

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

ITEM NO. 19

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 27th June 2018

Ward: Whitley

App No.: 180691

App Type: FUL

Address: Green Park Village

Proposal: A planning application for a 2 Form Entry Primary School, associated playing space, car parking, pedestrian and cycle routes, services & infrastructure, landscaping and other associated works.

Applicant: St. Edwards Homes Limited

Date valid: 25/4/18

Major Application: 13 week target decision date: 25/7/18

Planning Guarantee: 26 week date: 24th October 2018

RECOMMENDATIONS

GRANT Planning Permission subject to conditions and informatives and subject to the satisfactory completion of a S.106 legal agreement.

Or

REFUSE permission should the legal agreement not be completed by 25th July 2018 unless a later date is agreed by the Head of Planning Development & Regulatory Services.

The Section 106 Legal Agreement to secure the following:

Employment Skills and Training

- Preparation of Construction skills ESP

Transport

- Drop-off/ pick-up bays on Flagstaff Road to be available for school related use during specific hours.
- Travel Plan

Phasing Plan

- Regarding the ongoing marketing suite use once the school has opened and the phasing of works to complete the school once the marketing suite goes in 2021.

Transfer of School Site

- Obligations of relevance from the original S106 (2011 for 10/01461/OUT - para 8.1-8.4) regarding transfer of the school site from the developer to the Council or nominee, no service charges to apply to the school, rights of way and access to the school, etc

Community Use

- Community use agreement to deal with users of hall, parking, pitches, hours, numbers etc

CONDITIONS TO INCLUDE:

1. Time limit for commencement - 3 years
2. Approved Drawings and documents.
3. Materials to be submitted and approved.
4. DC2 Vehicle access provided in accordance with approved plans.
5. DC4 Vehicle parking plans to be approved.

6. Bicycle & scooter parking - submission and approval of plan, and provided prior to occupation.
7. Bin storage - submission and approval of plans and provided prior to occupation.
8. Car Parking Management Plan prior to occupation.
9. Roads serving the school to be provided prior to occupation.
10. CO2 Construction Method Statement/ Construction Environmental Management Plan to be submitted and approved prior to commencement of development (including demolition) including control of noise and dust.
11. DC10 Delivery and Servicing Plan to be submitted and approved prior to occupation and in accordance with approved thereafter.
12. The hours of noisy construction, demolition and associated deliveries.
13. Sound level of plant to be at least at 10db below the existing background sound level.
14. No bonfires
15. In accordance with FRA
16. Sustainable Drainage Scheme in accordance with approved details to be completed prior to occupation.
17. Whole life maintenance plan for drainage to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to occupation
18. L2a Landscaping - Hard and soft landscaping details to be submitted to and approved in writing and implemented thereafter.
19. L2b Landscaping Implementation.
20. L3 Standard Landscaping Maintenance.
21. L5 Landscape Management Plan Details (for larger schemes) - to be carried out as approved.
22. No amplified sound or music shall be played within the school buildings outside specified hours
23. Control of noise from the sports pitches
24. Submission of detailing elevations of sports pitches includes details of fencing materials
25. Hours of use of the sports pitches
26. Hours of use of the hall
27. Detailed lighting scheme.
28. No floodlighting of sports pitches
29. (i) The development as built, shall meet a minimum of BREEAM Very Good standard with a minimum score of 62.5 points.
(ii) No part of the development shall be occupied until a post-construction review demonstrating compliance with a minimum BREEAM Very Good score of 62.5 points has been submitted and approved by the LPA.
30. No development shall commence until details of the measures to be incorporated into the development to demonstrate how 'Secured by Design (SBD)' accreditation for schools will be achieved have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details, and shall not be occupied or used until the Council has acknowledged in writing that it has received written confirmation of SBD accreditation.

INFORMATIVES TO INCLUDE:

1. Terms and conditions.
1. Building control approval.
2. Pre-Commencement conditions.
3. Construction and demolition nuisance law.
4. S106
5. CIL
6. IF3 Highways i) The attention of the applicant is drawn to Section 59 of the Highways Act 1980, which enables the Highway Authority to recover expenses due to damage caused by extraordinary traffic; ii) Any works affecting the Highway shall be in accordance with Reading Borough's Council's document "Guidance Notes for Activities on the Public Highway within the Borough of Reading". The applicant should note that compliance with this document is mandatory and licences to work on the Highway will only be issued if the

requirements contained within it are met. A copy can be obtained from the Council's website.

7. EA advice - The Green Park area has been granted planning permission to raise the levels of the land, which we agreed at the time would result in the site effectively being in Flood Zone 1, and not Flood Zone 3 and Flood Zone 2 as currently shown on our Flood Map for Planning. This is as a result of a floodplain compensation scheme which involves extensive ground lowering and raising in the Green Park area, a flood storage area and a bypass channel, which over compensates for any built development proposals and allows for the wider development to go ahead without the need for further floodplain compensation
8. Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue advice - Recommend fitting sprinklers as a requirement, for both the students and staff, to make economic sense and to protect the school and local community from needless damage.
9. Positive and proactive.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application area forms part of the overall Green Park Village Development (GPV) identified as Phase 2B. The site is 0.94ha, broadly square in shape, and is located at the corner of Longwater Avenue and what will be one of the main entrances to GPV via Flagstaff Road, currently under construction (which will be the road to access the approved Green Park Station). It is located opposite the site of the Extra Care Building, which is largely complete (approved under Phase 2A). To the north and east of the application area is the Phase 1 residential area, now almost complete, which comprises a mix of three storey houses and apartment blocks up to 4 storeys. To the west will be the site of new public realm 'Market Square'.
- 1.2 The application area is currently part vacant land and partly the site of the marketing suite and its parking area. Work has commenced on the following:
 - Phase 1 (97 houses, 11 apartments);
 - Phase 1C (road);
 - Phase 2A (129 Extra Care and 8 private apartments);
 - Phase 2C (30 lakeside apartments);
 - Phase 3A (68 houses, 6 apartments); and
 - Phase 5 (54 houses, 29 apartments).
- 1.3 The original outline permission for GPV (10/01561/OUT) provided for a one form entry school on this site. At the pre-application stage the Council advised the applicant that as the proposal was to be a two form entry school, it would require a new full application to be submitted, rather than a reserved matters application.
- 1.4 The area is within the Settlement Boundary and within Flood Risk Area 1, following the completion of engineering works to raise ground levels and remodel the surrounding hydrology, but not subject to any other specific environmental designations.
- 1.5 It should be noted that the original school formed Phase 2b of the overall Green Park Village. The overall area of this Phase included part of a swale and bank adjacent to Longwater Avenue. This area has been excluded from the application area for the school, as the applicant has advised that it is difficult for it to form part of the school grounds given its gradient. It would remain landscaped as part of the overall flood strategy.

Layout of GPV at Outline Stage

School site



Proposed School Site



- 1.6 Pre-application discussions have taken place since early 2016, and more recently to establish design and transport principles.
- 1.7 The application is being referred to Planning Application Committee as it is a major application.

