

**WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - PLANNING, PUBLIC PROTECTION AND GOVERNANCE**

**DELEGATED APPLICATION**

**Application No:** 6/2022/0466/FULL  
**Location:** Northaw C Of E Primary School Vineyards Road Northaw Potters Bar Hertfordshire EN6 4PB  
**Proposal:** Erection of a single storey part front extension  
**Officer:** Ms Kirsty Shirley

**Recommendation:** Granted

6/2022/0466/FULL

<b>Context</b>	
<b>Site and Application description</b>	The application site is a Primary School located to the north of Vineyards Road. The application site is within the setting of the Grade II listed 8 Vineyards Road and The Old Vicarage. The site is also within the setting of Northaw Conservation Area.
<b>Constraints (as defined within WHDP 2005)</b>	CA - Conservation Area: NORT; - Distance: 30.22 LBC - LISTED BUILDING Cottage. C17 timber frame. 2 bays with gable end - Distance: 45.98 AAS - Area of Archaeological Significance Area of Archaeological Significance : AAS39 - Distance: 12.48 GB - Greenbelt - Distance: 0 LCA - Landscape Character Area (Northaw Common Parkland) - Distance: 0 PAR - PARISH (NORTHAW AND CUFFLEY) - Distance: 0 Wards - Northaw & Cuffley - Distance: 0 A4D - ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION - Distance: 0 FM10 - Flood Zone Surface Water 100mm (2747580) - Distance: 0 FM10 - Flood Zone Surface Water 100mm (2747644) - Distance: 0 FM00 - Flood Zone Surface Water 1000mm (18099) - Distance: 0 HEN - Existing habitat not currently qualifying under S41 NERC Act - Distance: 0 HEN - No known habitats present (high priority for habitat creation) - Distance: 0 HEN - Existing S41 NERC Act habitat - Distance: 0 SAGB - Sand and Gravel Belt - Distance: 0
<b>Relevant planning history</b>	Application Number: E6/1956/0410/ Decision: Granted Decision Date: 13 June 1956 Proposal: Playing fields.  Application Number: E6/1969/0806/ Decision: Granted Decision Date: 31 July 1969 Proposal: Additional school land.  Application Number: S6/1994/0706/FP Decision: Granted Decision Date: 21 November 1994

	<p>Proposal: Proposed formation of 8 No. additional car parking spaces</p> <p>Application Number: S6/1995/0184/FP Decision: Granted Decision Date: 01 May 1995 Proposal: Extension of school library</p> <p>Application Number: S6/2002/1459/FP Decision: Granted Decision Date: 12 May 2003 Proposal: Proposed early years classroom and relocation of playground</p> <p>Application Number: S6/2007/1107/FP Decision: Refused Decision Date: 17 September 2007 Proposal: Erection of single storey front extension</p> <p>Application Number: S6/2008/0360/FP Decision: Granted Decision Date: 18 April 2008 Proposal: Erection of single storey front extension</p> <p>Application Number: S6/2012/1591/FP Decision: Granted Decision Date: 24 October 2012 Proposal: Erection of mobile classroom unit</p>		
<b>Consultations</b>			
<b>Neighbour representations</b>	Support: 0	Object: 0	Other: 0
<b>Publicity</b>	<p>Site Notice Display Date: 17 March 2022 Site Notice Expiry Date: 7 April 2022 Neighbour notification letter</p>		
<b>Summary of neighbour responses</b>	None received		
<b>Consultees and responses</b>	<p>Conservation Consultant – Comment: <i>The proposed extension to the school would not harm the significance of either the listed buildings or the conservation area. The extension will have a traditional design that matches the current front elevation of the school and would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the area. In any case the small extension would be a minimal change that would not significantly alter views in and out of the conservation or the views of the listed buildings themselves. While there is a historic connection between the school and listed buildings, due to their locality, this connection would not be affected.</i></p> <p><i>The proposal is considered to be in line with Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Chapter 16 of the NPPF.</i></p> <p>HCC Historic Environment Advisor – no response Northaw &amp; Cuffley Parish Council – no response</p>		

**Relevant Policies**

NPPF  
 D1  D2  GBSP1  GBSP2  M14  
 Supplementary Design Guidance  Supplementary Parking Guidance  Interim Policy for car parking and garage sizes  
Others: SADM15

**Main Issues****Green belt**

The site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt.

