

**AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET**

**Name of Committee**

**Regulatory Committee**

**Date of Committee**

**21st November 2006**

**Report Title**

**Exhall Grange School, Bedworth - New Hall Block, Gym Block, Plus Various Extensions**

**Summary**

This report recommends the grant of planning permission for a new hall block, gym block and covered ways plus various extensions, hard play areas, access roads, turning areas and car parking at Exhall Grange School and Science College, Wheelwright Lane, Ash Green, Bedworth.

**For further information please contact**

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**Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework?**

Yes/No

**Background Papers**

Submitted applications, plans and design and access statement received 13th September 2006.  
Letter from local resident dated 22nd September 2006.

**CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:-**

*Details to be specified*

Other Committees

.....

Local Member(s)

(With brief comments, if appropriate)

Councillor F McCarney – no comments received as at 7/11/06.

Other Elected Members

.....

Cabinet Member

(Reports to The Cabinet, to be cleared with appropriate Cabinet Member)

.....

Chief Executive

.....

- Legal  I Marriott – agreed
- Finance  .....
- Other Chief Officers  .....
- District Councils  Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council – no comments received
- Health Authority  .....
- Police  .....
- Other Bodies/Individuals  .....

**FINAL DECISION**                      **YES/NO**      *(If 'No' complete Suggested Next Steps)*

**SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS :**

*Details to be specified*

- Further consideration by this Committee  .....
- To Council  .....
- To Cabinet  .....
- To an O & S Committee  .....
- To an Area Committee  .....
- Further Consultation  .....

**Regulatory Committee - 21st November 2006**

**Exhall Grange School, Wheelwright Lane, Ash Green  
Bedworth - New Hall Block, Gym Block, Plus Various  
Extensions**

**Report of the Strategic Director for  
Environment and Economy**

**Recommendation**

This report recommends the grant of planning permission for a new hall block, gym block and covered ways, plus various extensions, hard play areas, access roads, turning areas and car parking at Exhall Grange School and Science College, Wheelwright Lane, Ash Green, Bedworth, subject to the conditions and for the reasons contained in **Appendix B** of the report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Economy.

Application No : N109/06CC031

Received by 13/9/2006

Advertised Date : 21/9/2006

Applicant Strategic Director for Resources on behalf of Cabinet.

The Proposal : Construction of new hall block, gym block and covered link walkways. Extensions to existing 'North block', 'Lancaster Block', and 'main block'. Plus the provision for hard play areas. New access road, vehicular turning area, car parking areas and use of 'Lancaster Block' as i.d.s. Offices. [Submitted under Regulation 3 of the Town & Country Planning Regulations 1992.]

Site & Location : 10.12 Ha. of Land at Exhall Grange School and Science College, Wheelwright Lane, Ash Green, Bedworth [Grid ref: 335.842].

See plan in **Appendix A**

## 1. Application Details

- 1.1 The application seeks consent for various buildings and other works at the school. These proposals have largely arisen due to the future rationalisation of the site.
- 1.2 Currently, the site incorporates the Royal National Institute of the Blind (RNIB) Rushton Hall School which makes use of leased accommodation on the Exhall Grange School site. This leased accommodation is now unsatisfactory for the RNIB's needs and as such they intend to spend £20 million to build a totally new school and children's home on the northern part of the existing Exhall Grange School site. This would involve a freehold land transfer of this part of the site to the RNIB and mean that some accommodation would need to be replaced in the southern part of the existing site to ensure that the new Exhall Grange School can operate effectively.
- 1.3 Principally the school will require a new hall, incorporating kitchen and dining facilities, and a new gym. The gym is designed to enable it to be extended to a sports hall at some future date.
- 1.4 Whilst undergoing redevelopment of the site it is intended that a number of disabled access issues are also be addressed. These include the provision of new covered links, a new corridor between the art/music block and the main block alongside the proposed hall building and the replacement of internal ramps with two lifts.
- 1.5 The new gym block is sited away from the main blocks and would be the southern most building on the site adjacent to the school's playing fields. It would provide gym, weights room, stores, changing areas, toilets, office and boiler room. A hard play area (tarmac) is proposed adjacent to the block with a 1.2 metre high rebound wall and fencing, measuring 30 metres by 20 metres. The block would be treated with pitched roofs with the exception of the existing single storey building to which the block will be attached and measure approximately 575 sq m.
- 1.6 The gym would be the tallest building of about 9 metres high. This height is required for indoor sport and exercise purposes. The roof will be hipped with the exception of the south east elevation. It is intended to use brick work banding to create a land mark on the approach to the school and also to break up the scale of the largest block building on the site.
- 1.7 The new hall block would link the existing main block and art/music block and provide a stage/hall, kitchen and corridors (approximately 550 square metres, single storey). The building would be finished with a pitched roof and the height of the building would reach 7 metres above ground level. Such height is required for the stage and for physical education purposes, and would be no higher than the adjacent main buildings.
- 1.8 The application also includes the provision of linked covered ways, these would be between two buildings, the Lancaster and Main Block, the Main Block and

contiguous practical classrooms. These covered ways would be up to 3.8 metres in height depending upon the site ground levels and have glazed side walls.