2.0 PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 The application comprises the following:
 - Two storey building for a two form entry primary school of 2,264sqm, with a curved arrangement consisting of three main square accommodation blocks, connected by wedge shaped link sections. The school buildings would comprise:

- main hall and changing rooms; four key stage 1 classrooms; eight key stage 2 classrooms; two reception classes.; nursery accommodation; kitchen; staffroom, offices, stores, breakout areas etc.
 - Multi-use games areas
 - All-weather playing pitch
 - Other play areas
 - 20 car parking spaces (for staff) accessed from Main Street to the north (deliveries and refuse collection from the staff car park).
 - 7 parking bays for drop off and pick up, 4 of which will be available for school trip buses (on Flagstaff Road)
 - 30 cycle spaces (including scooter provision) for students and 20 for staff
- 2.2 The proposed scheme would be for 446 no. children - 26 nursery places and 60 per year group (2 classes) and 41 FTE staff. A breakfast and after school club are planned. It is anticipated that it will open in the summer of 2019.
- 2.3 At present there is a Marketing Suite and associated parking on part of the school site. The applicant has confirmed that as the school will be occupied incrementally, an artificial pitch will be provided which will meet the needs of the initial 2 years of intakes whilst the Marketing Suite remains. It is then intended in August 2021 following demolition of the Marketing Suite to extend the artificial pitch to its intended full size. This has been agreed in principle with all interested parties
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)
- 2.4 The proposed scheme would not generate CIL as the Council's Charging Schedule includes for zero charge for this type of use.
- 2.5 The following plans and supporting documents were submitted and have been assessed:

Received 25th April 2018:

- Site Location Plan - Drawing no: 27310 A-2FE-01-200 Rev P2
- Masterplan - Proposed Block Plan - Drawing no: 27310 A-2FE-01-100 Rev P2
- Proposed Site Layout - Drawing no: 27310 A-2FE-02-100 Rev P3
- Proposed Ground Floor Plan - Drawing no: 27310 A-2FE-03-200 Rev P6
- Proposed First Floor Plan - Drawing no: 27310 A-2FE-03-201 Rev P6
- Proposed Roof Plan - Drawing no: 27310 A-2FE-03-202 Rev P3
- Proposed GA Sections Sheet 1 - Drawing no: 27310 A-2FE-04-200 Rev P4
- Proposed GA Sections Sheet 2 - Drawing no: 27310 A-2FE-04-201 Rev P1
- Proposed GA Elevations - Drawing no: 27310 A-2FE-05-200 Rev P2
- Drainage Schematic - Drawing no: 4160914-SK1200 Rev I2
- Proposed Utilities Layout - Drawing no: 4160914-SK1100 Rev I1
- School Car Share Bays - Drawing no: 4160914-SK05 Rev I3
- Staff Car Park Swept Path Assessment - Drawing no: 4160914-SK06 Rev I3
- Refuse Vehicle Swept Path Assessment - Drawing no: 4160914-SK07 Rev I3
- Delivery Vehicle Swept Path Assessment - Drawing no: 4160914-SK08 Rev I4
- Fire Tender Swept Path Assessment - Drawing no: 4160914-SK09 Rev I2

Other Documentation:

- Archaeological Mitigation Report, prepared by Oxford Archaeology
- Air Quality Statement, ref: 442984, prepared by RSK, dated 5th April 2018
- BREEAM Pre-Assessment Report, Rev D, prepared by Energist, dated February 2018
- CIL Planning Application Additional Information Requirements Form

- Contaminated Land Planning Statement for Phase 2B at Green Park Village, prepared by Ramboll
- Design and Access Statement, prepared by Broadway Malyan, dated March 2018
- Ecological Statement, Phase 2b, Green Park Village School, prepared by CSA Environmental
- Energy Statement, Rev B, prepared by Energist, dated 22nd March 2018
- Flood Risk Assessment [and associated figures and appnedices]Green Park Village School, Ref: HH4160914/KJ/012, Issue 2, prepared by Glanville, dated 29th March 2018
- Noise & Vibration Report, dated 14/3/2018, prepared by Energist UK
- Planning Statement, prepared by Nexus Planning, dated March 2018
- School Travel Plan, prepared by Glanville, Ref: HH4160914/DK/008, Issue 3: 29th March 2018
- Sunlight and Daylight Impact Assessment, Rev C, prepared by Energist
- Transport Statement, Ref; HH4160914/DK/005, Issue 3: 29March 2018, prepared by Glanville

3. PLANNING HISTORY

- **85/TP/690** - Business uses including light industrial, warehousing and ancillary offices together with associated service areas, roads, aprons and car parking areas. Land north of Foudry Brook. Approved 26/07/1995.
- **85/TP/691** - Business uses including light industrial, warehousing and ancillary offices together with associated service areas, roads, aprons and car parking areas. Land north of Foudry Brook. Approved 26/07/1995.
- **07/00572/SCO** - Request for a Scoping Opinion in respect of development relating to approximately 17,000 sq m of B1 floorspace, 737 residential units and community facilities to include a one form entry primary school. Observations Sent 02/07/2007.
- **07/01275/OUT** - A planning application for mixed-use development comprising: "Phase 1 (submitted in full with no matters reserved and as defined on Plan Ref. PA-P1-002): the construction of housing - 46 houses and 22 apartments (Class C3), local retail (Use Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5), management suite, village hall, engineering and infrastructure works including reconfiguration of the lake, lakeside access, car parking, pedestrian and cycle routes, services and infrastructure, landscaping and other associated works; and subsequent phases (submitted in outline with all matters reserved except for details of the main access proposals): the construction of housing - 669 dwellings (Class C3), extra care housing with ancillary community uses (Class C2), 16,000 square metres office space (Class B1), one-form entry primary school including nursery (Class D1), health surgery (Class D1), sports pitches, children's play facilities, engineering and infrastructure works including reconfiguration of the lake and vehicular access, lakeside access, car parking, pedestrian and cycle routes, services and infrastructure, landscaping and other associated works." Approved 31/03/2009.
- **10/00587/SCO** - Request for a Scoping Opinion in respect of development relating to 730-750 new homes including an 80 unit Continuing Care Retirement Community scheme with extra care ancillary community facilities, 8 family homes for disabled persons, 16,000 sq m of use class B1 floor space, a One Form Entry Primary School with sports pitches for dual use with the local community, associated local centre, community and recreation facilities, a network of dedicated pedestrian and cycle routes and the provision of more than 8 hectares of open space, fully equipped children's play facilities and sports pitches, in addition to a 4 ha lake. Observations Sent 24/06/2010.
- **10/01461/OUT (102172)** - A planning application for mixed-use development comprising: Phase 1 (submitted in full with no matters reserved and as defined in

area on Plan Ref. PL-P1-001) for the construction of housing (Class C3), local retail (Use Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5), management suite, village hall, engineering and infrastructure works including reconfiguration of the lake, lakeside access, car parking, pedestrian and cycle routes, services & infrastructure, landscaping and other associated works; and Subsequent phases (submitted in outline with all matters reserved except for details of the main access proposals) for the construction of housing (Class C3), extra care housing with ancillary community uses (Class C2), offices (Class B1), one-form entry primary school Class (Class D1), health surgery (Class D1), Nursery (Class D1), sports pitches, children's play facilities, engineering and infrastructure works including reconfiguration of the lake and vehicular access, lakeside access, car parking, pedestrian and cycle routes, services & infrastructure, landscaping and other associated works - Approved 1/7/2011

- 151068/FUL - Temporary Marketing Suite - Approved 3/3/16 - temporary until 3/3/2021, with condition that *"The following shall take place no later than 3 September 2021:*
 - i) The marketing suite building, access road and car park and all associated structures, hard surfacing and waste materials shall be removed from the site.*
 - ii) The ground to the front of units 40-44, forming part of detailed Phase 1 of permission 102172, shall be reinstated in accordance with the plans approved under permission ref. 102172.*
 - iii) All land forming part of the site that are located within the Phase 2a area of the overall Green Park Village scheme of permission 102172 shall be cleared and levelled."*

4. CONSULTATIONS

(i) Statutory

Environment Agency

- 4.1 No objections subject to a condition regarding the scheme being undertaken in accordance with the FRA.

West Berkshire

- 4.2 The LPA does not wish to comment on this application.

- 4.3 However, the Education Department stated "The proposed school site is well within the Reading border and is unlikely to impact significantly on West Berkshire schools. We import pupils from across the Reading border, but this tends to be around Tilehurst and the schools are in close proximity to each other. I don't expect that the proposed school will impact on this cross border movement significantly as the school is not within Tilehurst and won't have those historic associations."

Wokingham Borough Council

- 4.4 No objection

(ii) Non-Statutory

Berkshire Archaeology

- 4.5 The proposals submitted under 180691 are accompanied by the Archaeological Mitigation Report (OA Nov 2016) which details the results of archaeological field work previously completed within the proposal area.

4.6 The results of this work demonstrated that there has been previous significant disturbance within the application area, with the archaeologically relevant deposits surviving only in one trench. In addition no archaeological features or finds were recorded within this trench.

