

## PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

Development Management Service  
Planning and Development Division  
Environment and Regeneration  
Department  
PO Box 333  
222 Upper Street  
LONDON N1 1YA

<b>PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE B</b>		
Date:	15th July 2014	NON-EXEMPT

Application number	P2014/2012/FUL
Application type	Full Planning Application
Ward	Finsbury Park
Listed building	Locally listed
Conservation area	N/A
Development Plan Context	None
Licensing Implications	None
Site Address	Ambler Primary School, 80 Blackstock Road
Proposal	Erection of a single storey (standalone) building adjacent to the Blackstock Road frontage to provide a dedicated building to accommodate the breakfast and after schools clubs, enabling the additional first form entry class to be located adjacent to the existing within the main building; insertion of new entrance door within the existing front boundary wall.

Case Officer	Ashley Niman
Applicant	Sachin Desai, LB Islington
Agent	John Keefe, Ream Partnership

### 1. RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is asked to resolve to **GRANT** planning permission:

1. subject to the conditions set out in Appendix 1;

### 2. SITE PLAN (site outlined in black)



### 3. PHOTOS OF SITE/STREET



Image 1: The relevant corner of the school from Blackstock Road

## **4.0 SUMMARY**

- 4.1 Planning permission is sought for a single storey stand alone building sited in the North West corner of the playground of the site, this has been identified for the dedicated accommodation of breakfast and after school clubs, and thereby allowing an additional first form entry class to be located within the main building.
- 4.2 The application is brought to committee because it is a Council-own development.
- 4.3 The principal of the land use(educational use) is acceptable, since there is a clear need for the additional building and the loss of playspace is justified. The proposed building is for breakfast and after school club use in association with the main school building.
- 4.3 The new structure will not harm the appearance, character and setting of Ambler Primary School nor the wider street scene.
- 4.4 The new structure will not materially affect the amenity of adjacent residents.
- 4.5 It is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted subject to conditions.

## **5.0 SITE AND SURROUNDING**

- 5.1 Ambler Primary School is a multi storey Victorian Board School. It is a locally listed building (Grade B).It is not located within a conservation area. The building has had few significant external alterations in recent years, including a metal façade enclosed area and a new separate childrens centre building located to the rear (West) of the site.
- 5.2 The main play area of the school is located in the North West and South West of the site, and there are two entrances off Blackstock Road and one off Romilly Road to the rear.
- 5.3 The surrounding area is mostly dominated by 2/3 storey terraced residential dwellings with ground floor commercial units (for example on Blackstock Road) and immediately to the South are the 3 storey Blackstock Mews and Chapman Place residential developments.

## **6.0 PROPOSAL (in Detail)**

- 6.1 A new detached single storey building is proposed (a proposed area of 104.22m<sup>2</sup>). It will be located in the North corner of the site, 1.5m from the Blackstock Road boundary and extending right up to the Northern boundary, with a new level access off Blackstock Road. This will provide a dedicated space for breakfast and after school activities, and free up space within the existing main building for the additional year 1 group class to be sited adjacent to the existing year 1 group class. The building will also be used to house other activities during the school day to

accommodate the loss of existing space in the main building during and after transition from a single form to 2 form entry.

- 6.2 The building will incorporate a disabled and staff WC, kitchenette and storage area.
- 6.3 The proposed building will have a part sloping roof and will be finished in cedar cladding with a completely glazed western elevation. It will measure 8m in depth x 18m in width. The building will reach a height of 3.2m in total.
- 6.4 The siting of the building will require the repositioning of an existing climbing frame (along with a part of a soft play area), and the removal of existing shrubs and vegetation and a low level brick wall.
- 6.5 The new pedestrian access through the Blackstock Road boundary wall will be 1.5m wide and sited approximately 9m from the Northern boundary.

## **7.0 RELEVANT HISTORY:**

### **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 P062206 External alterations to existing single storey building (known as block B). Refurbishment and replacement of existing windows, installation of new double doors in west elevation, installation of new door and window in north elevation. Erection of a single storey reception area and buggy store with roof lights (on east side of block B). Approved 21/11/06
- 7.2 P062770 Alteration to existing block for additional new kitchen including external extract, replacement of new kitchen windows, Installation of new ground to first floor dumb waiter and replacement of upper section to classroom (RM36) windows. Approved 03/03/2007
- 7.3 P091544 (Former School Keepers House) Conversion to 5 self-contained flats, including 3 storey rear extension. Approved 30/09/2009

The most relevant recent applications have been highlighted above.

