

TO: PLANNING & REGULATORY COMMITTEE **DATE:** 20 April 2016
BY: PLANNING DEVELOPMENT TEAM MANAGER
DISTRICT(S) ELMBRIDGE BOROUGH COUNCIL **ELECTORAL DIVISION(S):**
Walton South & Oatlands
Mr Samuels
Hersham
Mrs Hicks

PURPOSE: FOR DECISION **GRID REF:** 509675 164814

TITLE: SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL PROPOSAL EL/2016/0441

SUMMARY REPORT

Cleves School, Oatlands Avenue, Weybridge, Surrey KT13 9TS

Construction of a one storey building to provide an additional 1FE to the existing School, with associated proposed landscaping, hard play and additional parking. In addition the construction of an extension to the existing dining hall and separate classroom block, together with a MUGA.

The proposal has been submitted to meet an identified need for school places in the area and information on this need, and why alternative sites are not acceptable, has been submitted. The site lies within the urban area and as such there is no objection in principle to the proposed development and in accordance with Government advice the need for new school places should be given great weight in the assessment of proposals.

Officers have received 55 letters of objection mainly on grounds of impact from congestion caused by school traffic at peak times. In addition there are policy objections to the proposal in respect of the fact that it gives rise to a loss of open space and playing field land. An objection to the proposal has been received from Sport England in this regard. Officers have assessed all of the relevant issues and conclude that on balance the need for the school places outweighs these other considerations.

Therefore the recommendation is that pursuant to the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009, the application be forwarded to the Secretary of State and in the absence of any direction by him and pursuant to Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992, the application be **PERMITTED** subject to conditions

APPLICATION DETAILS

Applicant

Estates, Planning and Management

Date application valid

5 February 2016

Period for Determination

6 May 2016

Amending Documents

Playing Field Assessment and Plan received 05/04/2016 and amplified on 07/04/2016

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 (see overleaf)

Planning Issue	Is this aspect of the proposal in accordance with the development plan?	Paragraphs in the report where this has been discussed
PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATIONAL NEED	yes	25-36
DESIGN AND VISUAL APPEARANCE	yes	37-40
IMPACT ON RESIDENTIAL AMENITY	yes	41-46
IMPACT ON OPEN SPACE	No	47-53
IMPACT ON PLAYING FIELDS	No	54-61
IMPACT ON AREA OF HIGH ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL	yes	62-64
TRAFFIC AND PARKING	yes	65-76
IMPACT ON TREES	yes	77-81
SUSTAINIBILITY	yes	82-83

ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL

Site Plan

Plan

Aerial Photographs

3 Aerials

Site Photographs

Figure 1 Existing staff car park

Figure 2 North elevation of classroom block to be extended

Figure 3 North elevation of existing classroom block to be extended

Figure 4 North elevation of existing dining room to be extended

Figure 5 Site of new classroom block and area of hedge to be partially removed to accommodate

Figure 6 Existing trees around caretaker's house

Figure 7 Partial view of existing playing field

BACKGROUND

Site Description

- 1 Cleves School is located in a residential area east of Oatlands Park between the B365 Ashley Road and Oatlands Avenue. It lies within the Urban Area. Its site is roughly triangular in shape with the school buildings located to the south of the site and playing fields to the north. The school fronts a road on two of its sides – Oatlands Avenue to the east and Oatlands Chase to the north and there is a railway line in a cutting adjacent to its southern boundary. In the surrounding area are a number of private roads where it would appear a high degree of illegal parking in connection with the school takes place at peak times (see comments made under representations). The main access to the school and to the teachers parking is from Oatlands Avenue. There are a considerable number of trees on the site predominantly along its boundaries but some also within the site.
- 2 The existing school buildings are of brick construction under pitched and tiled roofs though there are some flat roofed elements. The site lies within an Area of High Archaeological Potential associated with Bronze Age cremation urns.

Planning History

- 3 The original school was constructed in the 1960's using a modular structural system that was common throughout the county at the time. Over the past 10 year period there have been numerous alterations and additions to the existing buildings including:
 - 1995 – Single storey extension to the administration block.
 - 1998 – New detached single storey teaching block and demolition of existing classrooms.
 - 2000 – New assembly function hall with associated accommodation.
 - 2003 – Single storey front and rear extensions and new roof over courtyard to create a new dining hall.
 - 2004 – New sports hall.
 - 2006 – Single storey front extension with entrance canopy.
 - 2010 – Single storey infill extension replacing existing courtyard.
- 4 In 2006 permission was granted for a small housing development on part of the school site which is now completed.

THE PROPOSAL

- 5 The proposed development is an extension to the existing Cleves School, expanding the existing 5FE Junior School by 1FE, to become a 6FE Junior School. During the 2014 / 2015 academic year Cleves School had a Pupil Admission Number (PAN) of 150 with capacity for 600 pupils. A bulge class (an additional 30 pupils) was accommodated in September 2015, and an additional class will be added each year from 2016 until the school reaches 180 PAN with capacity for 720 pupils in September 2018. The expansion proposals therefore equate to an additional 120 pupils. The number of staff is presently 64 and there would be an additional 10 teachers in connection with this expansion (5 full time and 5 part time).

