TO: PLANNING & REGULATORY COMMITTEE
BY: HEAD OF PLANNING & COUNTRYSIDE
DISTRICT(S): ELMBRIDGE
DATE: 31 March 2004
ELECTORAL DIVISION (S):
HERSHAM
Mrs M A Hicks

PURPOSE: FOR DECISION
GRID REF: 511228/164983

TITLE: SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL PROPOSAL: REGULATION 3: EL04/0224

SUMMARY REPORT
Land at Rydens School, Hersham Road, Walton on Thames

Construction of two linked single-storey teaching blocks containing eleven new classrooms and associated landscaping

Rydens School is a secondary school, which currently accommodates just over 1300 pupils aged 11 to 18 years. It is located within a residential area, immediately to the south of the London to Portsmouth railway line. The school dates from the 1950s, with several extensions having been added since then.

The applicant is seeking permission for the erection of new teaching accommodation, to be located within the cluster of school buildings on the site. It would be constructed on an area currently used as a games court; permission to relocate the games court is being sought under a separate application. (ref. EL04/0223). The building, which would be single storey, would be constructed of materials selected to match the existing buildings at the school.

The proposed building is required to accommodate an expected increase in the number of pupils from September 2004 and to alleviate pressure on current classroom space. It is expected that pupil numbers at the school will increase by sixty six over two years, with the expectation that numbers enrolling in the future will continue to grow.

The recommendation is that planning application no EL04/0224 be PERMITTED subject to conditions.

APPLICATION DETAILS

Applicant

1. Executive Director for Children and Young People

Date application valid

2. 23 January 2004

Period for determination 8 weeks

3. 19 March 2004

Amending documents

4. Letter containing details of brick and roofing along with appropriate samples dated 9 March 2004.

SUMMARY OF PLANNING ISSUES
5. This section identifies and summarises the main planning issues raised in the report. The full text should be considered before the meeting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is this aspect of the proposal in accordance with the development plan?</th>
<th>Paragraphs in report where this issue is discussed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Impact on residential amenity</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Impact on Traffic</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Design and visual amenity</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Impact on Strategic Open Urban Land</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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**ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL**

**Site Plan**

6. Plan 1

**Aerial Photographs**

7. Aerial 1 and Aerial 2

**Site Photographs**

8. Figure 1: View of site looking North East

9. Figure 2: View from site looking West

**BACKGROUND**

**Site Description**

10. Rydens School caters for pupils aged between 11 and 18. It is one of a group of schools occupying a large site north of Hersham Road and immediately south of the London to Portsmouth railway line. The other schools nearby are Bell Farm County Middle School immediately adjacent to the east and Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic School to the north-east. All share a large area of playing field, which is designated in the Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000 as Strategic Open Urban Land.

11. The surrounding area is predominantly residential, with a large area of playing fields located to the east of the site. The school site can be accessed by both vehicles and pedestrians via two entrances; one is located on Hersham Road, the other on Felcott Road.

**Planning History**

12. Rydens School dates from the 1950s, with additional buildings having been added in the 1960s and 70s. More recent additions to the built fabric of the school include planning permission being granted in 2001 for the erection of a science block to enlarge an existing laboratory and provide two new laboratories and a preparation room (ref. EL01/0475) and a demountable structure to be used as an art classroom granted a temporary permission for five years in 2002 (ref EL02/1386).

**THE PROPOSAL**

13. The applicant is seeking permission for the construction of two linked single-storey buildings to contain eleven new classrooms. The classroom blocks would be located on the south western side of
the school site, among the cluster of school buildings on an area which is currently hard surfaced and used as a games court. The building would comprise of eight general teaching classrooms and two design technology rooms along with associated offices and toilets. There is also a planning application being considered for a replacement games court, to replace the area that would be lost should this application be granted permission.

14. The extension is required due to an increase in pupil numbers, which is expected to continue, by an additional form at entry level. Within two years it is anticipated that pupil numbers will have risen by 66.

15. The applicant has submitted samples of the brick and roofing material that would be used in construction of the development. The brick would match the brick used in the construction of the neighbouring science block. The roofing material would be metal sheeting, although it is coated and shaped to give the appearance of tiles. The colour would be similar to that of the science block.

