immediate vicinity are through roads, not cul de sac. Beauchamp Road in particular is a bus route and is relatively wide with most residents having off street parking, especially to the east of its junction with Seymour Road, so can accommodate on street parking with relatively little disruption to the free flow of traffic. In officers' experience, this is a site where, relative to many other schools, the short term impacts on amenity caused to neighbours from traffic at the beginning and end of the school day is less severe.
- 42 Nevertheless it is appropriate for any proportionate measures to be taken to mitigate the impacts caused by a substantial increase in the numbers of pupils and parents cars attending the site. No suitable sites for 'park and stride' in the vicinity of the school have been identified and therefore there will be a total reliance on on-street parking and measures to encourage non car modes of transport.
- 43 In many instances where a school has more than one frontage, it would be desirable to open up additional points of access to spread the burden of picking up and dropping off by car. On the face of it, opportunities exist on this site given that the school site is bounded by Seymour Road and Molesey Park Road. There is a disused and overgrown pedestrian gate into the site in the south east corner at the junction of these two roads. In this instance officers do not consider that the promotion of a secondary access on the south side is desirable or necessary. It would not be supported by the Highway Authority.
- 44 The sight line visibility egressing from Seymour Road onto Molesey Park Road is very poor due to the approaching bend. A traffic calming scheme implemented by the highway authority on Molesey Park Road introduced a priority island to help mitigate this problem, slightly increasing visibility and limiting traffic movements. Parking by parents on this section of road should not therefore be encouraged. This southern end of Seymour Road is an unmade private road in poor condition and its use by parents should not be encouraged by reopening of the pedestrian access

- 45 In any event, an analysis of the home postcode locations of the children currently attending the school indicates that there would be little or no benefit in reopening this access since the vast majority live to the north and west of the school.
- 46 A speed survey was undertaken as part of the submission and the 85th%ile speed from traffic on Beauchamp Road immediately adjacent to the school is between 20 and 25 miles per hour which indicates that speed is not a particular issue on this stretch of the road. There are no designated crossing points on Beauchamp Road and pedestrians have been observed to cross in numerous locations. Officers' observations suggest that whilst parents seem in the main to park courteously, some poor parking behaviour takes place on the north side of the junction of Seymour Road with Beauchamp Road, resulting in visibility issues for vehicles exiting the junction. In order to address these and other issues, the applicant has proposed the following transport mitigation measures in conjunction with the application:-
- Raised table pedestrian crossing on Beauchamp Road;
  - Junction markings to deter parking at the junction of Beauchamp Road and Seymour Road;
  - Realignment of the school warning sign on Beauchamp Road;
  - The provision of an additional 12 cycle and 10 scooter spaces for pupils and 4 spaces for staff and visitors on site;
  - School Travel Plan.
- 47 The design and detail of the raised table and associated measures, including those to deter/prevent parking at the junction of Seymour Road and Beauchamp Road have not yet been finalised. A Stage 1 Safety Audit has recently been completed and the comments of the Local Highways Service and Parking Team forwarded to the applicant. The final design will be expected to have taken these into account.
- 48 Officers consider that the mitigation measures proposed are proportionate to the potential traffic impacts created by the proposed development, taking into account the nature of the surrounding road network and the scale of additional traffic likely to be generated. They are acceptable in principle to the Highway Authority. Implementation of detailed proposals can be secured by conditions.

### **Impact on Playing Fields**

#### **Elmbridge Core Strategy 2011**

#### **Policy CS14 – Green Infrastructure**

- 49 Core Strategy Policy CS14 seeks to protect a diverse network of accessible multi-functional green infrastructure and requires that new development involving open space be assessed against PPG17 'Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation'. PPG17 has been superseded by the NPPF. Para 74 of the NPPF states that existing open space, including playing fields, should not be built on unless certain criteria are met, including that where a loss of playing fields is involved there is equivalent or better provision in terms of quality or quantity
- 50 The proposal involves a new building in the corner of the school's playing field. This part of the field is already occupied by the demountable classroom building. However, the proposed building has a larger footprint than the existing one, extending approximately 3m further south and 12m further east than the existing. The application drawings show an indicative layout for a full oval running track and extended straight on the playing field, although in fact the field is more typically laid out with football pitches which cover a smaller area of the field, as evidenced by aerial photos of the site. Neither the existing building nor the proposed one encroach on this layout. There is therefore no practical loss of playing field and officers do not therefore consider it necessary to consult Sport England on the application. The policy requirement to make alternative provision is not engaged.
- 51 The school's playing field also has a contribution to make as an open space to visual amenity. The field's existing character is of an open field with a building in one corner, albeit one which is largely obscured from public view by the fences and screening on its public boundaries (those on the south and east sides). Officers consider that the proposal does not alter that essential character of the open space.