- 6 The proposal originated from Surrey County Council in response to the forecast demand for junior places in Weybridge. A public open session was held at the school on 1 July 2015 and parents and other local stakeholders received a consultation letter seeking their views. Having taken account of the local demand and the views of respondents the Governing Body approved the proposal for Cleves to expand. To facilitate this incremental increase in pupils the expansion requires the additional buildings proposed in this current planning application. The expansion of Cleves school in this way is part of a wider expansion of primary school places in Weybridge which has included two other local schools (Oatlands and Manby Lodge Infants, now both 3 FE.). A full Educational Justification Statement has been submitted with this application (see paragraphs below).
- 7 The development consists of a proposed new single storey classroom block, extension to existing dining area and an extension to an existing classroom block. The existing car park will be extended to accommodate additional teachers parking and the existing outdoor play area will be extended to create a connection between the existing and proposed buildings and provide the required additional hard play area.
- 8 The new detached classroom block would be sited just to the north of the existing school buildings and to the east of the Sports Block and it would be a single storey building under a shallow pitched roof. It would have overall dimensions of 16m by 37m and would be a maximum 4.5m high to the ridge of the shallow pitched roof. This building would provide 6 classrooms plus ancillary staff room and WCs. It would also have a small external canopy on three of its elevations. The external walls of this building will be clad in a mixture of facing brick (colour to match existing school) and white render with aluminium windows and doors under a grey Plastisol coated composite panel roof which would contain electrically operated opening roof lights.
- 9 main The proposed extension to the existing dining area is on the northern elevation of the school building and comprises a single storey addition 10m long by 6.4m wide under a pitched roof clad with a Plastisol coated composite panel roof. It would have a curtain wall of windows framed with aluminium frames along its northern elevation.
- 10 The proposed extension to the existing classroom is opposite the building proposed above and on the northern elevation of the existing school. It would comprise a u-shaped extension to the existing building to provide 2 additional classrooms. This extension would be single storey under pitched roofs designed to reflect the pitch of the existing roof of that building. The external walls would be rendered and painted white.
- 11 The extension to the existing car park would provide an additional 17 car parking spaces (expanding the car park to 55 spaces) and would require the removal of a concrete shed. One additional covered scooter parking bay is proposed with provision for 10 additional scooters. Use of the car park during core school hours will continue to be limited to staff as per the existing situation. No changes are planned to the existing accesses to the school. Informal on-site parking will continue to be used for outside-of-hours events at the school.
- 12 There would be a proposed new hard surface multi games area (MUGA) created on part of the existing playing field which would be approximately 33m wide by 36m long and would be surrounding with a 2.4 high mesh fence. There would be other additional areas of hardstanding created around the buildings described above.
- 13 The proposal was submitted with the following documents:
- Planning Statement
 - Design and Access statement
 - Transportation Assessment
 - Framework Travel Plan

CONSULTATIONS AND PUBLICITY

Consultees (Statutory and Non-Statutory)

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------------------|--|
| 14 | Elmbridge Borough Council | No comments yet received |
| 15 | Transportation Development Planning | No objection subject to conditions. This is a school that clearly already causes localised congestion and, it would appear, at times, has a poor relationship with its neighbours. Any increase in numbers runs the risk of exacerbating this situation without the school's proactive involvement in implementing the travel plan and reminding parents about parking courteously. The impacts largely affect amenity, rather than highway safety |
| 16 | County Archaeologist | Comments awaited |
| 17 | Sport England | Objects to the proposal as it will result in the loss of land available for playing fields |

Resident Associations

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------------------|--|
| 18 | Committee of Road Associations | No comments yet received |
| 19 | Lincoln Grove Residents Association | No comments yet received |
| 20 | Broom Way Residents Association | Object to the proposal. The Transport Assessment does not adequately consider the impact on private roads and mitigation measures are limited. Private roads should be gated to address the concern of their residents over safety though they could still be accessed by cyclists and pedestrians |

Summary of publicity undertaken and key issues raised by public

- | | |
|----|--|
| 21 | The application was publicised by the posting of a site notices and a total of 146 owner/occupiers of neighbouring properties were directly notified by letter. As a result of this publicity a total of 56 letters have been received. 55 of these object to the proposal and 2 express support for the proposal (though one of these also makes comments). The grounds for objection can be summarised as follows: |
|----|--|

1. Cleves is a fantastic school but is big enough already as the impact on the surrounding area is already chaotic
2. Whilst we have no objection to the planned expansion this must be on the basis that the parent parking at school start and finish times is properly addressed
3. We would like assurances that the small piece of woodland between Oatlands Chase and Oatlands Avenue will not be developed (comment: this land is not affected by the development)
4. School buses should be considered to reduce traffic
5. Extra parking for staff is a necessity as some park in the surrounding roads presently
6. Parents frequently park their cars in the adjacent private roads causing problems for the residents
7. School related cars are parking in the local church without any authority to do so
8. Lots of local parents chose to drive when they could walk
9. Traffic in this area is dangerous and something needs to be done before someone is seriously injured or killed
10. Beechwood Avenue is private and should be gated off (see paragraph....below)
11. Pavements in the area are not properly maintained by the Council and the whole area suffers from neglect
12. Parents park in unacceptable places on road junctions and blocking sightlines making it dangerous
13. There has been a presence of rats coming from the school refuse area to Rouse Close on several occasions and expansion will make matters worse
14. Rouse Close seems to have been omitted for consideration in the Transportation Assessment
15. There are out of school times when the traffic is also bad for example on bonfire night
16. The pedestrian footpath to the south of Cleves School is not well lit at night and this will not encourage its use as part of the Golden Boot Challenge during the winter months
17. The increased traffic will affect air quality – the smell from exhaust is already obnoxious
18. The Transportation assessment makes an optimistic forecast of the additional number of trips which would be generated by the proposal
19. Transport mitigations put forward are largely dependent on human behaviours guided through encouragement and discouragement but this is not robust
20. There should be a drop of facility within the school grounds
21. The Aboricultural Assessment did not refer to the new hardstanding and its impact on the trees and wildlife in the locality
22. Suggesting pupils cycle to school when there is no safe way to do this is fanciful
23. Anyone living far enough away from the school to take a bus would be unlikely to be in the catchment area

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 22 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 recently adopted Elmbridge Local Plan Development Management Plan April 2015 (the DMP).
- 23 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.

