

Development Control Committee
Meeting to be held on 1st March 2017

Electoral Division affected: Chorley Rural West
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Chorley Borough: application number. LCC/2016/0090

Single storey extension to allow expansion of admission numbers, additional playground/car parking areas, fenced MUGA and temporary single storey double classroom at Balshaw Lane Community Primary School, Bredon Avenue, Euxton

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Executive Summary

Application – Single storey extension to allow expansion of admission numbers, additional playground/car parking areas, fenced MUGA and temporary single storey double classroom at Balshaw Lane Community Primary School, Bredon Avenue, Euxton.

Recommendation – Summary

That planning permission be **granted** subject to conditions controlling working programme, construction working, sustainable drainage, building materials, and car parking.

Applicant's Proposal

This application is for a single storey extension at the eastern side of the main school building and a small infill extension close to the main entrance to allow expansion of admission numbers, additional playground/car parking areas, a fenced multi-use games area (MUGA) and a temporary single storey double classroom at Balshaw Lane Community Primary School, Bredon Avenue, Euxton.

The main element of the proposal would be a building extension measuring approximately 48m x 16m x 4m high and constructed of materials to match the existing school building, namely red facing bricks and a shallow pitched felt covered roof. Additionally, there would be a small infill extension measuring 5m x 7m which would allow for internal alterations including the creation of a new hall.

The MUGA and car park area would be located to the north west of the school site. The car park would provide 34 parking spaces including 2 disabled spaces.

The MUGA with synthetic grass carpet surface would measure approximately 20m by 35m and would be enclosed by a 3m high dark green mesh fence. Tree and shrub planting is proposed between the MUGA and residential properties to the west.

A small area of additional extended surfaced playground would be created to the south of the school building measuring approximately 15m x 10m and a small existing gazebo would be relocated approximately 10m further south. A number of paths would be established around the main extension and linking to the adjoining nursery.

A temporary demountable unit for a single storey double classroom would be located at the west of the site, close to the site entrance and to the rear of 16 Bredon Avenue. This would measure approximately 19m x 7m x 3m high.

Description and Location of Site

The school site is located at the eastern side of Euxton near Chorley, south of the A581 Balshaw Lane. The site is accessed off Bredon Avenue that forms part of a wider residential estate to the west of the school grounds. The main school building is surrounded by play areas and playing fields with limited on-site car parking. There is a building housing an independent nursery at the east side of the primary school grounds. There are a number of detached residential properties to the north east off Balshaw Lane and a cricket ground to the east and south located in the Green Belt.

Background

The application relates to an existing school site. There is no relevant planning history.

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Paragraphs 11 – 14, 17, 56 – 64 and 72 are relevant with regard to the requirements for sustainable development, core planning principles, good design and school provision.

Central Lancashire Adopted Core Strategy Local Development Framework

Policy 14	Education
Policy 17	Design of New Buildings
Policy 29	Water Management

Chorley Local Plan 2012-2026 - Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document

Policy V2	Settlement Areas
Policy BNE1	Design Criteria for New Development
Policy HW2	Protection of Existing Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities

Policy ST4 Parking Standards

Consultations (summary of responses)

Chorley Borough Council – No objection in principle but would like to draw attention to the major parking issues surrounding the school, which would only be exacerbated with any extension. The Council's parking standards (Policy ST4 and associated Appendix A of the Chorley Plan 2012-2016) would require the extended school to have thirty two spaces and the County Council are asked to explore if more spaces could be provided as part of the scheme.

Euxton Parish Council – The Parish Council are keen to see the much needed places provided at the site but has great concerns about the current access and parking situation and the way in which the proposed extension will exacerbate them unless suitable measures are applied. A traffic risk assessment should be provided. It is also noted that additional car parking is for staff and there is no provision to make access for children, parents and residents any safer or more convenient than at present. Additionally, there are no details of the construction compound and any trees that would be lost as a result.

Coal Authority – No objection.

LCC Highways Development Control – No objection. A number of conditions are recommended to improve highway safety and to manage construction traffic.

Sport England - Having assessed the application, none of the elements of the development affect the playing field and pitch located to the south of the site. The new Multi Use Games Area would be an asset and promote physical activity. Sport England is satisfied that the proposed development meets the following Sport England Policy exception: *E3 - The proposed development affects only land incapable of forming, or forming part of, a playing pitch, and does not result in the loss of, or inability to make use of any playing pitch (including the maintenance of adequate safety margins), a reduction in the size of the playing area of any playing pitch or the loss of any other sporting/ancillary facility on the site.* This being the case, Sport England does not wish to raise an objection.

Representations – The application has been advertised by site notice and neighbouring residents informed by individual letter. 2 letters of objection have been received on the following summarised grounds:

- Increased traffic congestion and car parking at neighbouring residential streets particularly at pick up and drop off times.
- Noise from children using the extended playground and as a result of an increased intake.
- Effects on wildlife, trees and hedgerows.
- Reception classes and play areas should be moved away from residential properties.
- No traffic risk assessment has been provided.

Advice

Planning permission is sought for a single storey extension at the eastern side of the main school building and a small infill extension close to the main entrance to allow expansion of admission numbers, additional playground/car parking areas, a fenced multi-use games area (MUGA) and a temporary single storey double classroom.

Projections indicate that there will be a need for additional primary school places in the Euxton area in the foreseeable future due to an increase in births and new housing development.

Balshaw Lane sits within the Euxton School Planning area. This area contains 6 primary schools which are: Buckshaw Primary School; Euxton CE Voluntary Aided Primary School; Euxton St Mary's Catholic Primary School; Euxton Primrose Hill Primary School; Balshaw Lane Community Primary School; and Trinity CE/Methodist Primary School.