4.7 On the basis of this work I can confirm that the archaeological investigations have been completed in the application area and there are no archaeological issues with these proposals.

Berkshire Fire and Rescue

4.8 There is a possible requirement for hydrant provision on this site, however until we are provided with a more detailed site plan we are unable to comment further. Access requirements for Fire Fighting are to meet the functional requirements the Building Regulations 1991 and the relevant provisions of the Berkshire Act. It should be noted that any gates required for emergency access should provide a minimum 3.1 m clear opening.

4.9 The layout plans provided have not been reviewed for fire safety provisions. This is the responsibility of your Buildings Regulations Department or Approved Inspector, in consultation with this Authority as part of a Building Regulations submission.

4.10 This Authorities overall strategic aim is to improve the safety of those who live work and travel in the county of Berkshire. School fires are a major national problem. Each year more than 2,000 schools in the UK suffer serious arson attack. Figures from insurers clearly show losses averaging almost £100m per annum over the last few years. Sprinklers are an effective way of preventing the spread of fire and experience has shown by those enlightened education departments who have fitted sprinklers that only minor disruption occurs if a fire is extinguished by a sprinkler system.

4.11 We would therefore recommend you to consider fitting sprinklers as a requirement, for both the students and staff, to make economic sense and to protect the school and local community from needless damage.

Burghfield Parish Council

4.12 No objection.

Ecology- RBC

4.13 There are unlikely to be any objections to this application on ecology grounds.

Education - RBC

4.14 The initial scheme outlined the requirement for a 1FE primary School, based on the Pupil Product Ratios of 0.3 per dwelling for Primary. In addition to this, other developments have been notified to RBC, such as Royal Elm Park Development which alone is anticipated to generate a further 1FE. Also in Green Park Village, a block originally intended to be office accommodation is now proposed to be residential accommodation. These developments would indicate the requirement for a second form of entry.

Environmental Protection and Nuisance - RBC

4.15 Noise generating development: A noise assessment has been submitted which identifies the noise limit which plant should meet in order to meet the Council's criteria at the nearest noise sensitive receptor. The applicants are not at a detailed enough design stage to be able to propose the exact plant to be installed. A noise condition is recommended.

- 4.16 *Air Quality*: The air quality assessment shows that air quality as a result of the development will remain below air quality objective limits and therefore no mitigation measures are required.
- 4.17 *Contaminated Land - high risk sites*: The contaminated land statement discusses the remediation that has already been carried out on the site and that the school site is now considered to be low risk and no further remedial works are required.
- 4.18 *Construction and demolition phases*: We have concerns about potential noise, dust and bonfires associated with the construction (and demolition) of the proposed development and possible adverse impact on nearby residents (and businesses). Fires during construction and demolition can impact on air quality and cause harm to residential amenity. Burning of waste on site could be considered to be harmful to the aims of environmental sustainability. I was unable to find the dust mitigation measures proposed which were referred to in the air quality assessment, so I have suggested the following conditions, which includes submission of proposed dust control strategies for during construction.
- 4.19 Conditions for Hours of construction and demolition working and no bonfires on site are recommended.

Joint Emergency Planning Unit¹

- 4.20 I have reviewed this application with respect to AWE Burghfield and would advise that it is outside the DEPZ for the site and therefore I have no adverse comments to make.

Leisure - RBC

- 4.21 The proposed 2 Form Entry Primary School within Green Park is welcomed, particularly the provision of new sports, recreational and community facilities which will serve not only the residents of Green Park Village but the wider community within Reading. We therefore have no objections to the proposal.

Natural Environment - RBC

- 4.22 The site is at a main entrance to GP, leading to the western lake housing (Phase 6), the Extra Care Home (Phase 2B) and GP Station. It is therefore important that the frontage of the site provides the green frontage consistent with Phase 2A opposite. The layout shown on the approved Masterplan for 10/01461/OUT (included in the DAS) allowed for a buffer on the frontage between the road and school buildings. However the proposed layout now shown brings the school buildings much closer to the road frontage between the GP entrance and Market Square, not allowing for tree planting. The lack of softening on the frontage is exacerbated by the significant wide expanse of unbroken building.
- 4.23 The only softening is a small low level landscape bed hence the proposal is not consistent with other Phases which allow tree planting on the frontage. If the current layout is acceptable in planning terms, can the inclusion of a tree be considered in the 'front entrance palette' (upright form)?
- 4.24 In terms of tree species proposed, these are Oak, Hornbeam, Hazel and Hawthorn which are all native so in biodiversity terms are positive. However, the latter two are very small trees and will therefore provide no wider landscape value which is unfortunate given the limited number of trees on site.
- 4.25 The DAS mentions the importance of the boundary planting in providing a screen into and out of the school. However, the palette proposed is of hedges (Hawthorn

¹ Bracknell Forest, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and West Berkshire

and Hazel) and low level shrub planting. It is therefore not clear how the screening element will be provided.

- 4.26 The landscape strategy includes a potential habitat garden/area, which would have the potential to provide the ecology suggestions of ephemeral, invertebrate, bird and bat habitats (ref 5.6 of the application statement). However, whilst the picture palette shows a bug house, there is no mention of other biodiversity enhancements with emphasis being put on growing vegetables and herbs. Further details on this space should be provided (subject to ecology comments) and other landscape provision is required prior to a decision.

Planning Officer Note: The agent advised that amended information would be submitted with regard to trees on the frontage and the species proposed. Natural Environment responded further as follows:

- 4.27 The response to the lack of softening on the frontage is a very architect led response. 'Softening' by building design is very different to softening with planting which is important, the inclusion of which would be consistent with other Phases. It is stated that softening will be dealt with by increasing the number of trees shown, however none are currently shown on the frontage. It is further stated that '*If this can be accommodated within the frontage design we would seek to specify Acer platanoides or Tilia cordata to mirror Phase 2C opposite. We would note these are to be upright form*'. Can tree planting be accommodated? If it can be, it should be noted that the Tilia cordata and Acer platanoides proposed (as per Phase 2A - not 2C) are not upright forms, as is indicated. However, there are upright varieties of these species available.
- 4.28 It would be useful for landscaping to confirm at what height the hedge will be allowed to grow and thereafter a min maintenance height.
- 4.29 In relation to the 'Habitat garden', given its name and the ecology suggestions, we should expect some of this space to be used for biodiversity enhancements, Details can be agreed at a later stage.

Planning Officer note: Amended details were provided which showed more trees and identified relevant tree species. The Natural Environment Officer confirmed that these were an improvement and that the scheme was acceptable.

ONR

- 4.30 I have consulted with the emergency planners within West Berkshire Council, which is responsible for the preparation of the Burghfield off-site emergency plan required by the Radiation Emergency Preparedness and Public Information Regulations (REPPIR) 2001. They have provided adequate assurance that the proposed development can be accommodated within their off-site emergency planning arrangements.

The proposed development does not present a significant external hazard to the safety of the nuclear site. Therefore, ONR does not advise against this development.

SUDS

- 4.31 Response awaited. This will be reported in an update report.

Thames Valley Police - Crime and Design

- 4.32 No objections to the development in principle. However there are some aspects of the design that would require attention/clarification to create as safe a development as possible.

- It appears that the main entrance provides access into a corridor, I would recommend the inclusion of a secured lobby where the identity of visitors can be verified before allowing them through to visit staff or attend the interview room.
 - Boundary treatment and access control gates
- 4.33 In addition, I note that there is limited information within Design and Access Statement relating 'Safety & Security'. Therefore, opportunities to promote community safety remain. To ensure that these opportunities are not missed I request that a condition be included [achieving Secured by Design accreditation for schools]. I feel that attachment of this condition would help the development to meet the requirements of: The National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (Part 7, Sect 58; 'Requiring good Design' and Part 8, Sect 69; Promoting Healthy Communities') where it is stated that development should create '*Safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion*', and Reading Core Strategy Policy CS7: Design and the Public Realm and Planning policy RC5

Thames Water

- 4.34 We're writing to tell you that we won't be pursuing a build over agreement for 180691 Green Park Village Longwater Avenue. Reading. Although the area itself has no mapped sewers, it is very likely not to have a public sewer within 3m. If this is incorrect and the site owner finds there is a public sewer within three metres of their building work, or a lateral drain within one metre, they must make sure they comply with our specifications. These can be found at www.developers.thameswater.co.uk/domestic-and-small-commercial/building-near-pipes/building-over-or-near-a-sewer/getting-approval.