CONSULTATIONS AND PUBLICITY

District Council

16. Elmbridge Borough Council: No objection

Consultees (Statutory and Non Statutory)

17. County Transport Authority
   - Transportation Development Control : Recommended that conditions be imposed requiring a Method of Construction Statement, a School Travel Plan and cycle parking.

18. Head of Planning and Countryside
   - Conservation Group : No objection

19. Head of Economic and Sustainable Resources
   - Senior Environmental Assessment Officer : No comment

20. Thames Water : No objection, made recommendations to be included as an informative

Parish/Town Council & Amenity Groups

21. None

Summary of publicity undertaken and key issues raised by the public

22. The application was advertised by site notice and by direct notification of twenty seven neighbouring properties. No letters of representation have been received.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

23. The proposal relates to a development in an urban residential area. Therefore Planning permission should be granted unless the development would give rise to harm on the amenity of the neighbouring properties, the transport network, or Strategic Open Urban Land. Planning conditions may be imposed so as to ensure that harm can be adequately controlled to an extent that the development is in accordance with both local and structure plan policy.
24. Local Plan policy COM4 sets out the requirements that need to be met for extensions to schools to be acceptable. It is required that there would not be a significant adverse impact on local residents. The main impact that could be detrimental is that of the additional pressure on the traffic network and parking in the locality. This has been dealt with under a separate heading.

25. The classroom block would be located within the cluster of buildings on the school site, some one hundred and twenty metres from the nearest residential property. The building would not be any closer, and in certain circumstances would be further away from residential properties and will not introduce any new uses to the site. There will be additional pupils but the increase is not considered likely to cause any material harm with regard to residential amenity. Therefore, Officers consider that permitting the development would not have a significant detrimental impact on residential amenity.

Impact on Traffic
Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000, Policy GEN1 – General Strategy Policy
Policy MOV4 – Traffic Impact of Development Proposals
Surrey Structure Plan 1994, Policy MT2 – The movement implications of development
Surrey Structure Plan, Deposit Draft 2002, Policy DN2 – Movement Implications of Development

26. Both local plan and structure plan policy seek to ensure that the transport infrastructure is able to cope with the demands that proposed development would place upon it. Surrey Structure Plan 1994, Policy MT2 identifies specific issues for which adequate provision should be made if development is to be permitted. In addition, Policy DN2 of the Surrey Structure Plan, Deposit Draft states that development will only be permitted where it is compatible with the transport infrastructure in the area. This should include identification of improvements to encourage walking cycling, and the use of public transport.

27. The proposed building would enable the school to accommodate an additional sixty six pupils over two years. The number of pupils at the site may continue to rise over the next few years, according to demand, which may be expected to have an impact on the number of car journeys made to the site.

28. Furthermore, the area surrounding the school is residential and there is a high demand for on street parking space. Therefore the availability of parking for contractors working at the site also needs to be addressed.

29. The County Transport Authority has considered the proposal and recommended three conditions that would mitigate the potential detrimental impact on local traffic both from the increase in pupils and from the contractors working at the site. The first condition recommended would require a method of construction statement be approved which should include details of parking for vehicle of site personnel, operatives and visitors, loading and unloading of plant and materials and storage of plant and materials. The second condition would require a secure covered cycle parking for forty cycles, The third condition would require a School Travel Plan to be produced and implemented prior to the development being occupied.

Design and visual amenity
Surrey Structure Plan 1994, Policy EN1 – Sustaining Surrey’s Environment
Surrey Structure Plan, Deposit Draft 2002, Policy SE4 – Design and Quality of Development

30. Structure Plan Policy EN1 seeks to create an attractive, safe and secure urban environment. Deposit draft Structure Plan Policy SE4 specifically encourages development to contribute to the improvement of an area, and states that the design of new buildings, and the way they integrate into their surroundings.

31. Rydens School was constructed in the 1950s and there have been various additions, both temporary and permanent since then as the school has grown. None of the school buildings that currently exist are of great architectural merit. The proposed building would be in materials similar to those of the existing buildings and has been designed to blend in with the existing built fabric rather than create a
new feature. It would not create a bulky addition, the building height reflects the existing scale of the school.