1.9 In addition, a number of smaller extensions to existing blocks is also proposed. These are as follow:-

- (i) Lancaster Block - New first floor corridor, lift extension, new roofs, walls, windows and main entry with canopy;
- (ii) Main Block - New main lift block replacing existing internal ramps;
- (iii) North Block - New link between the two ends of the block and the provision of glazed walling under the existing roof to form new offices.

1.10 As well as the proposed built development some external works are also proposed. These cover the following:-

- (i) The provision of new play grounds to replace loss by new buildings and car parking;
- (ii) New security fencing to secure the site. This fencing is located to the south of the main blocks of buildings on site and effectively separates the gym and car parking from the main school buildings.

## **2. Consultations**

2.1 **Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council** - No comments received.

2.2 **County Councillor McCarney** - No comments received, as at 7/11/06.

2.3 **Libraries, Adult Learning and Culture** - No objection subject to tree protection conditions.

2.4 **Sport England** - No comments received.

## **3. Representations**

3.1 One letter from a resident on Wheelwright Lane objecting to further development in the area due to the large amount of traffic on Wheelwright Lane that has caused a large number of accidents, and the sufficient existing provision of sporting facilities within the vicinity including the Ricoh stadium development.

## **4. Observations**

### **Site and Situation**

4.1 Exhall Grange School campus, including the RNIB Rushton Hall School, currently occupies a large area of 25 hectares. Most of the school buildings are sited in the northern part of the site whilst to the south lies extensive open school playing fields bounded by a hedgerow of mature trees, including Poplars.

- 4.2 The development site is bounded by the RNIB school to the north, with Wheelwright Lane Primary school and residential properties to the east, to the south lies an area of open land, whilst the western boundary lies part of Blackberry Lane, which serves as an access for Grange Farm at this point. The land to the west and south of the school site is largely open and forms part of the Warwickshire Green Belt, however the school site is not included within the designated Green Belt.
- 4.3 The school has been in use since for a many years and has been developed in a piecemeal fashion. As such a number of architectural styles and materials are present although they have been designed specifically for purpose and are typical of school buildings of their period.
- 4.4 Both single storey and two storey buildings are found around the main buildings. However, the scale, massing and bulk of the two storey buildings is not too evident in some cases as the ground levels on site drop from west to east.

### **Visual Amenity**

- 4.5 The proposed developments are located well within the school site and would have very little impact on the amenities of local residents or any particular view from the public domain. The nearest residential properties outside the school site are located at least 70 metres from proposed new buildings. Other development may be closer to residential properties. These include the provision of car parking spaces, but these are sited at least 10 metres from the school boundary which is well screened by mature trees.
- 4.6 The main issue would be the design of the buildings in relation to the existing buildings on site. As the site benefits from a range of buildings of various forms and materials, and the scale of the proposed buildings and extensions would not have an over dominant impact on the existing development, the new proposals would be of an acceptable design especially when the use is considered.
- 4.7 A condition has been proposed requiring design details for the proposed fencing to be submitted. This should ensure that the construction and finishing of the fencing respects its setting.

### **Highways Issues and Site Access**

- 4.8 The vehicular access will be transferred from Wheelwright Lane to the roundabout on Windinghouse Lane serving the nearby Prologis development for the Exhall Grange school. As such all vehicular traffic associated with this school will be removed from Wheelwright Lane. The Wheelwright Lane access has been a potential problem for some years due to poor visibilities and as such Highways safety would be improved. However, the access onto Wheelwright Lane will be retained for the use of RNIB Rushton Hall School, as the RNIB pupils are largely residential the overall volume of traffic along Wheelwright Lane will be reduced.

- 4.9 The main vehicle movements to and from the site would be associated with the pupils arriving and leaving at the start and end of the day. Most pupils arrive and leave by midibus, minibus or taxi which creates peak traffic flows. However, the new access road proposed is over 200 metres long before it reaches the proposed pick up points and would accommodate queuing vehicles off the public highway.
- 4.10 A local resident has raised the volume of traffic along Wheelwright Lane as a particular concern. However, shifting the access would help alleviate this issue.

### **Sports Facilities**

- 4.11 Another concern outlined in the local resident's letter is that there are sufficient sporting facilities within the vicinity and as such any further facilities are not required. It should be noted that the proposed gym would primarily be used by the school for its purposes, although wider community use may also be provided for. The school caters for pupils with a wide range of disabilities and as such needs to be on the school site. It would be inappropriate for pupils to travel off site for basic school sports facilities requirements. In addition the gym is sited directly adjacent to the extensive grass playing fields to allow for their use.

### **Landscaping**

- 4.12 The development would require a number of trees to be removed this includes the loss of three trees on the site of the proposed new hall building and a total of 18 trees around the proposed gym and new tarmac play area, along with a conifer hedge. A landscaping condition is proposed to ensure that adequate replacement trees are provided as part of the final scheme.

