

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

**DELEGATED APPLICATION**

**Application No:** 6/2020/1766/FULL  
**Location:** Chancellors School, Pine Grove, Brookmans Park, Hatfield, AL9 7BN  
**Proposal:** Erection of building to accommodate new electric meter.  
**Officer:** Mr David Elmore

**Recommendation:** Granted

6/2020/1766/FULL

<b>Context</b>	
<b>Site and Application description</b>	Planning permission is sought for the erection of a building to accommodate new electric meter with the school grounds. The building would form an extension to the existing drama theatre building.
<b>Constraints (as defined within WHDP 2005)</b>	GB - Greenbelt - Distance: 0 PAR - PARISH (NORTH MYMMS) - Distance: 0 Wards - Brookmans Park & Little Heath - Distance: 0 HEN - No known habitats present (high priority for habitat creation) - Distance: 0 SAGB - Sand and Gravel Belt - Distance: 0
<b>Relevant planning history</b>	<p>Application Number: 6/2019/0085/MAJ            Decision: Granted            Decision Date: 29 November 2019            Proposal: Erection of building comprising sports hall with associated changing facilities and 7 x classrooms built on existing hard play tennis courts; 4 x hard play sports pitches to be provided to replace existing; provision of 33 x parking spaces; and two mobile classrooms to be provided for the duration of the project</p> <p>Application Number: S6/2004/1882/FP            Decision: Granted            Decision Date: 27 June 2005            Proposal: Erection of new I.C.T building</p> <p>Application Number: S6/2001/0981/FP            Decision: Granted            Decision Date: 24 September 2001            Proposal: Erection of new main entrance and reception area to existing school</p> <p>Application Number: S6/1997/0652/FP            Decision: Granted            Decision Date: 10 November 1997            Proposal: Extensions to provide new gymnasium, music/drama classrooms and associated storage and circulation space</p> <p>Application Number: S6/1995/0205/FP</p>

<p>Decision: Granted  Decision Date: 11 May 1995  Proposal: Erection of single storey building to provide four new classrooms.  (Revision of permission S6/0786/94)</p> <p>Application Number: S6/1974/0742/  Decision: Granted  Decision Date: 08 January 1975  Proposal: Two storey extension to changing rooms.</p> <p>Application Number: E6/1972/5431/  Decision: Granted  Decision Date: 13 March 1973  Proposal: Addition to refectory and new teaching accommodation.</p> <p>Application Number: E6/1968/0111/  Decision: Granted  Decision Date: 31 July 1969  Proposal: Science block and part of teaching block.</p> <p>Application Number: E6/1966/1834/  Decision: Granted  Decision Date: 07 February 1967  Proposal: Library block</p> <p>Application Number: E6/1961/1466/  Decision: Granted  Decision Date: 05 February 1963  Proposal: Site for secondary school.</p>			
<b>Consultations</b>			
<b>Neighbour representations</b>	Support: 0	Object: 0	Other: 0
<b>Publicity</b>	Press Advert Display Date: 5 August 2020 Press Advert Expiry Date: 19 August 2020 Neighbour letters sent		
<b>Summary of neighbour responses</b>	No representations received		
<b>Consultees and responses</b>	North Mymms Parish Council - No comment		
<b>Relevant Policies</b>			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NPPF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GBSP1 <input type="checkbox"/> GBSP2 <input type="checkbox"/> M14 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supplementary Design Guidance <input type="checkbox"/> Supplementary Parking Guidance <input type="checkbox"/> Interim Policy for car parking and garage sizes			
<b>Main Issues</b>			
<b>Would the development reflect the character of the area?</b>			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
<b>Would the development reflect the character of the building?</b>			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
<b>Comment:</b> Subject to external walls matching that of the adjoining building			

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

Yes  No

**Other considerations**

Green Belt

The application site lies within the Green Belt. Policy GBSP1 of the District Plan states that the Green Belt will be maintained as defined in the Proposals Map.

*Appropriateness*

Paragraph 145 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) 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 and a recent planning permission for a new sports hall and classrooms is currently being built out. Having regard to the scale and location of existing extensions which have already taken place and that currently being constructed, it is considered that the original school buildings have already been disproportionately extended.

The proposed building would have a footprint of 5.25sqm and height of 2.1m. Although very modest in scale relative to the school buildings, it would add additional built development.

In light of the above, the proposed building would represent a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building and therefore represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

*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.

In this case the proposed building would be very modest in scale and be read as part of the large school building onto which it would adjoin. The building would also be positioned in a discreet location on the site, out of prominent views and partially screened by existing trees. Taking account of these factors, it is considered that the proposal would not have a material effect on Green Belt openness.

Whether there are any very special circumstances?

Paragraph 143 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 144 of the NPPF then 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

	<p>outweighed by other considerations.</p> <p>The proposed building would house a new electric meter for the school. The applicant explains that as part of the sports hall and classroom expansion project and as the detailed design has developed it has been established that an additional electric meter will be needed as the current supply is at maximum capacity.</p> <p>An electricity substation serving the school is located south eastern corner of the main school car park and ideally this would be the location for addition power supply. It is outlined however that it was not deemed possible to fit the new meter within the existing substation and after discussions with energy supplier UKPN, they have expressly advised against locating the new enclosure adjacent to the existing substation as they considered it an aid to climbing the existing substation fence. Furthermore, UKPN has confirmed that they cannot provide multiple electric supplies to this site and as such it is necessary to extend the current service from the existing meter housing.</p> <p>The proposed location of the building would also be strategically positioned as it would provide the shortest route for the new supplies to both the school and sports hall.</p> <p>The size of the building is also limited to allow only for the electric metre housing and access. Alternative locations were considered namely a 'freestanding' solution in the car park, however potentially two parking spaces would be lost, one for the housing and one to give access to the meter housing as UKPN will not allow parking in front of it and parking places are of high demand on this site.</p> <p>Based on the submitted information, it is clear that a new electric meter to the school is essential to manage the current and proposed power needs once the Sports Hall and additional classrooms are constructed. This amounts to very special circumstances necessary to clearly outweigh the harm identified to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness.</p>
<b>Conclusion</b>	
Subject to the suggested condition, the proposed development would be acceptable in planning terms.	

**Conditions:**

1. The external brickwork of the approved extension must match that of the adjoining 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>
2154 5 00		Location Plan, Site Plan and Proposed Floor Plan and	20 July 2020

0150	Elevations	
2154 5 00 0151	Existing Plan & Elevations	20 July 2020
2154 5 00 0152	Proposed Elevations in Context	20 July 2020

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. 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.

Hertfordshire Building Control Limited are a Company wholly owned by eight local authorities in Hertfordshire including Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council. Please contact them on 01438 879990 or at [buildingcontrol@hertfordshirebc.co.uk](mailto:buildingcontrol@hertfordshirebc.co.uk) to

discuss the process and all that is involved. Or alternatively refer to the Homeowner Information section on their website at [www.hertfordshirebc.co.uk](http://www.hertfordshirebc.co.uk)

**Determined By:**

Mr Mark Peacock  
14 September 2020