App.No.: 140798 & 140796  
Decision Due Date: 06/08/2014  
Ward: Upperton  

Officer: Leigh Palmer  
Site visit date: 11/06/2014  
Type: PPP  

Site Notice(s) Expiry date: 05/07/2014  
Neigh. Con Expiry: 05/07/2014  
Weekly list Expiry: 05/07/2014  
Press Notice(s)-: NA  

Over 8/13 week reason: Reported to committee within time  

Location: Former NHS Dental Practice Board, Compton Place Road  

Proposal:  
140798  
Erection of three-court sports hall.  
140796  
Erection of three storey extension and external alterations to existing buildings.  

Applicant: Gildredge House Free School  

RECOMMENDATION  
140798  
Erection of three-court sports hall.  
Refuse  
140796  
Erection of three storey extension and external alterations to existing buildings.  
Approve Subject to Conditions  

Executive Summary:  
This application seeks to vary elements of the new building and the external remodelling of existing building at the East Free School (Known as Gildredge House).  

140798  

Whilst there is no objection in principle to the applicants seeking to vary the design and appearance of the sports hall it is considered that the proposed changes to the sports hall have resulted in a building that has a somewhat utilitarian appearance which is considered to be at odds with the character of the site and its setting against the backdrop of the mature planting and the South Downs.
As the works on this element of the development are significantly progressed without a formal planning permission in place a Temporary Stop Notice has been served on the site/developers.

This notice has the effect of ceasing all further construction works on the sports hall building until the debate around its planning merits have been debated and a decision made at this planning committee.

This application is recommended for refusal.

140796

The changes to the external fabric of the main building are considered to be appropriate and would not result in any material harm to the character of the host property nor be harmful to the long and short range views of the site. It is considered therefore that this application is acceptable.

This application is recommended for approval.

On both applications as the use of the site has previously been supported and that these applications do not proposes any increase in the school number then the proposals remain acceptable in terms of their impact on the highway network.

Planning Status:

- Archaeological Notification Area
- Source Protection Zone 3
- Tree Preservation Order 139
- Adjacent to South Downs National Park

Relevant Planning Policies:

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 and supersedes Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Planning Policy Statements and provides a concise policy document. The NPPF introduces a ‘presumption in favour of sustainable development’ although it still requires proposals to be determined in accordance with the development plan.

The Eastbourne Core Strategy Local Plan (2013) was adopted by the Council in February 2013 and the following policies are considered relevant to this application:

- Policy B1 Spatial Development Strategy and Distribution
- Policy B2 Creating Sustainable Neighbourhoods
- Policy C10 Summerdown and Saffrons Neighbourhood Policy
- Policy D7 Community, Sport and Health
- Policy E1 Infrastructure Delivery
- Policy D10a Design
- Policy D1 Sustainable Development

The following ‘saved’ policies of the Eastbourne Borough Plan are considered to be relevant to this application:
Site Description:

The site is now being operated as Gildredge House School and there is significant building works in operation at the site.

At the time of the site the school were implemented the new build – refurbishment works as approved under the previous consent. The site visit confirmed that the applications reported here were essentially retrospective applications as the changes to the sports hall building and modifications to the school buildings were significantly progressed.

At the time of the site visit an element of the car park was being used as/for contractors vehicle parking. This will be short lived and the car park arrangement is not to be varied by either of these applications.

The site consists of 8 main buildings interlinked around a large sports field. The buildings range in age from 1877 through to the 1980’s. None of the existing buildings are Listed or locally Listed.
Relevant Planning History:

The buildings on site have been subject to extensions and alterations over time.

130161 Change of use of land from office (B1) to mixed use comprising non-residential education (D1) staff residential units (C2) and office (B1) and demolition of existing single-storey prefabricated building and erection of sports hall, three-storey extension and enclosed entrance court with associated landscaping and play and sports space: GRANTED 02/09/2013

Previous Approved Scheme

The sports hall will be rectangular in shape with a shallow pitched roof. The building will measure approximately 55 metres in length by 22 metres in width and will extend to 10 metres in height at its highest point. The external walls will include a brick plinth up to a height of approximately 3 metres with coloured render above this.

The front (east facing) elevation will be punctuated by a single-storey foyer/pavilion element that will have a flat roof and glazed facade.

The building will comprise four courts providing space for numerous sports including tennis, basketball, volleyball, netball, badminton, 5-a-side football and indoor cricket.

At the stage of the original consent it was envisaged that the school would be formed of three groups:

- The Lower School for those aged between four and eight (Reception to Year 3)
- The Middle School for those aged between eight and thirteen (Year 4 to Year 8) and
- The Upper School for those aged between thirteen and sixteen (Year 9 to Year 11) plus sixth form students in Years 12 and 13 (aged seventeen to nineteen).

Approximately 128 staff will be employed (approximately 106 full-time), consisting of 84No. teaching staff and 44No. non-teaching staff.

The initial pupil intake proposed for September 2013 would be 56 Reception Year pupils (age 4+) plus 120 Year 7 pupils (age 11+). The remaining 1,056 pupils would be introduced over each successive year in increments, with a total capacity of 1,232 achieved in September 2019.