Transport - RBC

- 4.35 The site established outline consent under planning consent number 10/01461/OUT in July 2011 for a mixed-use development consisting of dwellings, extra care housing, offices, local retails, one form entry primary school, nursery, community facilities and associated infrastructure works.
- 4.36 The site is located on the northern side of the junction of Longwater Avenue and Flagstaff Road (formerly known as Station Road), and opposite the Care Home currently under construction. It is situated 450m southeast of the proposed Green Park railway station and approximately 120m from bus stops on Longwater Avenue which form part of the Greenwave bus route.
- 4.37 The initial scheme outlined the requirement for a 1FE primary School to serve pupils living within the Green Park Village development. Since the outline application was approved in 2011, Reading Borough Council has requested that the school is expanded to a two-form entry establishment to accommodate the additional pupils from other developments coming forward such as Royal Elm Park Development.
- 4.38 The number of pupils who live within Green Park Village has been calculated using factors provided by RBC. The projected pupil numbers identified indicates that is likely to be a total of 417 pupils who live within the Green Park Village. This equates to 93% of the total 446 student places within the proposed school. It is anticipated that there will be a total of 41 FTE staff members.

Staff Parking

- 4.39 RBC parking standards are based on a zonal system depending on where in the Borough the site is located. The proposed Site falls within Zone 3 which is classed as a 'Secondary Core Area'. The car parking standards are expressed as maximums

and for Land Use Class D1: Primary Education is based on 1 car parking space per 1FTE staff and 1 drop-off space per 10 pupils.

- 4.40 Based on the proposed staff numbers, the development would be required to a total of 41 staff parking spaces. However, the site cannot accommodate this level of parking and a total of 20 staff parking spaces will be provided.
- 4.41 Whilst it is reasonable to assume that a couple of the teachers will also live within the Green Park Village development, it is evident that proposed parking provision is below the requirements of the current parking standards (once fully occupied). The application will therefore be accompanied by a Travel Plan to minimise car use and encourage sustainable travel to the site.
- 4.42 The school will initially fill the nursery and the reception classes with the number of staff and students increasing year by year as they progress through the school. Therefore, the school will need to appropriately manage the car parking as the school grows and implement travel plan measures such as car sharing, public transport incentives to ensure the school can operate efficiently once it is fully occupied. The Travel Plan measures are discussed later in this report.
- 4.43 The Transport Statement confirms that the parking on surrounding roads will be strictly managed to reduce the potential for parking to overspill onto residential roads, as identified within the S106 agreement for the original application. It is anticipated that this will be enforced by the Green Park Village parking enforcement team which currently provide parking management for the residential areas.
- 4.44 The staff car park will be situated to the rear of the school site and accessed via a 4.8m wide access road which connects to Champlain Street. Vehicular access to the staff car park will be restricted to staff vehicles at all times, no pupil or parent access will be allowed even during the breakfast and afterschool clubs.
- 4.45 In terms of layout, the staff car parking spaces do comply to the standard dimensions of 2.5m x 5m but there is not the full 6m turning space to the front of all spaces. The Transport Statement indicates that the school should consider managing the parking by ordering the way in which the bays should be filled up so that each space can be fully utilised. This seems unnecessary complicated and could be resolved by shifting the spaces south towards the sports pitch. This would ensure that the full 6m turning space is available for all spaces.

Pupil Drop off

- 4.46 The Council's parking standards state that a maximum 1 drop-off space per 10 pupils are required for primary schools. For a 446 pupil primary school this equates to a maximum 44 drop-off spaces.
- 4.47 The proposed Primary School at Green Park Village was originally planned to be a one-form entry school and no pupil drop off parking provision was included within the original development masterplan. Therefore, drop off/collection spaces in accordance with the Council's standards is unachievable.
- 4.48 The Transport Statement indicates that 7 parking bays will be provided on Flagstaff Road adjacent to the Market Square. During school peak hours, these bays will be restricted for school car sharing and for drop-off / pick-up activity with appropriate signage setting out the parking restrictions. It is anticipated that these bays will be managed and enforced by the Green Park Village parking enforcement company. However, these bays were originally approved as part of the Market Square

development to provide a loading bay for the retail units within Phase 2C. Condition 2 of planning permission 162050 states the following;
"The loading bay as shown on the approved plan, and as referred to in the amended Design and Access Statement is to be provided and ready for use prior to the occupation of the retail units and apartments.

Reason: To ensure that the retail units have an off-road loading bay to minimise stopping on the highway in accordance with Adopted Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012, revised 2015) Policy DM12: Access, Traffic and Highway-related Matters."

- 4.49 Therefore, it is clear that these bays were specifically for servicing/delivery of the retail units and apartments. It is not clear how the mixed uses of these bays will operate together given that the demand for these bays are likely to coincide with each other. The applicant is requested to address this concern.
- 4.50 In accordance with the projected pupil numbers set out within Table 2, it is anticipated that 93% or 417 pupils will live within Green Park Village whereby pupils will be encouraged to walk/cycle to school. However, it is acknowledged that initially the number of children travelling from outside the Green Park Village development might outnumber those from the adjacent properties. This is due to the school opening before families start moving into the neighbouring development.
- 4.51 I am concerned that the development does not provide adequate drop off spaces for the size of the school which will lead to on-street parking on Flagstaff Road which is main vehicular route for buses and cars to Green Park Station.
- 4.52 As previously stated, the school will initially fill the nursery and the reception classes with the number of staff and students increasing year by year as they progress through the school. It is understood that the school will be willing to consider staggering the end times of the school day according to school year to minimise any potential impact on the local highway network. This will be considered as the school grows and the actual impact on the highway network is identified but there is no firm commitment to do this. The Travel Plan should therefore commit to annual pupil/parent surveys to establish the demand for these spaces to identify a trigger point for reviewing school hours.
- 4.53 In line with a recent school application within Reading, the school should also commit to operating a managed drop-off/collection area for those parents happy to have their children quickly disembarked by staff/volunteers. A managed collection/drop-off arrangement allows a reduced parking provision for the pick-up / collection from the maximum standards as it will keep vehicles moving and remove the need for them to park for longer periods. This will help reduce any demand for on street parking on the surrounding highway network and improve the efficiency of the drop off spaces.

Community use

- 4.54 The school hall and sports pitch may be used for community events. It is considered that the main use of the school hall would potentially be used by Green Park Village residents for village events and meetings. The sports pitch will not be a full size pitch as it will cater for 5-a-side matches and will not be floodlit. Consequently, it would only potentially be used for local leagues or for residents of Green Park Village outside of peak hours or at weekends.
- 4.55 Any community use of the proposed school and sports pitch will be outside of normal school hours when there is no demand for staff parking. However, the

applicant is requested to confirm that staff parking area will be available for community use outside of school hours to ensure sufficient car parking is provided.

Servicing and Deliveries

- 4.56 It is proposed that all servicing and delivery associated with the school will occur to the rear of the building within the staff car park. Delivery vehicles will access the site via Longwater Avenue, Maine Street and Champlain Street.
- 4.57 A tracking diagram has been provided illustrating that a refuse vehicle and fire tender can manoeuvre around the staff car park. A swept path assessment showing a 10m Rigid heavy goods vehicle accessing the car park has also been undertaken. In order to ensure refuse vehicles and goods vehicles can easily access the staff car park, the management company must ensure that no on-street parking occurs on the access road. The applicant has confirmed that on-street parking will be managed and enforced by the Green Park Village parking enforcement company.