## **8.0 ENFORCEMENT**

- 8.1 None

## **9.0 CONSULTATION**

### **Public Consultation**

- 9.1 Letters were sent to occupants of 107 adjoining and nearby properties at Romilly Road, Blackstock Road, Ambler Road and Chapman Place on the 11<sup>th</sup> of June 2014. A site notice and press advert were displayed on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2014. The public consultation of the application therefore expired on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2014, however it is the

Council's practice to continue to consider representations made up until the date of a decision.

- 9.2 At the time of the writing of this report no responses had been received from the public with regard to the application.

### **External Consultees**

- 9.3 **Sports England** have no objection

### **Internal Consultees**

- 9.4 **Tree Officer** has no objection subject to a conditions relating to protection measures.
- 9.5 **Access Officer** has no objection subject to a condition requiring further details.
- 9.6 **Design and Conservation Officer** has no objection subject to a condition relating to roofing materials.

## **10.0 RELEVANT POLICIES**

- 10.1 Details of all relevant policies and guidance notes are attached in Appendix 2. This report considers the proposal against the following development plan documents.

### **National Guidance**

- 10.2 The National Planning Policy Framework 2012 seeks to secure positive growth in a way that effectively balances economic, environmental and social progress for this and future generations. The NPPF is a material consideration and has been taken into account as part of the assessment of these proposals.

### **Development Plan**

- 10.3 The Development Plan is comprised of the London Plan 2011, Islington Core Strategy 2011, Development Management Policies 2013, Finsbury Local Plan 2013 and Site Allocations 2013. The policies of the Development Plan are considered relevant to this application and are listed at Appendix 2 to this report.

### **Designations**

- 10.4 The site has the following designations under the London Plan 2011, Islington Core Strategy 2011, Development Management Policies 2013, Finsbury Local Plan 2013 and Site Allocations 2013:

**none**

### **Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) / Document (SPD)**

- 10.5 The SPGs and/or SPDs which are considered relevant are listed in Appendix 2.

## 11. ASSESSMENT

11.1 The main issues arising from this proposal relate to:

- Land Use and Need
- Design Considerations
- Neighbouring amenity
- Accessibility.
- Landscaping

### Land-use and Need

11.2 Ambler School is a two form entry primary school, but is currently operating as a single form entry school.

11.3 Following analysis the school was deemed suitable for permanent expansion in accordance with Islington's policies relating to the provision of school places. This means that the provision of an additional 180 spaces will be phased over the next 6 years. This follows the provision of a 30 space 'bulge class' in September 2014.

11.4 The submitted planning statement states that the existing building can accommodate the majority of additional places through internal reorganisation. However there is insufficient space on the ground floor to accommodate an additional Year 1 group class. This buldge class needs to be in place by September 2014).

11.5 In Islington, 781 children were eligible under September 2013 criteria, rising to 1117 in September 2014. There are currently 550 places available in Islington, rising to about 700 by September 2014. This need for places sets the background for the application.

11.6 London Plan policy 3.19 states that "Proposals that result in a net loss of sports and recreation facilities, including playing fields should be resisted." Further guidance is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which states that: "open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless,

- an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
- the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

11.7 Policy DM6.3 of the Development Management policies seeks to protect existing play space across the borough by resisting their loss unless a replacement play space of equivalent size and functionality is proved to meet the needs of the local population. Where this is not possible development will only be permitted where it

can be demonstrated robustly that the space is no longer required and its loss would not lead to a shortfall in overall play provision in the local area.

- 11.8 The proposed building will be located on existing playground space, with an area equivalent to 171m<sup>2</sup>. A section 77 application (development on playspace) has been submitted to the Secretary of State for the loss of the playground space.
- 11.9 It is anticipated by the applicants that this will be approved. Should it be approved then this would provide justification for the loss of this play space. It should also be noted that the area in question is an underused area of the site due to the lack of natural daylight and passive surveillance with dense planting making it a difficult area to supervise and monitor school children and visitors.
- 11.10 A condition is proposed to ensure that play equipment is relocated and installed promptly to enable play provision to be retained as far as possible.
- 11.11 This particular siting also was carefully chosen in terms of its proposed use, with a new dedicated access provided off street level to facilitate easy drop off and collection at children at staggered times before and after school.
- 11.12 The provision of the new facility can be classified as the provision of new social infrastructure. Development Management Policy DM4.12 therefore applies. The policy has particular relevance in regard to inclusive access, avoiding adverse impact on the amenity of surrounding uses, and seeking to ensure the safety and amenity of children. These matters are covered under Access and Amenity.
- 11.13 The London Plan supports new and expanded education facilities. Policy 3.18 states “Development proposals which enhance education and skills provision will be supported including new build, expansion of existing facilities or change of use to educational purposes. Those which address the current projected shortage of primary schools places will be particularly supported”. There is therefore in principle support for additional education facilities for primary schools.
- 11.14 In conclusion therefore, it is considered that the loss of playspace (which Sport England does not object to) is offset by the enhanced educational facilities which provide a social function serving the community. Given the arguments put forward above it is concluded that there is sufficient justification to comply with the above policies.