## **Sustainable Construction**

### **Elmbridge Core Strategy 2011**

#### **Policy CS27 – Sustainable Buildings**

- 52 Core Strategy Policy CS27 states that all developments should consider the use of sustainable construction techniques that promote the reuse and recycling of building materials. All applications for new development should include a completed copy of the Council's Climate Neutral Checklist. Paragraph 95 of the NPPF states that to support the move to a low carbon future, local planning authorities should, inter alia; plan for new development in locations and ways which reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and which actively support energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings.

- 53 The application is accompanied by the Climate Neutral Checklist required under Core Strategy Policy CS27, along with an efficiency report which proposes use of energy efficiency best practice in accordance with Part L2A of the Building Regulations, 'Conservation of Fuel and Power'. It also proposes the installation of a roof mounted photovoltaic system on the south facing of the new building. There is no requirement within the Elmbridge development plan policies to achieve a specified BREEAM rating. The information provided by the applicants meets development plan requirements and officers do not consider conditions relating to BREEAM can be required.

## Impact on Trees

### Elmbridge Core Strategy 2011

#### Policy CS14 – Green Infrastructure

#### Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000

#### Policy ENV12 – Retention of Trees on Development Sites

- 54 Core Strategy Policy CS14 seeks to ensure that new development protects and enhances local landscape character and takes account of intrinsic character and amenity value. It also seeks to strengthen the network of green infrastructure by safeguarding important trees and woodlands and securing provision of soft landscaping in new development focussing on native species. Local Plan Policy ENV12 resists development which results in loss of trees which make, or are capable of making, a significant contribution to character or amenity of the area. Conditions should be imposed to where appropriate to protect retained trees during construction.
- 55 The application does not involve the felling of any trees. The existing trees on northern boundary within grounds of House of Prayer are ornamental conifers of little individual merit. However, they have a collective importance as a screen along the boundary. Their importance is recognised by the application, and the arboricultural assessment and method statement submitted with it identifies an appropriate root protection area (RPA) for those trees. On the school side of this boundary, this is mainly occupied by the existing path running parallel to the boundary between it and the existing demountable building. Also proposes installation of protective fencing along the edge of the path which would separate the RPA from the works site. Officers therefore consider sufficient measures are proposed to protect these trees and the implementation of those measures can be secured by conditions. Officers therefore consider the development is acceptable in relation to development plan policies relating to trees.

## HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

- 56 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.
- 57 In this case, the Officer's view is that while the potential for impacts on amenity caused by construction noise, noise from use of the site as a primary school, the proximity of buildings to residential properties and traffic are acknowledged, the scale of such impacts is not considered sufficient to engage Article 8 or Article 1 of Protocol 1. Their impact can be mitigated by the use of conditions. As such, this proposal is not considered to interfere with any Convention right.

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## CONCLUSION

- 58 The proposal is for the provision of additional faith based school places, addressing both the overall number of places and choice of places on a site within the urban area. It is therefore acceptable in principle under national and local planning policies. Potential traffic impacts have been identified and mitigations proportionate to the nature of surrounding roads and the scale of impacts have been proposed and can be secured by conditions. The development would not have any significant adverse environmental or amenity impacts. All relevant development plan policies have been satisfied and subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions, the development can be permitted.

## RECOMMENDATION

That, pursuant to Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992, application no. EL2014/2424 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 approved shall be carried out in all respects strictly in accordance with the following plans/drawings:

14-1-1044 A-200 rev C Site Location Plan dated 09/06/14

A-201 rev C Existing Site Plan dated 09/06/14

A-202 rev C Proposed Site Plan dated 09/06/14

A-290 rev C Tree Constraints and Tree Protection Plan dated  
09/06/14

A-300 rev B Existing Building Floor Plans dated 04/06/14

A-301 rev B Existing Roof Plans dated 04/06/14

A-310 rev B Proposed Building Floor Plans Sheet 1 dated 04/06/14

A-311 rev B Proposed Building Floor Plans Sheet 2 dated 04/06/14

A-312 rev B Proposed Roof Plans dated 04/06/14

A-400 rev A Existing and Proposed Elevations dated 19/05/14

A-500 rev A Existing and Proposed Site Sections dated 19/05/14

unnumbered Utility Survey dated 25/04/14

3. In carrying out the development hereby permitted, no construction activities shall take place, nor shall there be any deliveries to the site nor shall any plant or equipment be operated on the site except between the hours of 07.30 and 18.00 between Mondays and Fridays and 08.00 and 13.00 on Saturdays. There shall be no working on Sundays or Bank or public holidays.
4. The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied unless and until details of a raised pedestrian crossing and measures to prevent parking at the junction of Seymour Road and Beauchamp Road as generally shown in Figure 6-1 Proposed Physical Measures in the Transport Statement dated June 2014 accompanying the application, and any other ancillary matters arising, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority, and the scheme has been implemented in accordance with the approved details.