**Impact on Strategic Urban Open Land**

**Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000, Policy ENV28 – Strategic Open Urban Land**

32. The school playing fields have been designated as Strategic Open Urban Land in the Local Plan. However, the proposed development would not extend into the designated area, nor bring the built area any closer to the designated area. Therefore officers consider that the proposed development would not have a detrimental impact on the open area and thus the development is in accordance with the relevant policy.

**HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS**

33. Public Authorities are required to act, as far as possible, compatibly with the European Convention on Human Rights, now enforceable in English courts by way of the Human Rights Act 1988. Decision makers must weigh the adverse impact of any development for which planning permission is sought against the benefits to the public at large. Article 8 safeguards the right to respect for a private family life.

34. The Officer’s view is that this proposal will have no adverse impacts on public amenity and does not engage Article 8. As such the proposal has no human rights implications.

**CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

35. The extension would provide much needed accomodation at the school and would enable the County to accommodate the increased demand for senior school places in the locality. Although there are some potential detrimental impacts relating to the possible increase in traffic movements relating to the development, the Officer’s view is that this can be successfully mitigated by the use of appropriate conditions. The development would not be located any closer, and in certain circumstances would be further away than the surrounding residential properties than the existing school buildings and would not encroach onto the Strategic Open Urban Land. Therefore, Officers consider that the development is acceptable in policy terms and planning permission should be granted.

**RECOMMENDATION**

The recommendation is to permit subject to the following conditions:

Conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun not later than the expiration of five years beginning with the date of this permission.

2. No development shall take place until a Method of Construction Statement, to include details of:
   a) parking for vehicles of site personnel, operatives and visitors
   b) loading and unloading of plant and materials
   c) storage of plant and materials

   has been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. Only the approved details shall be implemented during the construction period.

3. No new development shall be occupied until space has been laid out within the site in accordance with the scheme to be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority to provide secure covered cycle parking to accommodate a minimum of 40 cycles.
4. No new development shall be occupied until the School has produced and implemented, in accordance with the procedures set out by the County Council Safe Routes to School officer, and to the satisfaction of the County Planning Authority, a School Travel Plan that will include initiatives designed to reduce the number of car journeys to and from the School, and to encourage the use of school transport, public transport, cycling and walking.

Reasons:

1. To accord with the provision of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

2. In order to ensure that the development should not prejudice highway safety not cause inconvenience to other highway users, in accordance with Policy MT2 of the Surrey Structure Plan 1994 and Policy COM4 of the Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000.

3. In order to ensure that appropriate provision is made for cyclists, in accordance with Policy MT2 of Surrey Structure Plan 1994.

Informatives:

1. The school is advised to liaise with the Safe Routes to School Officer, Lynne Howard (01372 832519), in order to agree the necessary measures to fully implement and monitor the progress of the School Travel Plan.

2. The applicant’s attention is drawn to the comments made by Thames Water in their letter dated 23 February 2004, a copy of which is attached to this decision notice.

Town And Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 (As Amended) - Reasons for the grant of the proposal relevant to the decision.

The summary of reasons for the grant of planning permission are as follows:

1. will provide adequate classroom space to accommodate the anticipated increase in pupil numbers;

2. is in accordance with the development plan policies in as far as they are relevant to the application and there are no material considerations to justify a decision to refuse planning permission; and

3. any harm can be suitable mitigated by the conditions subject to which planning permission is granted.

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

**Surrey Structure Plan 1994**
Policy MT2 – The movement implications of development
Policy EN1 – Sustaining Surrey’s Environment

**Surrey Structure Plan Deposit Draft 2002**
Policy DN2 – Movement Implications of Development
Policy SE4 – Design and Quality of Development

**Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000**
Policy COM4 – Provision of Educational Facilities
Policy GEN1 – General Strategy Policy
Policy MOV4 – Traffic Impact of Development Proposals

**Policy ENV28 – Strategic Open Urban Land**

**CONTACT**
Joanna Cavill
BACKGROUND PAPERS

The deposited planning application documents and plans, documents and plans subsequently received amending the proposal, responses to consultations, referred to in this report and included in the planning application file, and the following:

Surrey Structure Plan 1994
Surrey Structure Plan, Deposit Draft 2003
Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000