- 24 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 is 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).

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATIONAL NEED

Elmbridge Core Strategy 2011

Policy CS1 – Spatial Strategy

- 25 Core Strategy Policy CS1 directs new development towards previously developed land within the existing built up areas. Paragraph 72 of the NPPF states 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.
- 26 In terms of need Primary School rolls have risen steadily in Elmbridge over the last decade. The highest number of births (1,890) was in 2010 and between 2005 and 2014 births have risen by approximately 25%. C Although the numbers have fallen slightly in 2012 and 2014 these children are not yet in school and the net result of the higher births and more house building over the decade has been an increased demand for school places.
- 27 Although new housing development in Weybridge is minimal the birth rate (approximately 136 children per year) and movement of families into existing housing in the town has increased the demand for primary places. Having added temporary (bulge) classes at three schools (St James Primary, Oatlands Infant and Manby Lodge Infant), and then 1FE permanent expansions at both infant schools, there is a clear and immediate need for additional junior school places in the town equivalent to one form of entry per year. Manby Lodge and Oatlands Infant Schools both now admit 90 pupils per year and this cohort needs an equivalent number of junior school places.
- 28 Education legislation states that Infant aged pupils (YR - 2) should not be taught in classes larger than 30 pupils. Therefore once numbers exceed multiples of 30 the school has to provide an additional class. It is expected that primary aged children will be offered a place within a short home to school travel distance, usually within their home planning area. It is Surrey County Council policy to offer a school place to every resident family that requests one. Sometimes it receives more applications in a planning area than they have places and therefore, to make a reasonable offer, the Council has to add a 'bulge' class at a school. For all of these reasons it is therefore sometimes necessary to provide extra places to meet these priorities, even though the combined borough PAN indicates a sufficiency of school places overall.

- 29 In the Primary Planning areas of Weybridge we identified a shortage of places both at Reception and in Year 3. The following table demonstrates this ongoing demand and supports the rationale for expanding Cleves. The forecast includes pupils coming from added new housing over the period.

Consideration of options to meet the need in the Weybridge Planning Area

- 30 The Weybridge Primary Planning Area contains 2 existing primary phase schools, 2 infant and 1 junior school. The expansion of the two other existing primary schools has been considered and the following conclusions have been made:
- 31 **St Charles Borromeo RC VA Primary** This is a popular and academically successful school that is its own admissions authority. As a denominational school it only admits catholic pupils and so expansion would attract other children from the wider deanery but would not necessarily provide places that non-Catholic Weybridge families could access. Its campus and buildings are also too small to expand; it is currently a 1 FE primary. Finally, expansion here would not solve the problem of additional junior places for pupils transferring from the two infant schools.
- 32 **St James VC Primary** This is a 2 FE primary school that has taken a junior bulge class in 2009, 2012 and 2013. Additional accommodation had to be provided to enable these extra classes and the site is now at its capacity and could not easily take an additional two more classrooms that would be needed to permanently expand the junior part of the school. The site is in a residential road with associated traffic and parking issues. The site also has a scheduled ancient monument (a Victorian grotto) which makes planning permission for significant future development unlikely.
- 33 Expansion of one or both **Manby Lodge/Oatlands Infant schools** to primary status. This option was considered and discussed early on with the area head teachers and chairs of governors of the infant schools and Cleves. Apart from the site constraints at both infant schools there were major objections from all schools to this idea. If this were to have been adopted it would have implied a major re-organisation of provision in Weybridge and would have been a costly and unpopular option locally.
- 34 Cleves is a popular and academically successful junior school which is always over-subscribed. In the 2014 admissions round it received 239 first preferences for its 150 places. It was seen to be providing an outstanding level of education at its last OFSTED inspection in July 2007 and the proposal to expand the academy meets the government's policy of Local Authorities and academies expanding popular and successful schools. In the wider context, more junior school places across Weybridge are required. Currently, there are six Reception classes across two schools and this proposal, as part of the wider reorganisation of three schools, helps to provide a matching number of junior places. It also aims to improve educational standards for all children by encouraging a developing educational partnership that will support continuity and progression between the two infant schools and Cleves.
- 35 In response to the above and a commitment from Surrey County Council for the provision to be funded from the County Council's Basic Need Capital Programme Budget Cleves School conducted a statutory public consultation on a proposal to expand the school from five to six forms of entry in 2015
- 36 In conclusion on this issue this application seeks to provide additional school places within the built up area of Weybridge for which there is a demonstrated need. Relevant policies state that the need for school places should be accorded great weight. The proposal does therefore accord with development plan policies in this regard and is acceptable.