### **Design Considerations**

- 11.15 The main school building is a late Victorian brick structure, but does have some alterations and modern structures erected in the grounds.
- 11.16 The proposed single storey structure is designed to be low key and unobtrusive. Its modern design does not compete with the historic main building and its materials are chosen to match that of the Children’s Centre which exists to the rear of the play area.

- 11.17 As such, it is considered that, given its scale and siting, some 15m from the main building, the proposed structure would not harm the setting or the character and appearance of the principal school building.
- 11.18 Running along the Blackstock Road boundary of the school is a 2.2m high brick wall. Whilst the building will be sited only 1.5m from this boundary, given its design and limited height, (approximately between 2.5m to eaves, 3.2m to its highest eaves) the boundary wall, (including a similarly sized wall/fence along the North West boundary) will mostly obscure the building from public view.
- 11.19 As such, its impact upon the wider street scene is considered to be limited, and in compliance with policies in this respect.

### **Accessibility**

- 11.20 Both front and rear thresholds are level and therefore suitable for disabled access. The facility includes a Disabled and Staff WC. There is also an individual entrance to the facility from the street (1.5m wide)
- 11.21 A condition is proposed to ensure that gate and building complies with access standards.

### **Landscaping and Trees**

- 11.22 There are a total of 5 trees that would be affected by the development.
- 11.23 Trees T1, T2 and G3 are sited along the Eastern boundary and given the proximity of the proposed building, these trees will need to be removed. These are given a category C grading in accordance with BS 5837.
- 11.24 The trees identified as T4 and G5 in the submitted arboricultural report (by GHA trees, dated 12<sup>th</sup> May 2014) are considered to be of importance (graded A or B in accordance with BS 5837) are sited along the North West boundary. The report concludes that, whilst the proposed development would encroach into the root protection area of T4, adequate protection measures during the build could ensure that this tree (and G5) could be retained. A condition to ensure this is recommended.
- 11.25 The Tree Officer has reviewed the scheme and, subject to conditions suggested above, does not object to the proposal.

### **Neighbouring Amenity**

- 11.26 The Council seeks to ensure that new development does not harm the amenity of adjacent residents, either from loss of daylight, sunlight, privacy and overlooking, sense of enclosure or noise. The proposed structure will be single storey and will be set behind a retained boundary school wall. Whilst the structure will be sited right up to the North West boundary (with No 78 Blackstock Road, a residential property) , there will be no material impact on the amenity of the adjacent residents, as the



proposed classroom would be South East of the house and only marginally higher (3.2m at the mid point) than the boundary wall (which is 2.2m high).

11.27 The proposal is therefore considered not to prejudice the residential amenity of neighbouring properties in line with policy DM2.1 of the Development Management Policies.

## 12 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

### Summary

- 12.1 The principle of the land use is acceptable and there is clear justification for the loss of external playspace.
- 12.2 The new structure will not harm the appearance, character and setting of the existing main school building.
- 12.3 As such, the proposed development is considered to accord with the policies in the London Plan, Islington Core Strategy, Islington Development Management Policies, and the National Planning Framework and is recommended for approval subject to appropriate conditions.

### Conclusion

It is recommended that planning permission be granted subject to conditions as set out in Appendix 1 - RECOMMENDATIONS.

## APPENDIX 1 – RECOMMENDATIONS

### RECOMMENDATION A

That the grant of planning permission be subject to conditions:

#### List of Conditions:

<b>1</b>	<b>Commencement</b>
	CONDITION: The development hereby permitted shall be begun not later than the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.  REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Chapter 5).
<b>2</b>	<b>Approved plans list</b>
	CONDITION: The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:  Location Plan, LB1/RP01 REV 1, LB1/RP/02 Rev 2, LB1/RP/03 Rev

