

**ST GILES AND ST GEORGES CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL, ORME ROAD,
NEWCASTLE**
THE CABINET, STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

16/00039/CPO

This is a consultation by the County Council on an application for the construction of a new teaching block accommodating 7 additional teaching rooms and a new extension to the hall of the school with the creation of a school club room and main entrance. A car park extension and new external store are also proposed. The County Council's reference is N.15/07.

The site is within the Urban Area of Newcastle as indicated on the Local Development Framework Proposals Map.

For any comments that the Borough Council may have on this proposal to be taken into account they have to be received by the County Council by no later than 2nd March 2016.

RECOMMENDATION

That the County Council be advised that the Borough Council is supportive of the principle of extending the capacity of the school in the interests of the delivery of housing and that it raises NO OBJECTIONS to the application.

Reason for Recommendation

The proposal could significantly assist the delivery of housing development in the area, and is of a design that makes a positive contribution to the area and it does not adversely affect any interests of the Borough Council.

Key Issues

Planning permission is being sought for the construction of a new teaching block accommodating 7 additional teaching rooms and a new extension to the hall with the creation of a school club room and main entrance. A car park extension and new external store are also proposed.

The Borough Council is being asked for its views on this proposal – the County Council being the determining Planning Authority in this instance. The Planning Committee, with respect to 'major developments', is the part of the Borough Council which decides what comments are to be put to the County Council. In deciding what representations to make the first consideration is whether the proposal has an impact upon any particular interests of the Borough Council (such as landholdings). It is understood that that the Borough has no land or property interests in the area.

Beyond that, Members may wish to consider whether any aspect of the development has a particular bearing upon the amenity of the residents of the Borough, and to comment upon whether the proposal appears to conflict with any policies within that part of the development plan for which the Borough has responsibility, and upon whether the proposal has any bearing upon the strategic aims of the Council (in the context of a decision on a planning application).

The Design and Access Statement states that the current school is a successful school in the community and that the current intake is greater than the designed capacity of the current school, putting pressure on the existing facilities. It is the aim of the County Council to address this current shortfall in accommodation as well as to expand the school to meet future increase in pupil places within the area. The school would become a 2 form entry school with a significant increase in its capacity from 210 (+ 26 nursery) to 450 pupils (+30 Nursery).

It needs to be remembered that the Borough Council is not the Planning Authority and it should not attempt to deal with the matter as if it were the relevant planning Authority. The County Council will have to determine the application, balancing a range of considerations including the visual, environmental and traffic implications of the development.

In this case it is considered that the main issues for the Borough Council are

- 1) The provision of additional primary education places within the town and the consequences for other objectives including the delivery of housing
- 2) The acceptability of the proposal in terms of design and impact on the character and appearance of the area.

Members may of course consider there to be other issues as well.

The Borough Council has a strong interest as both planning and strategic housing authority in the delivery of housing. The Borough Council also receives New Homes Bonus as a consequence of housing development. The provision of educational places is a vital element in the infrastructure required to support that delivery. The availability of spare capacity in catchment schools is the determinant of whether education contributions are sought with respect to proposed housing developments. As members will be aware it is not uncommon for developers to submit that residential schemes are financially unviable as a result of contributions that are sought from them. The provision of additional education places as here proposed could, in some cases, make a crucial difference to the deliverability of a housing development. That the catchment area includes both Newcastle Town Centre and an extensive area surrounding that centre is a further positive aspect in that the development can support regeneration projects involving housing within that area. This is a material consideration which the County Council as Local Planning Authority can and should take into account in the determination of this planning application.

CSS Policy CSP1 states that new development should be well designed to respect the character, identity and context of Newcastle and Stoke-on-Trent's unique townscape and landscape and in particular, the built heritage, its historic environment, its rural setting and the settlement pattern created by the hierarchy of centres. It states that new development should protect important and longer distance views of historic landmarks and rural vistas and contribute positively to an area's identity and heritage (both natural and built) in terms of scale, density, layout, use of appropriate vernacular materials for buildings and surfaces and access.

The new 2-storey teaching block would be sited to the west of the existing school within an area that is currently a soft landscaping and seating area. There would be no encroachment into the adjacent playing fields. The elevations would comprise a limited palette of materials, principally comprising timber cladding and glazing and the appearance would be simple and contemporary with clean lines. The front entrance extension would be single-storey and would have a glazed frontage.

The existing building is modern in design and it is considered that the proposed extensions would be sympathetic to the character and appearance of both the existing school and the surrounding area. Whilst the proposed extension to the west would be two-storey, it would have a flat roof, to minimise the mass of the building. There are existing trees along the boundary of the site with St. Paul's Road.

It is not considered that an objection could be sustained on the grounds of impact on the character and appearance of the area.

APPENDIX

Policies and proposals in the approved development plan relevant to this decision:-

Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Core Spatial Strategy (CSS) 2006-2026

Policy CSP1: Design Quality
Policy CSP3: Sustainability and Climate Change
Policy CSP5: Open Space/Sport/Recreation

Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan (NLP) 2011

Policy T16: Development – General Parking Requirements

Other Material Considerations include:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) (2014)

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Urban Design (2010)

Relevant Planning History

03/01093/CPO 210 Place Primary School with 26 Place Nursery, access, Parking, Delivery and Play Areas. The Borough Council had no objections subject to a financial contribution (to provide suitable replacement open space) and conditions. The application was approved by the County in April 2014 (SCC reference N.03/30)

Views of Consultees

The **Environmental Health Division** have advised the County Council that they have no objections subject to contaminated land conditions. Other consultations will be being undertaken directly by the County Council

Representations

It is the responsibility of the County Council to publicise the application.

Applicant's/Agent's submission

The application is accompanied by the following documents:

- Design and Access Statement
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Ecological Impact Assessment
- Noise Assessment
- Transport Assessment
- Site Investigation Report
- Arboricultural Survey Report

These documents can be viewed on the County Council's website searching under reference N.15/07 at www.staffordshire.gov.uk/planning

Background Papers

Planning files referred to
Planning Documents referred to

Date report prepared

16th February 2016