DESIGN AND VISUAL APPEARANCE

Elmbridge Core Strategy 2011

Policy CS1 – Spatial Strategy

Policy CS17 – Local Character, Density and Design

Elmbridge Local Plan Development Management Plan 2015

Policy DM2 – Design and Amenity

Policy DM9 – Social and Community Facilities

- 37 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 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.
- 38 DMP Policy DM9 requires community facilities to accord with the local character of residential areas. Policy DM2 requires that proposals should preserve or enhance the character of the area, taking account of design guidance detailed in the Design and Character SPD, with particular regard to the following attributes:
- Appearance
 - Scale
 - Mass
 - Height
 - Levels and topography
 - Prevailing pattern of built development
 - Separation distances to plot boundaries
 - Character of the host building, in the case of extensions
- 39 The existing buildings on this site are predominantly brick under tiled roofs though there are some flat roofed elements. The proposed extensions to the existing buildings to provide two additional classrooms and an extension of the dining room have been designed to reflect the scale, design and character of those existing buildings and are sympathetic to them and are therefore acceptable in this regard. The proposed new standalone classroom building picks up features from the existing school such as elements of matching brickwork and render and its scale is similar to other buildings on this site. It will not be prominent as it is set well within the site and will not therefore detract from the visual appearance of the site or the area. Though this building has a very shallow pitched roof which would be clad with a Plastisol coated grey cladding – which will be different to the majority of the school buildings on the site – officers consider that this is acceptable within the context of the school.
- 40 Officers therefore consider that the policy meets the provisions of the development Plan and is acceptable in this regard.

IMPACT ON RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

Elmbridge Local Plan Development Management Plan 2015

Policy CS17 – Local Character, Density and Design

Policy DM2 – Design and Amenity

- 41 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

- 42 DMP Policy DM2 requires that, to protect the amenity of adjoining and potential occupiers and users, development proposals should be designed to offer an appropriate outlook and provide adequate daylight, sunlight and privacy.
- 43 All of the elements of the proposal in this case are well within the school site and away from its boundaries. There are no issues in respect of the impact of the built form on the residential amenity of neighbours.
- 44 The proposed expansion will give rise to an increase in traffic in the local area at drop off and pick up times. The situation is already extremely difficult for local residents as indicated in the letters of objection on this application. It has to be acknowledged that the proposal will give rise to some additional degree of loss of amenity for nearby residents at peak times as an increase in pupil numbers is proposed. Though some mitigation measures are proposed as part of the application, these can only assist in trying to manage the situation they will not reduce the vehicle numbers. From survey information provided a high proportion of pupils at this school travel there by private car and though there are measures put forward in the School Travel Plan to seek to try to reduce this it is unlikely those measures will achieve maintenance of the status quo in respect of vehicle movements. This situation is one which occurs at most school sites but in respect of this school the problem is exacerbated by the existence of several private roads in the vicinity which cannot be taken into account in the assessment of available on street parking but where it would appear parents consistently park to drop off and pick up children. A number of residents have referred to the inconvenience caused by inconsiderate parking and significant vehicle numbers during the peak hours in their letters of objection.
- 45 This situation is acknowledged. However Officers are of the opinion that whilst there is a degree of increased loss of amenity to local residents the increase in this case will be a moderate one having regard to that which already occurs and the fact that is confined to short periods during weekdays only.
- 46 Officers therefore consider that the moderate adverse impact which would arise from this proposal on residential amenity would need to be balanced against the other issues relevant in this case including the need for the required school places.

IMPACT ON OPEN SPACE

Elmbridge Local Plan Development Management Plan 2015

Policy DM20 – Open Space and Views

- 47 Policy DM20 states that Local Green Space (to be identified within Settlement ID Plans) will be protected from inappropriate development unless there are very special circumstances that would clearly outweigh potential harm. Part b of the policy states that other areas of existing open space including playing fields will not be built on unless an assessment has been undertaken which clearly shows the open space to be surplus to requirements, the loss would be replaced by equivalent or better provision elsewhere or the development is for alternative sports and recreation provision the needs for which clearly outweighs the loss.
- 48 On the Elmbridge Borough Local Plan, which has now been replaced by the Elmbridge DMP, the playing fields at Cleves School were designated as Strategic Urban Open Land (SOUL). Policies in the former local plan sought to resist development on such areas. The new Elmbridge DMP fully replaces the local plan and Policy DM20 of the Elmbridge DMP is now the relevant policy. This refers to Local Green Spaces which will be identified in Settlement ID Plans. Those settlement ID Plans were prepared in 2012

and went out for public consultation in 2013 but following key changes to Government policy at that time in the NPPF work stopped on them and none have been formally adopted. On the consultation Settlement ID Plan for Weybridge a larger part of Cleves School (that is larger than the previously identified SOUL) is identified as Local Green Space which are 'spaces of significant local importance' and hence there would be a presumption against land at the school being built on.