*Appropriateness*

Paragraph 149 of the NPPF outlines that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt, apart from a limited number of exceptions. One of these exceptions (relevant in this case – as explained below) is the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

The original school building has been substantially extended over the years. Having regard to the scale and location of existing extensions which have already taken place, it is considered that the original school buildings have already been disproportionately extended.

The proposed development would add approximately 37m<sup>2</sup> in footprint to the school. Whilst relatively modest in size, the extension would contribute further to the significant increase in size to the original building, representing a cumulative disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building.

*Openness*

There is no definition of openness in the NPPF but, in the context of the Green Belt, it is generally held to refer to freedom from, or the absence of, development. However, assessing the impact of a proposal on the openness of the Green Belt requires a judgment based on the circumstances of the case. Openness is capable of having both spatial and visual aspects - in other words, the visual impact of the proposal may be relevant. The duration of the development, degree of activity, the specific characteristics of the proposal and its setting are also relevant in this case when making an assessment.

As a consequence of the size and scale of the development, the loss of Green Belt openness in spatial terms would be minimal. The visual impact would also be limited given the use of matching materials to the school building and the extension would be read in the context of the existing school blocks.

*Very Special Circumstances*

Paragraph 147 of the NPPF states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in Very Special Circumstances. Paragraph 148 of the NPPF goes on to state that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. Very Special Circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

The proposed extension would represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt and result in a loss of Green Belt openness. In accordance with the NPPF, substantial weight is attached to this harm.

Information submitted with this application explains that the extension is required to improve the staff room by providing further space. The size and scale of the current staff room is insufficiently sized to adequately meet the needs of the teaching staff, with little space elsewhere in the school for staff to work outside of a lesson. The proposed development would also provide an opportunity for the pipework to be updated, as the existing staff room does not benefit from prompt or sufficient hot water supply.

The extension is also required to increase the kitchen space. The application site is a Transporting Kitchen, providing meals for both staff and children at the application site as well as the St Marys C of E School in Newgate Street Village. The size of the kitchen space is insufficient, with storage spaces used simultaneously as office spaces, and a small bathroom to be used as a changing room. The proposed development would result in an increase in kitchen storage space with a dedicated kitchen office and larger bathroom.

The proposed development would provide required and adequate space for both teaching and kitchen requirements, as well as further adequate hot water provision throughout the site, which are key elements essential to the day to day running of the school.

It is therefore considered that the considerations above amount to very special circumstances necessary to clearly outweigh the harm identified to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and limited loss of Green Belt openness.

**Would the significance of the designated heritage asset be preserved or enhanced?**

Yes  No

**Comment** (if applicable): Section 16 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act states that the local planning authority shall have “*special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses*”.

The specific historic environment policies within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are contained within paragraphs 184-202. Paragraph 192 of the NPPF states, ‘*In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:*

- *The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- *The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- *The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness’*

Paragraph 199 of the NPPF outlines that, when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, ‘great weight’ should be given to the asset’s conservation and the more important the asset the greater the weight it should be given.

Paragraph 200 states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting) should require clear and convincing justification.

Paragraph 201 of the Framework states ‘Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use’.

Policy SADM15 of the Draft Local Plan Submission 2016 is similar in these aims.

The proposed extension to the school would not harm the significance of either the listed buildings or

the conservation area. The extension will have a traditional design that matches the current front elevation of the school and would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the area. In any case the small extension would be a minimal change that would not significantly alter views in and out of the conservation or the views of the listed buildings themselves. While there is a historic connection between the school and listed buildings, due to their locality, this connection would not be affected.