Traffic Generation

- 4.58 It was agreed at pre-application stage that the morning peak hour would have the worst impact on the highway network as it would occur at the same time as office workers travelling to Green Park.
- 4.59 It is anticipated that 93% or 417 pupils will live within Green Park Village upon full occupation of the school. It was agreed at pre-application stage that these trips would not be assessed given that the trips would be coming from within the Green Park Village development and pupils would be encouraged to walk, scoot and cycle to and from the school site through the Travel Plan measures. It should be noted that no pupil vehicular trips were included within the assessment in original outline permission.
- 4.60 In order to accurately calculate the number of vehicle trips from pupils outside of the Green Park area, it has been assumed that some families will have more than one child at the school. It has also been assumed that 10% of pupils will attend both the Breakfast Club and the After School club. Given this, it is anticipated that the pupils will result in a marginal increase in vehicular trips in the am peak.
- 4.61 Paragraph 5.31 of the Transport Statement states that due to the proximity of the sustainable modes of travel, and on the basis that a strong School Travel Plan will be implemented, it is considered that the staff modal split would be as follows:

Table 9: Staff Modal Splits

Mode	Proportion	Number of staff
Car Driver	25%	10
Car Share	30%	12
Walking	5%	2
Cycling	5%	2
Train	10%	4
Bus	25%	10

- 4.62 The original school application identified that fifteen out of the eighteen staff drove to the site during the AM highway peak hour of 08:00 to 09:00. However, the proposed staff modal splits within Table 9 of the Transport Statement significantly reduce the number of single occupancy vehicle trips to site given the limited parking on-site.

- 4.63 When compared to the one-form entry school, the assessment determines that the staff vehicular trips will increase before 8am but will decrease in period between 8am-9am, despite a doubling in staff numbers. I find it unrealistic to assume that that staff vehicular trips will reduce in the period between 8am and 9am. However, the limited parking within the site will significantly influence mode of travel by staff and the development is unlikely to significantly increase the staff vehicular trips during the am peak hour above the permitted use.
- 4.64 The combined staff and pupil vehicle trips from the proposed two-form entry school development will result in a net increase in trips when compared to the former school application. However, it is considered that the junctions within Green Park would not experience a significant adverse impact on their operation as a result of the increased flows and is acceptable.

Cycle Parking

- 4.65 The RBC cycle parking standards are minimum standards and are applicable irrespective of zoning. RBC's SPD document states that cycle parking should be provided for primary schools at a ratio of 1 space per 5 FTE staff for staff cycling and 1 space per 15 pupils for Years 1 to 3 and 1 space per 10 pupils for Years 4 to 6. This equates to a minimum cycle parking provision of 9 spaces for staff and a minimum 38 spaces for the proposed maximum roll of 446 pupils.
- 4.66 To encourage both staff and students to either cycle or use their scooters, 40 student cycle parking spaces will be provided and a further 10 cycle parking spaces will be provided for staff. It is proposed that these cycle spaces will take the form of Sheffield cycle stands and will be located adjacent to the car park. We will however require full details to demonstrate that this cycle parking is covered with a 1m spacing between the stands but I am happy for this to be dealt with by way of a condition.

Travel Plan

- 4.67 A Framework Travel Plan has been submitted and is deemed appropriate as the travel patterns will not be established until the building is occupied. Following the opening of the school, it is proposed that a hands-up Travel Survey will be undertaken by pupils to identify the baseline pupil modal split. Teachers and parents will be asked to complete an online survey. A full travel plan will therefore need to be **submitted** within 6 months of occupation (within the second term of the first academic year).
- 4.68 The Action Plan within Section 8 sets out the Measures & Initiatives of the Travel Plan. I have however reviewed the detail within the plan and I comment as follows:
- Prior to the opening of the new school in the summer of 2019, a Travel Plan Co-ordinator (TPC) will be appointed. This is acceptable.
 - Pupil Information sheets and home school agreements highlighting travel options and parking restrictions/enforcement will be undertaken prior to the school opening. This is acceptable.
 - For clarification travel surveys must be undertaken with 6 months (clear timescale opposed to second term). Travel surveys must be repeated annually to ensure that the modal splits accurately reflect the expansion. The monitoring process should commence 12 months following approval of the initial Travel Plan.
 - Promotion of sustainable travel for staff should be prior to school opening. The TPC should offer all staff members a form of personalised travel planning in their induction outlining the possible modal options on offer to

them from their home location. This will encourage sustainable travel options from the offset to reduce the reliance on driving to the site.

- The TPC will actively promote car-sharing. The initial travel survey should also determine staff members' willingness to car share to identify suitable car sharers.
- Public transport incentives should also be investigated and promoted to staff, this could be in the form of discounted travel.
- The Green Park Village walking Bus should be set up and trialled within 3 months of opening. This should be reviewed annually to determine whether demand has increased.
- In line with recent school application within Reading, the school should also commit to trailing a managed drop-off/collection area for those parents happy to have their children quickly disembarked by staff/volunteers to relieve pressure on parking.
- The Travel Plan should commit to annual pupil/parent surveys the establish problems associated with pupil drop off/collection to identify a trigger point for reviewing school hours.

(iii) Public Consultation

4.69 A number of site notices were displayed and a notice was put in the local paper.

4.70 One letter of support was received as follows:

We fully support the application. The residents of Green Park Village have to travel a lot for a school. This school will help the Green Park Village and will reduce the traffic on A33.

5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.

5.2 The following national and local planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

National

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Policy Guidance

Reading Borough Local Development Framework - Adopted Core Strategy (2008, altered 2015)

CS1: Sustainable Construction and Design

CS2: Waste Minimisation

CS3: Social Inclusion and Diversity

CS4: Accessibility and Intensity of Development

CS5: Inclusive Access

CS6: Settlement Boundary

CS7: Design and the Public Realm

CS9: Infrastructure, Services, Resources and Amenities

CS20: Implementation of Reading Transport Strategy

CS22: Transport Assessments

CS23: Sustainable Travel and Travel Plans
CS24: Car / Cycle parking
CS29: Provision of Open Space
CS30: Access to Open Space
CS34: Pollution and Water Resources
CS35: Flooding
CS36: Biodiversity and Geology
CS38: Trees, Hedges and Woodland

Reading Borough Local Development Framework - Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012, altered 2015)

SD1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
DM1: Adaptation to Climate Change
DM3: Infrastructure Planning
DM4: Safeguarding Amenity
DM12: Access, Traffic and Highway-related Matters
DM16: Provision of Open Space
DM18: Tree Planting
DM19: Air Quality

SA1: South Reading Development Principles
SA2: South Reading Strategic Development Sites
SA11: Settlement Boundary

Emerging RBC Local Plan - Submission Draft Reading Borough Local Plan, March 2018

CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
CC9: Securing Infrastructure
TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
TR4: Cycle Routes and Facilities
TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging
OU1: New and Existing Community Facilities

Supplementary Planning Documents

Revised Parking Standards and Design (Oct 2011)
Employment, Skills and Training (2013)
Planning Obligations under S106 (April 2015)
Sustainable Design and Construction (July 2011)
South West Reading Planning Brief (April 2000)

Other Guidance Documents

- Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: A Guide to Good Practice Second Edition, by Paul Littlefair BRE, 2011
- BS8206 - Part 2: 2008 Code of Practice for Daylighting
- Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light, Institution of Lighting Professionals (2012)
- Acoustic Design of Schools; Performance Standards, Building Bulletin 93, DFE & EFA (February 2015)

6. APPRAISAL

(i) Principle of Development - Location

- 6.1 Paragraph 34 of the NPPF requires developments to be sited in sustainable locations and the Core Strategy identifies that Green Park is such. Green Park Village (referred to as Green Park 3 at that time) was identified as one of four

sustainable locations for future development at that time. This will rely on the continued high level of public transport accessibility, as described below.

- 6.2 The site is well served by buses, is close to the proposed South MRT, existing and proposed cycling routes which connect to the wider Reading cycle network and an approved railway station. There is a good network of existing and proposed footpaths within GPV, Green Park and beyond.
- 6.3 The proposed development benefits from a high level of accessibility by a range of sustainable transport modes in accordance with paragraph 17 of the NPPF.