- 49 Having regard to the emerging policy context, though the settlement ID Plan for Weybridge, which includes the Cleves School site, is emerging and has not been fully adopted it is clear that the policies in the Elmbridge DMP seek to ensure that the site remains open. This reflects the stance taken in the former Elmbridge Local Plan.
- 50 There are therefore two issues which need to be considered in the assessment of the impact on the open space/playing fields in this case, being:
- The loss of existing open space as identified in the relevant Development Plan – considered in the following paragraphs
 - The loss of existing playing field land as identified by Sport England (considered in the next section of the report under Impact on Playing Fields)
- 51 The proposed extensions to the school itself in this case are not affected by the policies but the new classroom block does extend onto land which has been identified as Local Green Space within the Elmbridge DMP, (though it is outside of the land previously identified on the Elmbridge Local Plan as Strategic Open Urban Land (SOUL). The development of the classroom block is clearly then contrary to emerging Development Plan Policy and therefore in this case this would have to be weighed against the other considerations, in particular the need for the school places.
- 52 Assessing the details of the proposal it is accepted that there are no other suitable locations within the school to provide the new classroom block and the proposed building has been sited as close to the existing school buildings as possible within a 'bay' of the playing field which is sited between the existing staff car park and the sports hall. Therefore the vast majority of the proposed designated open green space on this site will be retained and as the proposed building will be sited adjacent to the existing school buildings the impact on the open character of this site is minimised. This is also assisted by the fact that the proposed building is set back from both road frontages where the open space designation is of most relevance. In terms of the proposed MUGA this is providing alternative sports provision on an area of the site which is currently unusable and therefore officers are of the view that this can be considered acceptable having regard to Policy DM20.
- 53 Having regard to the above officers are of the view that although this proposal does not fully comply with Development Plan Policy where it relates to open space, that policy is only emerging and designations have not yet been finalised but the impact of the proposal on the overall aims of the policy has been minimised. The issue will have to be weighed in the balance against the other relevant issues including the need to provide the school places and the lack of alternative sites in the area.

IMPACT ON PLAYING FIELDS

Elmbridge Local Plan Development Management Plan 2015

Policy DM20 – Open Space and Views

- 54 Policy DM20 states that Local Green Space (to be identified within Settlement ID Plans) will be protected from inappropriate development unless there are very special circumstances that would clearly outweigh potential harm. Part b of the policy states that other areas of existing open space including playing fields will not be built on unless an assessment has been undertaken which clearly shows the open space to be surplus to requirements, the loss would be replaced by equivalent or better provision elsewhere or

the development is for alternative sports and recreation provision the needs for which clearly outweighs the loss.

- 55 The proposed new classroom block and car park extension, as well as the proposed MUGA are all within areas which currently comprise the edges of the playing field land on this site. Sport England has been consulted on the application and raise objection on grounds that the proposal will give rise to the net loss of playing field land which will not be replaced elsewhere on a like for like basis.
- 56 There are therefore two issues which need to be considered in the assessment of the impact on the playing fields in this case, being:
- The loss of existing open space as identified in the relevant Development Plan (this has been considered in the previous section of the report under Impact on Open Space)
 - The loss of existing playing field land as identified by Sport England – considered in the paragraphs below.
- 57 It is acknowledged that this application will displace land which is currently part of the school playing pitches in that the proposed MUGA and new classroom block will be sited on land forming part of the existing playing fields. However the area of land that is affected comprises the periphery of the playing field. The site of the proposed new classroom is a 'peninsular' of land which would be unusable as a pitch because of its size and shape and proximity to the school buildings and in respect of the area of the proposed MUGA this is overgrown and uneven and also in a corner very close to existing buildings.
- 58 The applicant has submitted a statement and layout plan to clarify the impact on the playing fields. This shows that and the proposed development will not have any impact on the existing playing pitches and other sports provision (which includes various size football pitches up to nine a side, rounders pitches, athletics running track, and relay circle) which are laid out on the site. The statement goes on to clarify that the proposal necessitates the loss of approx. 1000 m² of grassed area and that there is no other suitable location to accommodate the proposed development within the site. In respect of the fenced, all-weather surface, multi-use games area (MUGA) this will be approx. 1224 m² and will be marked out with formal games areas as required by the school. This MUGA will be constructed on land currently not of useable quality, either as 'soft informal and social' or as 'soft outdoor PE'. Therefore the creation of the MUGA enhances the vitality of this part of the playing fields for formal and informal recreation use. The applicant also asks that it should be noted for information that, in addition to the above, Cleves Primary School currently has a full sized sports hall of approx. 670m², with marking for various formal sports. The current overall school site area of 40083m² is in excess of the 38000m² guide site area for a 720 place 6FE junior school.
- 59 In addition to the above the applicant has demonstrated on a plan submitted with the statement that the loss of the land to this proposal would not in fact have any impact in real terms on the potential for the school to provide playing pitches as no more pitches could be accommodated with or without the inclusion of the land which would be lost.
- 60 Having regard to the above officers are of the view that though playing field land will be lost in this case, that land, given its location and magnitude, being within a school and along the edges of school playing pitches, does not have the potential to provide any additional playing pitches. There is a loss of physical area but little practical reduction to the site's utility. Officers therefore consider that its loss must be balanced against the other factors relevant in the application including the demonstrated need for school places in this area.

61 In conclusion on this issue the proposal does not fully comply with the provisions of the Development Plan in this case in regard to the loss of playing field land however officers consider that the practical impact of this is small and this needs to be balanced against other considerations including the demonstrated need for new school places.

IMPACT ON AREA OF HIGH ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

Elmbridge Local Plan Development Management Plan 2015

Policy DM 12 - Heritage

62 Policy DM12 states that planning permission will be granted for developments that protect, conserve and enhance the Borough’s historic environment, which includes Areas of High Archaeological Potential. Proposals need to take account of the likelihood of a heritage asset with archaeological significance on the site and provide positive measures to assess their significance and enhance and understand their value.