The total of 1,232 pupils will be accounted for as follows:

- Reception Year to Year 6 (primary education) – 392
- Year 7 to Year 11 (secondary education) – 600
- Year 12 and Year 13 (sixth form secondary education) – 240

An initial ‘Phase 1’ redevelopment programme is necessary to accommodate the first 176 pupils in September 2013.
It will be a non-residential school with core opening hours between 8.30am and 3.00pm for the lower school, whilst the middle and upper school will remain open until 4.00pm, with extra-curricular sessions continuing on until 5.00pm. This offers parents the opportunity to collect their children within their normal working day. As a result there will be a gradual departure of pupils and staff from the site, rather than one peak departure time as is the case with many schools. School gates will open for pupils at approximately 8.00am so children can arrive for morning groups, which will again create a more gradual arrival pattern. In addition, it is proposed that the school facilities will be available for use by the community outside normal school hours.

There is no information that this position has/will change as a result of these applications.

**Proposed development:**

140798 Sports Hall

Full planning permission is sought for a sports hall to be located at Gildredge House.

This application seeks approval for an alternative to the sports hall approved previously (130161) in September 2013.

The location of the sports hall is predominantly in the same location as the one previously considered namely sited on the western part of the site.

The proposed revised sports hall will be positioned lengthways from east to west running adjacent to the tree belt along the southern boundary of the site.

The footprint of the current scheme measures approximately 18m X 27m is capped with a flat roof at a height of approximately 9m, ventilation/plant pod are to be located on the top of the flat roof resulting the in the maximum height being approximately 10.2m.

The external fabric of the sports hall is a propriety cladding system with exposed supporting superstructure. The external colouring is a light grey colour.

140796

This application proposes modifications to the external fabric of three parts of the school campus; these buildings relate to:-

- the proposed three storey extension  
  The proposed three storey extension is proposing to remodel the window openings and fenestration pattern giving them a more vertical emphasis and to clad this extension in facing brickwork.

- the existing school block and  
  The existing school block is proposing to reduce the extent of glazing, incorporate facing brickwork to the ground floor to visually provide a plinth to this part of the building. This ground floor brickwork links in with the
external appearance of the three storey extension.

- the proposed glazing courtyard infill.
The glazed screen wall to the inner courtyard area is to be approximately 0.5m higher than previously proposed and also introduces a more regular fenestration pattern.

There is no change to the footprint of the new building elements of the scheme and save for the modest increase in height for the glazed link there are no other material increases to the height of the proposed extensions.

**Neighbour Representations:**

140798

1 letter

- If I had known about the appearance of the building looking like an industrial building then probably would not have bought property.
- Car parking and access issues

140796

None received

**Officers Appraisal:**

140798 & 140796

The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are as follows:

- The principle of the development having regard to the existing use of the site and planning policy
- The effect the proposed development will have on the visual amenities of the locality
- The effect the proposed development will have on the amenities of occupiers of surrounding residential properties
- Highways and parking considerations
- Other material considerations

**The principle of the development having regard to the existing use of the site and planning policy**

The site is now operating as Gildredge House School and as such there is no objections to the principle of new buildings that support the school's desire to deliver the widest possible curriculum.

**The effect the proposed development will have on the visual amenities of the locality**

The application site is not within a Conservation Area. However, it is acknowledged that the site is visually prominent and the sensitive nature of the surrounding environment requires careful consideration.
The changes to the external fabric of the sports hall building with the proprietary cladding and exposed superstructure has resulted in a building that is utilitarian in its appearance and is at odds with the quality of the existing buildings at the site.

It is accepted that the sports hall is a smaller building than that formally considered however its external appearance is considered to be detrimental to the long and short range views of the site. This loss of amenity is considered to be a material planning considerations and officers contend that the visual impacts of the scheme should be given significant weight in the determination of this application.

There are no objections to the changes to the external fabric of the main school buildings. The use of a common palette of materials and repetitive fenestration sizing and pattern will result in a degree of homogeneity to the development and would assist in linking the building back to the main (older) part of the school.

At the previous application stage the covered courtyard area was considered to be an intrinsic part of the redevelopment of the site; Members will note that this element is to be retained within this proposal.

**The effect the proposed development will have on the amenities of occupiers of surrounding residential properties**

The use as a school has previously been accepted and there is no element of the schemes that would suggest any increase in the number of classrooms or school pupil numbers and as such issues in relation to noise and disturbance and areas of concern in relation to vehicle movements and parking can not be re-opened here.

Given the site has a fairly open aspect from Compton Place Road all of the changes proposed within these applications will be visible from public vantage points.

It is accepted that the development forming these applications is located along the western boundary of the school campus and as such at positions furthest from residential properties that adjoin the site. Notwithstanding this it is considered that the external appearance of the sports hall is such that it creates a simple utilitarian form of development that does not reflect the architectural language of the site and surrounding area and as such is considered to be harmful to the long and short range views of the site.

There are no areas of concern with the remodelling of the main school building.

**Human Rights Implications:**

It is considered that the proposal would not affect the rights of occupiers of surrounding residential properties to the peaceful enjoyment of possessions and protection of property. Furthermore the proposals will not result in any breach of the Equalities Act 2010.
Recommendation:

140798

The proposed sports hall building by reason of its prominent siting, its design and external appearance would be likely to result in a form of development that would be harmful to the visual appearance of the site and surrounding area and would be contrary to saved polices UHT 1 & HO20 of the Eastbourne Borough Plan and Policies D1 and D10a of the Councils Core Strategy Local Plan

& 140796

(1) Commencement of development within three years
(2) Drawing Nos. of approved plans
(3) Samples of all materials

Appeal: Should the applicant appeal the decision the appropriate procedure to be followed, taking into account the criteria set by the Planning Inspectorate, is considered to be written representations.