(ii) Principle of development - Use

- 6.4 The principle of a primary school was established through the outline planning permission (10/01561/OUT) which included a one-form entry school. There is an ongoing need for primary provision specifically within this part of the Borough and during pre-application discussions RBC Education advised the applicant that a two form entry school would meet wider educational needs. Since the original outline permission there has been a range of residential permissions within the local area including the pending issuing of the decision for further residential within GPV within Phase 6, all of which add to the potential primary age pupils in the area.
- 6.5 The NPPF identifies that in terms of the social role of sustainable development it should support *“strong, vibrant and healthy communities,with accessible local services that reflect the community’s needs and support its health, social and cultural wellbeing”*. It places great importance on ensuring that there is a sufficient choice of school places available to meet the needs of existing and new communities (para 72).
- 6.6 The adopted Core Strategy includes as one of its key social and economic objectives to *“maximise access for all to the necessary education, skills and knowledge to play a full role in society”*. Policy CS3 addresses the need for major developments to *“... demonstrate measures to enhance social inclusion in terms of access to housing, employment, services, community facilities, leisure, health, education, and other services and facilities”* and that *“...All members of the population should be provided with access to good quality health, education and other social facilities...”*. Policy CS31 supports new education development especially where this involves the co-location of facilities on a single site. The overall proposal includes for a hall which will as well as being for school use will be available for the wider community. A condition is recommended requiring the submission and approval of a community use agreement, which would include the use of the hall and the sports pitches.
- 6.7 Para 13.1.4 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document (SDPD) states that *“Significant shortfalls have been identified within South Reading in relation to the provision and accessibility to, and quality of, various community facilities including public meeting venues, open spaces, allotments and other recreational areas. Future significant shortfalls in primary and secondary school reception places are also predicted and there is an ongoing need to provide healthcare and other community, leisure and social facilities to serve an expanding population.”* Para 13.5.5 goes on to refer to the shortfalls in various community facilities, in particular within the education sector, which add to the deprivation within the local wards. The provision of a school would contribute to meeting this need.

- 6.8 The emerging RBC local plan identifies the need for new education provision at both primary and secondary and Policy CC9 gives the highest priority to securing education facilities.
- 6.9 The proposed use would also have economic benefits with regard to the creation of jobs during the construction period and, once occupied, for a proposed 41 new jobs (full time equivalent).

(iii) Transport and Accessibility

- 6.10 The submitted Transport Statement, the scope of which was agreed with RBC officers in March 2017, sets out that the proposed scheme would be for a total 446 no. pupils (once fully occupied). This would comprise 26 FTE nursery spaces and two forms of entry (max 30 per form) for each year group from reception to year 6.
- 6.11 It has been calculated, based on the approved outline scheme for GPV, that there would be a pupil yield from GPV of 417 (=93%) with the remainder from outside the development. The Statement identifies that it is not anticipated that many families would live in the Phase 6A apartments and would therefore not generate a significant demand for school places, however if these were included than 100% of anticipated school pupils would be within GPV.
- 6.12 There would be a total of 41FTE staff members, with an assumption that a couple of these would live within GPV. The proposed parking provision is below the requirements of the current parking standards (once fully occupied) (41 requirement against 20 proposed). A Travel Plan will therefore be required to minimise car use and encourage sustainable travel to the site. This is included as a recommended S106 obligation.
- 6.13 Pedestrian access to the school would be via the main entrance which would face directly on Market Square, accessible from Flagstaff Road and the wider network of roads within GPV. An additional pedestrian gate would be provided at the south-eastern corner adjacent to the Longwater Avenue/Flagstaff Road roundabout.
- 6.14 Vehicular access to the car park would be restricted to staff at all times. Transport has advised that although the layout of the spaces would comply with standards, the full 6m turning space could not be achieved. The applicant's proposal of managing the car park, so that each space could be fully utilised, e.g. a specific order that the spaces should be filled up, appears unnecessarily complicated. An amended layout could be achieved, which removes this conflict, by shifting the spaces south towards the sports pitch. An amended layout has been requested and will be reported in an update.
- 6.15 The staff car park is also proposed to be used for servicing, delivery and refuse vehicles. Relevant swept path analyses have been included and Transport has confirmed that the arrangement would be acceptable. However, a condition is recommended for the submission and approval of a delivery and servicing plan.
- 6.16 The scheme includes for 50 no. cycle parking spaces (40 for pupils (20 stands) and 10 for staff) including scooter spaces, which would meet Council standards. A condition is recommended for the submission and approval of the layout of the cycle storage area intended to be adjacent to the car park.
- 6.17 Although the Transport Statement sets out the assumption that most pupils would walk or come using other sustainable modes, there is also the provision of seven drop-off/ pick up bays on Flagstaff Road, also to be available for visitors (the latter also with access to unallocated Market Square parking). Four of these bays would

be reserved for a school bus at times for school outings. The Transport Statement identifies that these would be controlled (as a private road) through appropriate signage and enforcement. However, these bays were originally approved as part of the Market Square development to provide a loading bay for the retail units within Phase 2C. Condition 2 of planning permission 162050 states the following;

"The loading bay as shown on the approved plan, and as referred to in the amended Design and Access Statement is to be provided and ready for use prior to the occupation of the retail units and apartments.

Reason: To ensure that the retail units have an off-road loading bay to minimise stopping on the highway in accordance with Adopted Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012, revised 2015) Policy DM12: Access, Traffic and Highway-related Matters."

- 6.18 Therefore, it is clear that these bays were specifically for servicing/delivery of the retail units and apartments. It is not clear how the mixed uses of these bays would operate together given that the demand for these bays would be likely to coincide with each other. The applicant is requested to address this concern. This will be reported in an update.
- 6.19 It is recommended, however, that the provision of these and the specific hours and for what use are defined within a S106 obligation, to ensure that the bays are retained for school use during relevant hours.
- 6.20 Notwithstanding the recommended obligation for the bays Transport is concerned that the development does not provide adequate drop-off spaces for the size of the school and that this would lead to on-street parking on Flagstaff Road which will be the main vehicular route for buses and cars to Green Park Station. It is understood that the school would be willing to consider staggering the end times of the school day according to school year to minimise any potential impact on the local highway network, but there is no firm commitment to do this. It is recommended, therefore, that the Travel Plan should therefore commit to annual pupil/parent surveys to establish the demand for these spaces to identify a trigger point for reviewing school hours. In addition, in line with a recent school application within the Borough, the school should also commit to operating a managed drop-off/collection area for those parents happy to have their children quickly disembarked by staff/volunteers. This would allow a reduced parking provision, from standards, as it would keep vehicles moving and remove the need for them to park for longer periods. This in turn would help reduce any demand for on street parking on the surrounding highway network and improve the efficiency of the drop off spaces.
- 6.21 Transport has confirmed that the combined staff and pupil vehicle trips from the proposed two-form entry school development would result in a net increase in trips when compared to the former school application. However, it is considered that the junctions within Green Park would not experience a significant adverse impact on their operation as a result of the increased flows and is acceptable.
- 6.22 The sports pitches and hall are proposed for community use. The submitted Transport Statement includes limited details regarding the anticipated associated transport/ accessibility requirements. The Transport Statement refers in para 4.33 *"for events which take place at the evenings or weekends the school should liaise with the Business Park to identify whether the nearby office car parks could be utilised when not being used by office staff."* A similar suggestion is made with regard to visitor parking for events at the school. There needs to be clear details regarding the number and hours of use and relevant proposed parking and other

transport provision. As any community use of the proposed school hall and sports pitches would be outside of normal school hours, when officers assume there would be no demand for staff parking. However, confirmation has been sought from the applicant that the staff parking area would be available for community use outside of school hours to ensure sufficient car parking is provided. This will be reported in an update. As stated above a recommended obligation is included within the S106 regarding the submission and approval of a community use agreement, which would include hours of use, numbers of users etc.