5. The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until the additional 16 cycle and 10 scooter parking spaces have been provided in accordance with the details shown on Proposed Site Plan number NPS-SI-PL A-202 Revision C.
6. The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied unless and until the Interim School Travel Plan submitted with the application has been updated in accordance with details for its review which have first been submitted to the County Planning Authority within 6 months of this permission and the details have been approved by the Authority. The School Travel Plan shall thereafter be implemented from the first occupation of the development hereby permitted and shall thereafter be maintained, monitored and developed in full accordance with the details approved.
7. Subject to the provision of condition 3 above, the development hereby permitted shall be carried out in all respects strictly in accordance with the Construction Traffic Management Plan Planning Stage Document stamped as received on 11 June 2014.
8. In carrying out the development hereby permitted, no HGV movements to or from the site shall take place between the hours of 08.15 and 09.15 and 14.30 and 15.30 nor shall the contractor permit any HGVs associated with the development at the site to be laid up, waiting, in Beauchamp Road, Nightingale Road, Seymour Road or Molesey Park Road during these times.
9. Noise emissions from the building hereby permitted and any associated plant shall not exceed 5dB LA90 above daytime background level (07.00 - 23.00) or 5dB LA90 below night time background level (23.00 - 07.00) when measured at a distance of 1m from the facade of any residential property.
10. a.) Before any equipment, machinery or materials are brought onto the site for the purposes of carrying out the development hereby permitted, protective fencing in accordance with the details contained in Appendices 2 and 4 of the Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement submitted with the application and stamped as received on 11/06/14 shall be installed and shall thereafter be maintained until all equipment, machinery and surplus materials have been removed from the site. For the duration of works on the site no materials, plant or equipment shall be placed or stored within the protected area.

b.) The development shall be carried out in all respects in full accordance with all other measures to protect trees during construction set out in Appendices 4 and 5 of the above Arboricultural Method Statement.

11. The solar PV panels hereby permitted shall only be installed if either

a.) they meet the criteria for an installation to constitute permitted development under Part 43, Class A (Installation of Non-domestic Microgeneration Equipment) of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order, or

b.) the details of the panels have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority and the installation is carried out in accordance with the approved details

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. For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.
3. In the interests of the residential amenities of the area, pursuant to policy COM4 of the replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000 and Policy CS17 of the Elmbridge Core Strategy 2011.
4. In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users pursuant to saved Policy COM4 of the Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000.
5. To encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport in order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users pursuant to saved Policy COM4 of the Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000.
6. To encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport in order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users pursuant to saved Policy COM4 of the Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000.
7. In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users pursuant to saved Policy COM4 of the Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000.
8. In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users pursuant to saved Policy COM4 of the Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000.



9. In the interests of the residential amenities of the area, pursuant to policy COM4 of the replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000 and Policy CS17 of the Elmbridge Core Strategy 2011.
10. In the interests of the visual and residential amenity of the site and area pursuant to Policies CS14 and CS17 of the Elmbridge Core Strategy 2011 and saved Policies COM4 and ENV12 of the Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000.
11. In the interests of the visual amenities of the site and area pursuant to Policy CS17 of the Elmbridge Core Strategy 2011 and Policy ENV2 of the Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000.

Informatives:-

1. 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 Building Bulletin 102 'Designing for disabled children and children with Special Educational Needs' published in 2008 on behalf of the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, or any prescribed document replacing that note.
2. 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 other statutory provision whatsoever.
3. The County Planning Authority confirms that in assessing this planning application it has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive way, in line with the requirements of paragraph 186-187 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.
4. The applicant is reminded that, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended (Section 1), it is an offence to remove, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or is being built. Planning consent for a development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this Act.

Trees and scrub are likely to contain nesting birds between 1st March and 31st August inclusive. Trees and scrub are present on the application site and are assumed to contain nesting birds between the above dates; unless a recent survey has been undertaken by a competent ecologist to assess the nesting bird activity during this period and shown it is absolutely certain that nesting birds are not present

## **CONTACT**

Mr C Northwood

## **TEL. NO.**

020 8541 9438

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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:

Government Guidance; National Planning Policy Framework 2012

The Development Plan: Elmbridge Core Strategy 2011 and saved policies of the Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000

Other Documents: BS4142:1997, 'Rating industrial noise affecting mixed residential and industrial areas'

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