	<p>3, LB1/RP/04 Rev 1, LB1/RP/05 Rev 1 (General Front Elevations), Arboricultural and Planning Integration Report (GHA/DS/1960:14). Cover letter (author John Keefe dated 15/5/2014), Design &amp; Access statement/supporting statement (May 2014)</p> <p>REASON: To comply with Section 70(1)(a) of the Town and Country Act 1990 as amended and the Reason for Grant and also for the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of proper planning.</p>
<b>3</b>	<b>Materials</b>
	<p>CONDITION: The development shall be constructed in accordance with the schedule of materials noted in part 9 of the application form.. The development shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the details so approved and shall be maintained as such thereafter.</p> <p>REASON: In the interest of securing sustainable development and to ensure that the resulting appearance and construction of the development is of a high standard.</p>
<b>4</b>	<b>*Materials</b>
	<p>CONDITION: Prior to the commencement of development details of the roof materials of the development hereby permitted shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>REASON: In the interest of securing sustainable development and to ensure that the resulting appearance and construction of the development is of a high standard.</p>
<b>5</b>	<b>Trees</b>
	<p>CONDITION: No development (including demolition works) shall take place on site until a method statement for the retention of the trees identified in the submitted arboricultural report (by GHA trees, dated 12<sup>th</sup> May 2014) and details of the 3 new trees to be planted, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Councils Tree Officer (<a href="mailto:jon.ryan@islington.goc.uk">jon.ryan@islington.goc.uk</a>) should be contacted 2 weeks before commencement of development of any works to arrange a site inspection.</p> <p>REASON: To protect the health and stability of trees to be retained on the site and to neighbouring sites, and to ensure that a satisfactory standard of visual amenity is provided and maintained.</p>
<b>6</b>	<b>*Access</b>
	<p>CONDITION: Prior to the commencement of development details of the disabled access, access into the classroom, new boundary gate, and internal details of the class rooms and W/C's hereby permitted shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>REASON: In the interest of securing acceptable access arrangements and to ensure that the external appearance of the development is of a high standard.</p>

**List of Informatives:**

<b>1</b>	<b>Positive Statement</b>
	<p>To assist applicants in a positive manner, the Local Planning Authority has produced policies and written guidance, all of which is available on the Council's website.</p> <p>A pre-application advice service is also offered and encouraged. The LPA and the applicant have worked positively and proactively in a collaborative manner through both the pre-application and the application stages to deliver an acceptable development in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF</p> <p>The LPA delivered the decision in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF.</p>
<b>2</b>	<b>Tree Protection Measures</b>
	<p>The Council shall be contacted regarding the pre-commencement meeting and be updated at the defined stages of construction.</p>
<b>3</b>	<b>Accessibility</b>
	<p>The access doorway widths to the building and from the Blackstock Road entrance, along with the disabled WC should comply with Islington's Inclusive Design SPD. The shared kitchen facilities should comply with building regulations.</p>

## APPENDIX 2: RELEVANT POLICIES

This appendix lists all relevant development plan policies and guidance notes pertinent to the determination of this planning application.

### National Guidance

The National Planning Policy Framework 2012 seeks to secure positive growth in a way that effectively balances economic, environmental and social progress for this and future generations. The NPPF is a material consideration and has been taken into account as part of the assessment of these proposals.

### Development Plan

The Development Plan is comprised of the London Plan 2011, Islington Core Strategy 2011, Development Management Policies 2013, Finsbury Local Plan 2013 and Site Allocations 2013. The following policies of the Development Plan are considered relevant to this application:

#### A) The London Plan 2011 - Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London

3 London's people Policy 3.1 Ensuring equal life chances for all Policy 3.18 Education facilities	7 London's living places and spaces Policy 7.1 Building London's neighbourhoods and communities Policy 7.2 An inclusive environment Policy 7.3 Designing out crime Policy 7.4 Local character Policy 7.8 Heritage assets and archaeology Policy 7.18 Protecting local open space and addressing local deficiency
---	--

#### B) Islington Core Strategy 2011

Spatial Strategy Policy CS8 (Enhancing Islington's Character)	Policy CS15 (Open Space and Green Infrastructure) Policy CS16 (Play Space) Policy CS17 (Sports and Recreation Provision)
Strategic Policies Policy CS9 (Protecting and Enhancing Islington's Built and Historic Environment)	Infrastructure and Implementation Policy CS18 (Delivery and Infrastructure) Policy CS19 (Health Impact Assessments)

#### C) Development Management Policies June 2013

Design and Heritage DM2.1 Design DM2.2 Inclusive Design DM2.3 Heritage	Energy and Environmental Standards DM7.4 Sustainable design standards
Health and open space	Infrastructure DM9.1 Infrastructure DM9.3 Implementation

DM6.3 Protecting open space  
DM6.4 Sport and recreation  
DM6.5 Landscaping Trees & diversity

## **Designations**

The site has the following designations under the London Plan 2011, Islington Core Strategy 2011, Development Management Policies 2013, Finsbury Local Plan 2013 and Site Allocations 2013:

### **Islington Local Plan**

Locally Listed Building

## **Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) / Document (SPD)**

The following SPGs and/or SPDs are relevant:

### **Islington Local Plan**

Environmental Design  
Conservation Area Design Guidelines  
Urban Design Guide  
Accessibility SPD

### **London Plan**

Accessible London: Achieving and  
Inclusive Environment  
Providing for Children and Young  
Peoples Play and Informal Recreation  
Planning for Equality and Diversity in  
London