- 6.23 The emerging revised Local Plan Policy TR5, states that 10% of spaces should be provided with an active charging point, which would equate to 2 spaces. 1 charging point (2 spaces) is proposed for this scheme.
- 6.24 Bin stores would be provided. A condition is recommended for the submission and approval of further details.
- 6.25 Transport has confirmed that this is a sustainable location and that, subject to conditions and obligations, included in the recommendation above, the proposed scheme would accord with national and local policies CS22, CS23, CS24, and DM12 and emerging policies TR1, TR3, TR4 and TR5.

(iv) Design

- 6.26 The site location and area for the proposed school was fixed by the outline permission, and so the challenge has been to achieve a suitable design and layout for a two form, as opposed to a one-form entry school. Originally the one form entry school needed to have a specification which accorded with clause 3.1 of the S106 legal agreement, which states *"the specification of the school is to accord with the DfES guidance BB99 (Building Bulletin 99. Briefing Framework for Primary School Projects) current at the date of the agreement"*. The proposed scheme has been developed based on Building Bulletin 103 (current version) and is in line with Education Funding and Skills Agency (EFSA) guidelines.
- 6.27 The DAS explains that the design development took place from 2015 onwards and in August 2017 it was agreed with RBC that a two form entry would be preferable on the site. Prior to submission of the application, work continued on refining the design including internal layouts and the external envelope.
- 6.28 The building is comprised of three square blocks linked by two wedge shape structures, following a curve, facing not Flagstaff Road, the access road to the approved Green Park Station. At the end nearest Market Square is the proposed hall for the school and community access, and this is separated from the teaching blocks and ancillary accommodation by a school entrance. The overall building is two storeys in height and the gross internal area is based on Building Bulletin 103 and is in line with the ESFA guidelines.
- 6.29 To the rear of the school is a proposed MUGA -single netball size; all weather pitch Sport England standard for under 11/12 year olds; and informal play area (hard landscaping) within the constraints of the originally planned 1FE site.



- 6.30 Design is a key element of national planning policy and para 56 of the NPPF states that *“The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.”*
- 6.31 At the local level Core Strategy Policy CS7 states that all developments must be of high quality design that maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located. The submitted DAS includes an assessment of the proposals under the headings of use, amount, layout, scale, landscape, appearance and access.
- 6.32 The following will examine different components of the overall design.

Layout

- 6.33 The series of connected buildings are in a curved arrangement, located adjacent to Market Square, and these would positively contribute to defining that public space, by formally providing an edge to it, enclosure, and contributing to an active frontage. The section which would front the square would be the school hall, which would also be accessible to the community. The main entrance to the school and teaching blocks beyond would provide a continuous active frontage to Flagstaff Road to its junction with Longwater Avenue (opposite Green Park Business Park).
- 6.34 The external landscaped areas would be mainly to the north of the school (rear) acting as a buffer to the residential area to the north-east and north-west of the site.
- 6.35 During pre-application discussions officers queried the location of the nursery outdoor space being located to the front of the building, adjacent to the road and requested that the rationale for this would need to be clearly explained. The applicant has identified that alternative locations were tested, however, the proposed location was felt to be the best location, as it provided contiguous play space for nursery/reception separate to that of the main school (alternative locations would fragment the play space for older children on a constrained site), it would enable parental access for am/pm sessions of nursery and reception classes

to function without disruption to the running of the rest of the school. The enclosure to play space provides safe containment of the nursery/reception area.

- 6.36 In terms of the internal layout at the ground and first floor the northernmost block accommodates the hall (double height), kitchen and changing rooms; the central block the reception, offices, nursery and KS1 classrooms to the rear at ground floor and KS2 classrooms at first floor; and the southernmost block reception classrooms to the front and KS1 classrooms to the rear at ground floor and KS2 classrooms at first floor.

Scale

- 6.37 The proposed school would be well within the original maximum height parameter for the school as defined at outline stage, i.e. 7.9m compared to an approved maximum of 13m. The surrounding buildings range up to 6 storeys (extra care) and therefore the overall scale and massing would be appropriate in the context.

Appearance

- 6.38 The school is proposed to be principally constructed using the same buff multi-stock brick as the surrounding residential apartments. It is proposed that the entrance would have a series of different colour vertical fins with the green fin carried through into the atrium space to emphasise the route into the building, along with a double height glazed corridor. A green totem bearing the school name is also proposed to act as a visual landmark.
- 6.39 The façade of the community hall is proposed to be a combination of strong buff brick surround with bronze look clad facade and glazing. Vertical fins of the same material as the cladding would give emphasis to the height of the hall and provide a civic façade to the Market Square.
- 6.40 A different composite cladding is proposed for the curved connecting blocks with the coloured vertical metal shading fins to distinguish them from the other buildings and to provide a 'fun' element to the elevations, intended to appeal to primary aged children.
- 6.41 The teaching blocks would be similar in appearance to the hall, but simpler i.e. without the vertical fins.

Illustrative Images to Market Square and the school entrance



View looking North-West across Market Square



View looking North towards main entrance



View looking North-West across Market Square with the school on the right hand side

Access

- 6.42 There would be level access through the school with a lift. Stair and door widths would comply with Part M of Building Regulations.
- 6.43 Officers consider that the scheme provides for a good quality design in accordance with policy CS7.

(v) Amenity Impacts

- 6.44 With regard to local planning policies the key guiding principles for amenity are set out in Policy DM4: Safeguarding Amenity. The matters identified in the Policy are discussed and assessed in turn below:

Sunlight and Daylight

- 6.45 A Sunlight and Daylight Impact Assessment was submitted which reviews the expected access to natural light and the building's impact on the availability of natural light for neighbouring buildings. It concludes that the overall design and layout allows for good levels of natural daylight for the majority of teaching rooms;

that it will not affect the natural daylight of surrounding development; outdoor space with sufficient levels of direct sunlight and a passive design to use naturally occurring solar gains.

- 6.46 In summary out of the 15 windows assessed 13 of them would have sufficient access to natural light. The Nursery would experience the lowest levels of daylight and sunlight, due in part being opposite the Extra Care Building, but mostly as a result of the covered play space on the ground floor, which is an educational requirement. The proposed scheme has exceeded recommendations for both sunlight and daylight for a greater proportion of areas than those that do not.

Privacy and Overlooking

- 6.47 There would be some overlooking of the school from adjacent developments, in particular the upper floors of the Extra Care building, but this would be a minimum of 33 m away (front face to front face). The flat block to the north would be at ca 15m. These relationships are largely the same as approved at outline, and it is not considered that there would be significant issues with regard to privacy and overlooking.

Visual Dominance

- 6.48 The proposed scheme would be well within the height parameters as set at outline stage and would not be visually dominant, especially when viewed in the context of the extra care building opposite.

Noise and Disturbance

- 6.49 The national and local policy framework seeks to ensure that developments are not subject to noise which gives rise to significant adverse effects which would impact on health and quality of life. Adequate mitigation measures should be provided to minimise the impact of such pollution (para 123 NPPF, Core Strategy Policy CS34: Pollution and Water Resources).
- 6.50 A Noise and Vibration Report was submitted which concludes that based on future predicated noise levels from road traffic, i.e. once GPV and the Station are fully operational, that the levels are likely to be higher than would be acoustically acceptable for natural ventilation via openable windows. Therefore alternative means of ventilation may need to be considered. The Environmental Protection and Nuisance Officer recommends a condition controlling the noise level of plant.
- 6.51 The approved outline permission includes conditions regarding hours of use of the sports pitches and the community hall, to protect amenity of neighbouring residences, which remains relevant for this scheme.

Artificial Lighting

- 6.52 A section entitled 'Lighting Strategy' is included in the DAS. This refers to lighting design being produced in accordance with the Department for Education and Employment's Lighting Design for Schools. The types of lighting shown in the DAS appear to be a suitable approach, but it is recommended that a condition be included for the submission and approval of a detailed lighting scheme.

Dust

- 6.53 The Environmental Protection and Nuisance officer has recommended that a condition be included for a dust management plan to be submitted and approved.

Crime and Safety

- 6.54 National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (Part 7, Sect 58; 'Requiring good Design' and Part 8, Sect 69; Promoting Healthy Communities') where it is stated that development should create '*Safe and accessible environments where crime and*

disorder, and the fear of crime do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion’.