63 The applicants have submitted a full Archaeological Statement which is based on a desk top assessment of the site. This concludes that the site lies within a wider area where there has been a high level of archaeological activity with particular focus on the Bronze Age. However the ground areas where the proposed buildings will be located within this site will have probably been disturbed in the past thereby removing any archaeological deposits. The report recommends a watching brief is carried out across the development of the new classroom block and car park extension.

64 Subject to confirmation by the County Archaeologist (on which the Committee will be updated) Planning Officers consider that the approach proposed in this case is appropriate and proportional and a condition is therefore recommended to secure an appropriate watching brief. Subject to this officers consider that the proposal complies with the Development Plan.

TRAFFIC AND PARKING

Elmbridge Core Strategy 2011

Policy CS25 – Travel and Accessibility

Elmbridge Local Plan Development Management Plan 2015

Policy DM7 – Access and Parking

65 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. The paragraph goes on to state that ‘Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe’. 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.

66 Core Strategy Policy CS25 directs new development generating a high number of trips to previously developed land in sustainable locations in urban areas and requires a transport assessment and travel plan for all major development proposals in order to promote the use of sustainable transport.

67 DMP Policy DM7 sets criteria for access and parking against which new development proposals should be judged, including, inter alia, that;

- new accesses should be acceptable in terms of amenity, capacity, safety, pollution, noise and visual impact
 - access from the highway be safe and convenient for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists
 - the impact of vehicle and traffic nuisance is minimised, especially in residential areas
 - proposed parking provision does not result in on-street parking stress to the detriment of local residential amenity
 - cycle storage and car parking be integrated into the design of development
 - car, cycle and disabled parking comply with the Borough's standards.
- 68 The application was supported by a Transport Assessment (TA) and an interim Travel Plan.
- 69 The application has been assessed by Transportation Development Control who has commented as follows: A decision has been taken to permanently expand the school from 5 forms of entry (600 pupils) to 6 forms of entry (720 pupils) which would result in an additional 120 pupils. The need for the additional places arises from forecast demand for junior places in Weybridge and two permanent 1 form entry expansions that have already taken place at infant schools in the town.
- 70 39% of pupils live within 1 km of the school, 46% live between 1 and 2 km of the school and the remaining 15% live more than 2 km from the school. Currently 69% come by car and 31% come by sustainable modes, which is higher than average for a Surrey School. On this basis, an additional 120 pupils would result in 83 of them arriving by car. There are a total of 141 legal on-street spaces within 500m of the school of which a maximum of 67 are occupied during school drop off in the morning and a maximum of 132 are occupied during school pick up in the afternoon. The existing situation in the afternoon is therefore already approaching parking capacity, without the additional pupils. The additional pupils will result in demand exceeding supply during the pick up peak 15 minutes between 3.15 and 3.30 pm. Localised congestion will be exacerbated, albeit within a concentrated area and for a short period. There are already complaints about the existing situation. Additionally, there are a number of private roads opposite the school and residents complain that parents are currently using these roads for parking and turning. It may intensify following the expansion.
- 71 An additional 17 on-site parking spaces are included as part of the proposal. On-site parking is restricted to staff and visitors only and this situation will continue. There are currently 38 spaces but existing demand is around 48. The proposed 55 spaces will accommodate the existing demand plus an additional 7 for staff employed as a result of the expansion. The proposal will give rise to an increase in staff by 5 full-time and 5 part-time. It is therefore considered that staff parking will be acceptably catered for by this proposal.
- 72 There is some physical mitigation proposed to address the impact of the proposal but this will have to be matched by the school implementing and vigorously promoting the travel plan and reminding parents not to park illegally, inconsiderately or on private roads. The anticipated proposed mitigation measures include the following:
1. Improved pedestrian crossing facilities on Oatlands Chase and Ashley Road
 2. Parking restrictions on Oatlands Chase to prevent commuter parking and to free up space for parents and other short-term users to park
 3. A new access gate into the school for pedestrians from Oatlands Chase, adjacent to the new crossing, and speed cushions to reduce traffic speeds on the section of Oatlands Chase between Ashley Road and Oatlands Avenue (note the final design of this will need to be safety audited and will be subject to the relevant traffic orders.)

4. The school also has been trying to secure permission from St Mary's Church and the Oatlands Chase public house for use of their car parks for drop off/pick up/park and stride but this has not been forthcoming. The options in this regard are therefore limited.
- 73 A Framework School Travel Plan has been submitted with the proposal which sets out objectives to increase the numbers of children coming to school by sustainable means, to encourage parents to park more considerately in surrounding roads and encourage pupils to take part in pedestrian training. The proposed measures to achieve these comprise:
- Park SMART initiative
 - Pedestrian advice training to encouraging the use of the zebra crossing
 - Take part in the Golden Boot Challenge
- 74 In summary, TDP has advised that this is a school that clearly already causes localised congestion and, it would appear, at times, has a poor relationship with its neighbours. Any increase in numbers runs the risk of exacerbating this situation without the school's proactive involvement in implementing the travel plan and reminding parents about parking courteously. The impacts largely affect amenity, rather than highway safety and as such there is no objection to the proposal from a transportation perspective, subject to conditions relating to:
- Construction Traffic Management Plan.
 - Hours of use of HGV movements
 - School Travel Plan
 - Provision of additional on-site parking
 - Provision of the off-site highways works
- 75 They have also assessed representations made on this application from local residents where it has been requested as part of this application that a gate is provided across Beechwood Avenue to prevent parents using this private road. As Highway Authority they have considered this and have concluded that a public right to pass and repass over the surface of this road has historically been established and therefore a gate cannot be erected as it would prevent legitimate public access. No rights exist for public parking however and the residents/road association can enforce this through the installation of lines or employing a private parking enforcement company. As this is a private road, the County Highway Authority has no right or ability to control parking, and for the purposes of the TA the assessment of legal parking capacity cannot include these roads.
- 76 In conclusion on this issue officers consider that the proposal does not give rise to any impact in respect of highway safety but traffic conditions do have an impact on residential amenity (considered under that section in the report). There is no objection to the proposal on highways grounds but given the degree of amenity problems which already exist in the area arising from the traffic from this school, it is considered appropriate and necessary in this case to ensure that the off-site highways works are in place prior to first occupation of the buildings.