The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

**Would the development reflect the character of the area?**

Yes  No

**Comment** (if applicable): The proposed extension would match the existing front projection of the school in terms of roof form, projection and design. The scale of the extension would appear subordinate to the school building and matching materials can be secured by condition to ensure the development remains in keeping with the character of the school.

**Would the development maintain the amenity of adjoining occupiers? (e.g. privacy, outlook, light etc.)**

Yes  No  N/A

**Comment** (if applicable): No neighbour representations have been received.

The positioning, size and scale of the development would not result in adjoining neighbours to experience a detrimental loss of sunlight or privacy, nor would the development appear overbearing or unduly dominant.

**Would the development provide / retain sufficient parking?**

Yes  No  N/A

**Comment** (if applicable): The proposed development would not result in a reduction of car parking spaces, nor would the development facilitate additional staff at the site. Parking is therefore not a consideration for this application.

**Conclusion**

It is considered very special circumstances exist which outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and consequently the proposal is considered acceptable in planning terms.

**Conditions:**

1. The brickwork, roof tile, bond, mortar, windows, detailing, guttering, soffits and other external decorations of the approved extension/alterations must match the existing building in relation to colour and texture.

REASON: To ensure a satisfactory standard of development in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policies D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

**DRAWING NUMBERS**

2. The development/works shall not be started and completed other than in accordance with the approved plans and details:

<b>Plan Number</b>	<b>Revision Number</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Received Date</b>
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201	Location and Block Plans	28 February 2022
202	Proposed Site Plan	28 February 2022
203	Existing Part Floor Plan	28 February 2022
205	Existing Elevations	28 February 2022
207	Proposed Roof Plan	28 February 2022
204	Existing Part Roof Plan	28 February 2022
206	Proposed Floor Plan	28 February 2022
208	Proposed Elevations	28 February 2022

REASON: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and details.

#### 1. POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE STATEMENT

The decision has been made taking into account, where practicable and appropriate the requirements of paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework and material planning considerations do not justify a decision contrary to the development plan (see Officer's report which can be viewed on the Council's website or inspected at these offices).

#### **Informatives:**

1. This permission does not convey any consent which may be required under any legislation other than the Town and Country Planning Acts. Any permission required under the Building Regulations or under any other Act, must be obtained from the relevant authority or body e.g. Fire Officer, Health and Safety Executive, Environment Agency (water interest etc.) Neither does this permission negate or override any private covenants or legal interest (easements or wayleaves) which may affect the land.
2. Any damage to the grass verges caused by the development/works hereby approved is the responsibility of the applicant and must be re-instated to their original condition, within one month of the completion of the development/works. If damage to the verges are not repaired then the Council and/or Highway Authority will take appropriate enforcement action to remedy any harm caused.
3. In addition, and separate to your planning permission, for the majority of schemes, you are required by law to appoint a building regulator who will inspect your property at various stages during the course of your building project. This is to ensure it is compliant with the Building Regulations and the Building Act 1984.

The checks the building regulator will carry out include, but are not limited to, the structure, foundations, fire precautions and escape routes, electrical and plumbing compliance and other issues such as drainage and insulation. The objective of these checks is to ensure that your building is safe to live in, accessible and environmentally sustainable.

Once all build stages are checked and the works are finished, a Completion Certificate is issued confirming that these objectives have been met. You will also

need the Completion Certificate, should you sell the property, as it will confirm to future owners that the work has been carried out in compliance with the Regulations.

As the owner of the property, you are responsible for Building Regulations compliance so we would urge you to decide which regulator to use, as opposed to leaving your builder or architect to make the choice. This is so that you can be sure the building regulator is truly independent and working to protect you from any breach or omission during the works.

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**Determined By:**

Mr Mark Peacock  
27 April 2022