- 6.55 The design of the school has been led from meeting requirements of BB103, rather than specific secure by design guidance. However, TVP has confirmed that the overall design, layout, security appear to be an acceptable approach, but recommend a condition be attached that Secure by Design accreditation is achieved.
- 6.56 In conclusion on residential amenity matters, the original outline permission clearly found the location and use acceptable with surrounding residential development. Although the proposal is for increased activity on the site, the overall principle for the use, subject to suitable conditions, is still considered to be acceptable with respect to residential amenity issues.

(vi) Landscape & Open Space/Leisure

- 6.57 The landscape strategy has been based on principles set out in the Department for Education and Skills document ‘Schools for the Future - Designing School Grounds’: inspiration and variety, access, choice and versatility, security and safety, the natural environment and management and maintenance. The Strategy includes for a variety of external spaces; design of flexible play space to consider the sun’s movement; key social nodes with larger hard landscaped areas to provide adequate functional space and seating opportunities; a habitat garden, and tree planting for privacy.
- 6.58 Additional tree planting was requested at the front of the school to soften the appearance as well as suggestions as to amended tree species and further details of the hedge planting. Amended details were submitted, which the Natural Environment Officer has confirmed are acceptable. The overall principles of landscaping are, however, considered acceptable subject to further detail and recommended conditions for the submission and approval of hard and soft landscaping detail.
- 6.59 With regard to the provision of open space the key policy framework at the local level is set out in the Core Strategy, policies CS29 & CS30, supported by the Open Spaces Strategy (2007) and in the Sites and Detailed Policies Document, Policy DM16. Combined, these require that all new development should make provision for open space needs through on or off-site provision or through contributions.
- 6.60 The original S106 legal agreement for the one form entry included the requirement for *“a shared use sport facility to be located within the School site to include three sports pitches of approximately 300sqm each which facility may be used for sports purposes for the benefit of the community, which are appropriate in the residential area to include changing and lavatory facilities.”* The overall provision is for an all-weather 3G pitch of 38x55m (2090sqm), and a MUGA 32.5x21.5m (699sqm). This meets relevant education related requirements for school sites and would provide new sports, recreational and community facilities, which would serve Green Park Village Residents and the wider community in Reading. This accords with policy and is supported by Leisure. The use of the pitches would be defined within a community use agreement which is a recommended condition.
- 6.61 The landscaping scheme seeks to maximise opportunities on a constrained site and deliver a range of functions. The overall scheme is considered to accord with relevant policies CS7, CS29, CS38, DM16 and DM18.

(vii) Ecology

- 6.62 NPPF paragraph 118 requires local planning authorities to aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity when determining planning applications. The local policy (Core Strategy policy CS36) also requires development to retain, protect and incorporate features of biodiversity or geological interest found within sites.
- 6.63 The submitted Ecological Statement concludes that the original Phase 2b area contained habitats of low ecological value, although there were a small amount of woody vegetation and ditch line, which have since been lost or altered. The Statement identifies that measures to increase the ecological value of proposed habitats have been incorporated into the landscape design where possible. However, although the Landscape Strategy does include a potential habitat/garden area, which would have the potential to provide ecological habitats, there is no other mention of biodiversity enhancements.
- 6.64 A condition is recommended requiring further detail to be submitted and approved as part of a detailed landscape scheme.
- 6.65 The proposed scheme is considered acceptable and accords with policy CS36, subject to the above condition/s.

(xiii) Environmental Effects

Air quality

- 6.66 The site is not within an Air Quality Management Area and the submitted air quality Statement shows that the air quality as a result of the development will remain below air quality objectives.

Contamination

- 6.67 The previous use of the site and its potential for contamination was considered at the outline stage. The contaminated land statement discusses the remediation that has already been carried out on the site and that the school site is now considered to be low risk and no further remedial works are required.

Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage

- 6.68 As advised by the EA Green Park was granted permission to raise levels of the land resulting in the site being in Flood Zone 1. The wider development can therefore go ahead without the need for further floodplain compensation measures. The EA has recommended a condition that the development is to be in accordance with the submitted Flood Risk Assessment.
- 6.69 A Surface Water Drainage Strategy forms part of the Flood Risk Assessment submission. This sets out that the drainage on the site would be designed to accommodate rainfall intensities for a 100yr +40% climate change storm event. The discharge of surface water is not expected to exceed that which was allowed under the original permission.
- 6.70 Conditions are recommended with respect to SUDS.
- 6.71 It is considered that the development proposals would comply with relevant standards for flood risk and sustainable drainage in accordance with Policy CS1, CS35 and DM1.

(ix) Sustainability

- 6.72 As part of the environmental strand of sustainable development the NPPF, supported by local policies CS1, CS2, SD1, DM1, and DM2 requires development to *“mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.”* The submission information includes an Energy Statement and BREEAM Pre-Assessment Report.
- 6.73 Policy CS1 and supporting SPD requires a minimum of 62.5% BREEAM score to be achieved. The submitted report demonstrates that a score of 68.3% could be achieved. With regard to energy requirements, the measures identifies to be incorporated area: Energy efficient building fabric and insulation to all heat loss floors, walls and roofs; high efficient double glazing; high efficient heating and mechanical ventilation systems; led lighting; occupancy sensors to WCs, and heating and lighting sub-metering in line with BREEAM requirements.
- 6.74 Policy DM2 ‘Decentralised Energy’ states that any non-residential development of 100sqm or more shall consider the *“inclusion of a CHP plant, biomass-fuelled heating system or other form of decentralised heating provision within the site unless it can be demonstrated that the scheme is not suitable or feasible for this form of provision.”* A number of energy options were explored, but only solar PV panels were considered as feasible option for the site.
- 6.75 Together these measures would deliver a total reduction in CO2 emissions of 23.7% which would meet council requirements.

(x) Infrastructure Provision (Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy)

- 6.76 Policies CS9 and DM3 allow for securing the necessary contributions to ensure that the impacts of a scheme are properly mitigated. These are considered to meet the relevant legal tests as set out in the CIL regulations and would mitigate the effects of the scheme effectively.
- 6.77 Reading’s Economic Development Plan sets out the need to harness the unique opportunities provided by major developments in the South Reading Corridor. South Reading includes some of the more deprived wards in Reading, including with regard to the level of skills and employment. This proposed development would provide an opportunity to develop Employment, Skills and Training Plans which would benefit residents. An Employment, Skills and Training Plan for construction is a recommended obligation within the Section 106 agreement.
- 6.78 The proposal includes for parking bays to be utilised for drop-off and pick up as well as for school buses for trips. As these lie outside the red line application area of the school an obligation is recommended to specify specific hours of use for the school and shared servicing and delivery use, and that these are retained, for specific hours, for those uses.
- 6.79 An obligation is recommended regarding Travel Plan requirements based on Transport comments above.
- 6.80 The application site currently includes the current marketing suite building and associated parking spaces. It is proposed to retain the marketing suite until 2021 (when the temporary permission elapses), which would involve phased completion of the external space of the school to coincide with the phased filling of the school. The relevant phasing is included as a recommended obligation within the S106.

6.81 The overall proposal includes for the community use of the hall, external sports pitches and parking area. This is included as an obligation to ensure that the community use benefits are realised and retained.

(xi) **Equality**

6.82 In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the current application) that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application.

6.83 In terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 The principle of development has been established by the outline planning consent and the proposed scheme would meet a specific need for education and community facilities in an area of Reading with deprivation.

7.2 The scheme would be in sustainable location, support the creation of community, and create jobs during the construction phase

7.3 There would be no significant environmental effects.

7.4 The principle of the proposals and the detailed aspects of the development would comply with the objectives of national planning policies and the adopted local policies.

Case Officer: Alison Amoah

APPENDIX 1: PLANS

Proposed Site Plan



Proposed Elevations



1 Proposed South West Elevation - Market Square
1:200



2 Proposed North West Elevation
1:200



3 Proposed South East Elevation
1:200



4 Proposed North East Elevation
1:200

Proposed Floor Plans

Ground



First



Roof