IMPACT ON TREES

Elmbridge Core Strategy 2011

Policy CS14 – Green Infrastructure

Elmbridge Local Plan Development Management Plan 2015

Policy DM6 Landscape and Trees

- 77 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.

- 78 DMP Policy DM6 requires that development does not result in loss of, or damage to, trees and hedgerows that are, or are capable of, making a significant contribution to the character or amenity of the area, unless in exceptional circumstances the benefits would outweigh the loss, and adequately protects existing trees including their root systems prior to, during and after the construction process.
- 79 An Arboricultural Assessment has been submitted with this application which shows that 13 individual trees, 1 group of trees and 7 hedges have been surveyed on the site during the preparation of this application. Not all of these trees are sited close to the proposed development area. 3 individual trees are shown to be removed - one in the amenity area in front of the classroom block – the other two are along the boundary with the caretaker's house. The trees for removal comprise a category B Cherry together with category C Cherry (alongside boundary with caretaker's house) and a Category C Sweet Gum tree in the amenity area. Two hedges will also require removal.
- 80 This site is well covered with trees and those that are to be removed are not prominent outside of the site and are of no particular individual merit and officers consider that their loss, together with the removal of existing hedges is acceptable. A condition requiring the replacement of those trees lost is recommended. Measures are proposed to secure the protection of the remaining trees during construction and officers consider that it is also appropriate to attach a planning condition to secure these.
- 81 Subject to appropriate conditions it is considered that the proposal accords with the development plan in this regard.

SUSTAINIBILITY

Elmbridge Core Strategy 2011

Policy CS27 Sustainable Buildings

- 82 Policy CS7 of the Core Strategy requires all new developments in Elmbridge to be accompanied by their Climate Neutral Checklist and the policy goes on to state that all new developments should consider using sustainable materials.
- 83 The applicants have submitted both the required climate neutral checklist and a BREEAM pre - assessment with this application. In the BREEAM pre-assessment the broad details of the proposal are assessed (and certain assumptions made) against a number of sustainability criteria. This concludes that the proposal is capable of achieving a score of at least within the 'very good' category and the applicant has confirmed a commitment to securing a sustainable design as far as possible. Officers consider that the proposal complies with Development Plan Policy in this regard.

HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

- 84 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.
- 85 In this case, the Officers' view is that while impacts on amenity caused by traffic movements at the start and end of the school day are acknowledged, the scale of such impact is considered moderate given that it occurs for small periods and this is not considered sufficient to engage Article 8 or Article 1 of Protocol 1. As such, this proposal is not considered to interfere with any Convention right.

CONCLUSION

- 86 There is a demonstrated need for additional school places in the local area of this school and there are no acceptable alternatives to provide this elsewhere within the area. The school lies within the Urban Area and there is no objection in principle to the expansion in principle and Government Policy in the NPPF advises that proposals for the provision of new school places where there is an identified need should be given great weight.
- 87 In this case there are other issues to consider which need to be balanced against the need for the school places. The proposal would give rise to a loss of amenity to surrounding residential dwellings by virtue of the increased vehicle movements it will create in an area where there are already profound problems. This is acknowledged and Officers consider that given that this impact is confined to small periods during the day and represents a small degree over what already occurs this impact can be described as moderate. In addition to this the proposal does not fully accord with the Development Plan, in relation to existing open space and playing field land and will give rise to an actual loss of both. However Officers are of the opinion that the loss which occurs in respect of both of these issues would not give rise to any significant adverse impact in respect of the aims of the open space designations nor the provision of playing pitches in the area for reasons which have been fully explained in the relevant sections of this report.
- 88 Officers have carefully considered the relevant factors in this case and given that the need for the school places should be given great weight, consider that this outweighs the moderate loss of residential amenity which occurs and the other considerations in respect of open space/playing fields.
- 89 In conclusion Officers have considered all of the relevant issues and recommend that the application be

RECOMMENDATION

- 90 That:
1. Pursuant to the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009, application no. EL/2016/0441 be forwarded to the Secretary of State in view of Sport England's objection and
 2. in the absence of any direction by him and pursuant to Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992, the application 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:

Location plan PL003 December 2015
 Existing Floor Plan PL005 REV A December 2015
 Existing Roof Plan PL006 REV A December 2015
 Proposed Floor Plan Extension PL007 REV A December 2015
 Proposed Floor Plan PL008 REV A December 2015
 Proposed Roof Plan PL010 REV A December 2015
 Proposed Roof Plan PL010 REV A December 2015
 Existing / Proposed Elevations Dining Block PL011 REV A December 2015
 Existing/Proposed Elevations Classroom Extension PL012 REV A December
 2015
 Proposed Elevations/Sections PL013 December 2015
 Below Ground Drainage Strategy - Layout Plan PL015 P1 04.11.12
 Proposed Local Accessibility Improvements PL014 Undated
 Proposed Site Plan PL004 REV B 05/02/16
 Proposed Landscape Plan PL023 REV A 05/02/16
 Pitch Layout Drawing PL024 REV A 05/04/16

3.
 - 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 Appendix 4 and drawing no. TPP01 dated 27/04/2015 contained in the Arboricultural Method Statement submitted with the application 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 Section 5 and 6 of the above Arboricultural Method Statement.
4. Prior to the occupation of the development hereby permitted the Framework School Travel Plan shall be updated and submitted for approval to the County Planning Authority. The approved Travel Plan shall be implemented upon first occupation of the development hereby permitted and thereafter maintained, monitored and developed.
5. The development shall be implemented strictly in accordance with the 'Construction Traffic Management Plan' dated December 2015
6. In carrying out the development hereby permitted, no HGV movements to or from the site shall take place between the hours of 8.30am to 9.15am and 3.00pm to 4.00pm nor shall the contractor permit any HGVs associated with the development at the site to be laid up, waiting, in the surrounding roads of Oatlands Avenue, Ashley Road, Oatlands Chase during these times.
7. The development shall not be occupied unless and until the additional car parking spaces have been provided in accordance with the approved plans and shall thereafter be retained for their designated purpose.

8. Prior to the commencement of the development, the proposed local accessibility improvements as generally shown on the Atkins concept design drawing PL014 comprising a new school access gate to Oatlands Chase; a raised zebra crossing on Oatlands Chase and associated footway works; speed cushions on the stretch of Oatlands Chase between Ashley Road and Oatlands Avenue; parking restrictions to prevent all day commuter parking on Oatlands Chase adjacent to the school; and an improved pedestrian crossing island on Ashley Road, shall be submitted and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority in an application on that behalf. The agreed works shall then be fully implemented prior to the occupation of the development and permanently maintained in accordance with the approved details.

9. In carrying out the development hereby permitted, no works involving groundworks, the excavation of foundations or any other works involving the disturbance of any previously undisturbed ground shall be carried out unless the applicant has secured at his own expense the presence of a suitably qualified archaeologist to exercise a watching brief over the works being carried out in accordance with a specification which has been agreed in writing by the County Archaeologist.

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 interest of the visual amenity of the site and the area in accordance with policy Policy CS14 of the Elmbridge Core Strategy 2011 and Policy DM6 of the Elmbridge Local Plan Development Management Plan 2015

4. To mitigate the impacts of the proposed expansion in order that the development should not prejudice highway safety not cause inconvenience to other highway users, to prevent conflict between pupils, parents and staff with construction vehicles and to protect the residential amenity of local residents, in accordance with Policy CS25 of the Elmbridge Core Strategy 2011 and Policy DM7 of the Elmbridge Local Plan Development Management Plan 2015

5. In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety not cause inconvenience to other highway users, to prevent conflict between pupils, parents and staff with construction vehicles and to protect the residential amenity of local residents, in accordance with Policy CS25 of the Elmbridge Core Strategy 2011 and Policy DM7 of the Elmbridge Local Plan Development Management Plan 2015

6. In the interests of the amenity of the residential dwellings in the vicinity of the site in accordance with Policy Policy CS25 of the Elmbridge Core Strategy 2011 and Policy DM7 of the Elmbridge Local Plan Development Management Plan 2015

7. In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety not cause inconvenience to other highway users, to prevent conflict between pupils, parents and staff with construction vehicles and to protect the residential amenity of local residents, in accordance with Policy CS25 of the Elmbridge Core Strategy 2011 and Policy DM7 of the Elmbridge Local Plan Development Management Plan 2015

8. To ensure that any archaeological presence on the site is identified, recorded and protected in accordance with Policy Policy DM 12 of the Elmbridge Local Plan Development Management Plan 2015

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. Further details of the highway requirements necessary for inclusion in any application seeking approval of details pursuant to the above conditions may be obtained from the Transportation Development Planning Division of Surrey County Council.
5. The developer is advised that as part of the detailed design of the highway works required by the above condition, the County Highway Authority may require necessary accommodation works to street lights, road signs, road markings, highway drainage, surface covers, street trees, highway verges, highway surfaces, surface edge restraints and any other street furniture/equipment.
6. The permission hereby granted shall not be construed as authority to carry out any works on the highway or any works that may affect a drainage channel/culvert or water course. The applicant is advised that a permit and, potentially, a Section 278 agreement must be obtained from the Highway Authority before any works are carried out on any footway, footpath, carriageway, verge or other land forming part of the highway. All works on the highway will require a permit and an application will need to be submitted to the County Council's Street Works Team up to 3 months in advance of the intended start date, depending on the scale of the works proposed and the classification of the road. Please see <http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/road-permits-and-licences/the-traffic-management-permit-scheme>. The applicant is also advised that Consent may be required under Section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991. Please see www.surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/emergency-planning-and-community-safety/flooding-advice.

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:

[National Planning Policy Framework 2012](#)

[The Development Plan](#)

Elmbridge Core Strategy 2011

Elmbridge Local Plan Development Management Plan April 2015 (the DMP).