## **5. Policy**

- 5.1 The local plan for the area is the Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Local Plan 2006. In the local plan the site has no specific designation, as such the Borough wide policies such as the Environmental policies of the plan apply.
- 5.2 Policy Env14 – Supplementary Planning Guidance/Supplementary Planning Documents states that “the design and materials of all development should be of a high standard in keeping with the scale and character of the locality.” Whilst the policy is of particular relevance to considering developments against published Supplementary Planning Guidance the impact of the development in terms of visual appearance is still relevant.
- 5.2 Policy Env22 encourages a high level of personal and community safety. The proposed scheme incorporating the provision of security fencing therefore accords with this policy.
- 5.3 Policy Env31 addresses development in areas where there are no specific proposals or policies to guide development and places the emphasis on the decision maker to take into account the merits of the scheme, their impact on

nearby land uses and other material considerations to ensure a properly planned area.

- 5.4 The proposed development would be some distance from public vantage points and neighbouring properties the design and layout harmonises with the existing buildings it would be supported by the adopted local plan.

## **6. Conclusion**

The proposals would accord with the local plan policies and would harmonise with the surrounding area. Further, the use of a second access would reduce traffic onto Wheelwright Lane. Therefore the proposal would be acceptable.

## **7. Environmental implications**

The proposal would have a limited additional impact within the vicinity as it concerned with additions to an existing school.

JOHN DEEGAN  
Strategic Director for Environment and Economy  
Shire Hall  
Warwick

6th November 2006





Scale 1: 6508

Ref No. N109/06CC031

Drawn Richard Forbes

Regulatory Committee 21/11/2006

Subject

**Exhall Grange School - New Hall, Gym and other works**



John Deegan  
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**Regulatory Committee - 21st November 2006**

**Exhall Grange School, Wheelright Lane, Ash Green  
Bedworth - New Hall Block, Gym Block,  
Plus Various Extensions**

**Application No.N109/06CC031**

1. The development hereby approved shall be commenced no later than 3 years from the date of this permission.

**Reason:** To comply with the provisions of section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the submitted application ref: N109/06CC031 and drawing numbers 316-01 Rev Q, 316-02 Rev S, 316-03 Rev K, 316-04 Rev E, 316-05 Rev A, 316-06 Rev Gcol, 316-07 Ecol, 316-08 Rev C, 316-09 Rev F-col1, 316-10, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the County Planning Authority.

**Reason:** To ensure development is carried out in accordance with the planning permission hereby granted.

3. No development shall take place until full details of soft landscape proposals have been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. These details should include a planting plan, written specifications, schedules of plants noting plant species, sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate.

**Reason:** To ensure a satisfactory standard of development in the interest of the visual amenities of the area.

4. The landscaping scheme approved pursuant to condition 3 shall be implemented in the first planting season following the completion of the development hereby approved, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the County Planning Authority. Should any trees die, be removed, become damaged or seriously diseased within five years of the initial planting, they shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species.

**Reason:** To ensure a satisfactory standard of development in the interest of the visual amenities of the area.

5. No trees other than those shown to be removed on drawing numbers 316-01 Rev Q and 316-05 Rev A shall be lopped, topped, pruned or felled, nor shall any roots be removed or pruned without the written consent of the County Planning Authority.

**Reason:** In order to protect trees on the site which are of amenity value.

6. The total root area of the trees to be retained adjacent to the approved developments shall be protected by 1.2 metre chestnut pale fencing (conforming to BS:1722) to be erected at a distance of 1 metre beyond the tree canopy and staked to the ground, for the duration of the development. No development shall take place until tree protection barriers have been erected; the barriers shall remain in situ and maintained to the satisfaction of the County Planning Authority for the duration of the works.

**Reason:** In order to protect trees on the site which are of amenity value.

7. No storage of materials, chemicals, fuel, machinery the lighting of fires nor the movement of vehicles shall take place under the tree canopies.

**Reason:** In order to protect trees on the site which are of amenity value.

8. The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until a schedule of all external finish materials, to be used on the exterior of the buildings hereby approved have been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the said approved schedule.

**Reason:** In order to ensure the satisfactory appearance of the completed development.

9. The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until full design details of all new fencing and railings to be erected on the site as part of this development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the said approved details.

**Reason:** In order to ensure the satisfactory appearance of the completed development.

10. The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until full construction details of the new car parking areas and access roads within the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the said approved details.

**Reason:** In order to ensure the satisfactory appearance of the completed development and to ensure that satisfactory arrangements are made for servicing the site.

11. Prior to the first use of the new school, the car park and service roads shall be laid out surfaced drained and marked out in fully accordance with the scheme approved pursuant to Condition 10 of this consent.

**Reason:** In order to ensure the satisfactory appearance of the completed development and to ensure that satisfactory arrangements are made for servicing the site.

### **Development Plan Policies And Proposals Relevant To The Decision To Grant Permission**

Nuneaton and Bedworth Local Plan 2006-2011, Adopted June 2006

- Env22 Security
- Env31 Other Development

### **Reasons For The Decision To Grant Permission**

The development hereby permitted is in accordance with the relevant provisions of the development plan and there are no contrary material considerations sufficient to require refusal.