Whilst a significant proportion of the additional housing development within Euxton is on Buckshaw Village development, other parts of this school planning area have also experienced growth through increased live births and housing development (the number of births in the area have risen from 90 in 2000/2001 academic year to around 200 at current levels).

As a result of housing on Buckshaw Village, the County Council negotiated 2 sites for primary school provision. These sites have been utilised to build Trinity CE/Methodist Primary school on two separate sites which, following statutory consultation, will be expanded to 3 forms of entry across the two sites. Additional places have also been provided at Primrose Hill Primary School, taking the school's admission number from 30 to 60 in 2015. The proposal for Balshaw Lane would increase the annual admission number to 60 with effect from September 2018, and would provide for the additional demand for pupils due to further growth in the area.

The applicant has stated that the school was selected to provide the expansion as it met the criteria for expansion within the Strategy for the Provision of School Places and Schools' Capital Investment referred to below. It was also one of only two schools in the area which hadn't already been expanded which had a site large enough to support the expansion. The Head and governors of Buckshaw Primary School had no will to expand their school at this point in time.

There has not been a drive to progress a new school locally as the County Council's Strategy for the Provision of School Places and Schools' Capital Investment states that the County Council will provide additional places in existing schools wherever possible, in preference to the provision of new schools. This approach helps to maintain stability of existing schools.

In response to major new development proposals in the area the County Council can request new school provision or funding towards school expansion but this must be reasonable and proportionate in relation to proposed development. Where developments are small in scale, the County Council must rely on the local planning authority (Chorley Council for this area) to take a strategic approach to the provision

of sites on behalf of LCC, since no single small development would be of a scale to justify a new school site being requested.

Lancashire County Council has a statutory duty to provide a Lancashire child with a school place. However, this does not specify that it must be close to their home. If this planning application was to be refused, it is likely that children in the area would have to travel to more distant locations to access a school place.

Lancashire County Council are providing an extra 1 form entry school at Trinity CE Methodist, and additional places are being provided at Primrose Hill together with what is proposed for Balshaw Lane to satisfy the basic need requirements of additional pupil places for the Euxton area. The growth of the school would be from Reception class up, which would mean a gradual increase in pupil numbers to the school rather than all the additional pupils at once, and some of the children would be siblings of others at the school already. Balshaw Lane Primary School currently has 276 pupils on its roll and with the proposed new accommodation could eventually rise to 420 pupils. However, the actual number of pupils at the school is not controlled by planning condition and there could be some scope to accept additional pupils at the school irrespective of this planning application.

Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In considering the issues that arise from the proposed development, it is necessary to take into consideration the relevant policies of the Development Plan and the planning history of the site and all other material planning considerations. Government policy is a material consideration that should be given appropriate weight in the decision making process. The Development Plan for the site is made up of the Central Lancashire Adopted Core Strategy Local Development Framework, and the Chorley Local Plan 2012-2026 Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document.

Paragraph 72 of the NPPF states that the Government attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities and that Local Planning Authorities should give great weight to the need to expand schools.

The site is an existing primary school within the urban area of Euxton. The existing built development at the school falls within the settlement boundary (Policy V2 of the Chorley Local Plan) and there is a presumption in favour of appropriate sustainable development subject to other policies and material considerations. Part of the main extension area, MUGA and car park would be located on land beyond the designated settlement area and instead fall within land allocated as existing open space. Policy HW2 of the Chorley Local Plan seeks to protect land within this designation unless alternatives would be provided, or, the loss of the site would not lead to a deficit of provision in terms of quantity and accessibility, the site is not identified as being of high quality, it can be demonstrated that retention of the site is not required to satisfy a recreational need, and the site does not make a significant contribution to the character of an area in terms of visual amenity.

Policy BNE1 of the Chorley Local Plan relates to design criteria for new development and seeks to achieve quality in design. Policy 17 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy relates to the design of new buildings and has similar criteria.

The main extension would be single storey to match the existing school building and would be to the eastern side of the school remote from residential properties. The scale and design of the new extension is acceptable and is considered to comply with the relevant policies of the development plan in this respect. The main extension and remodelled car parking area would encroach onto open space land but it is considered that a loss of this area would not be to the detriment of recreational need given the availability of open space elsewhere and that there would be no loss of playing pitches. The MUGA would provide an additional sporting facility for the school to enhance the quality and availability of usable open space, while the extended surfaced playground would provide enhanced all-weather facilities within the school grounds already used by pupils. Sport England has raised no objection.

Policy 17 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy also recognizes that there should be a promotion of designs that adopt principles of sustainable construction including Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). The applicant has submitted a drainage study that identifies that the site is currently well served by foul and surface water sewers. Due to the nature of the underlying soils, soakaway systems would not be appropriate for the proposed development due to their poor infiltration capacities. A more feasible sustainable drainage solution would be to provide a below ground cellular storage system with a flow control unit to restrict discharge to sewer to equivalent green-field run-off rates. A condition is recommended for further details and implementation of any approved design.

The main concern associated with the proposed expansion of the school is the potential exacerbation of traffic congestion arising from an increase in pupil drop-off/pick-up at the start and end of the school day. Several residents and Euxton Parish Council have indicated that the neighbouring roads are already blocked with cars driving to and from the school, by parking by the side of the roads, and that an increase in pupil numbers will only make matters worse.

The existing car park at the school can cater for 7 vehicles (including 2 disabled spaces) although site visits and aerial photographs indicate that staff also take advantage of other available spaces (maybe up to 10) around a turning circle. The original proposal provided for 24 parking spaces but following the concerns raised and following a review of available funding, this has been extended to 34 (including 2 disabled spaces), which complies with the parking standards requirements set out in the Chorley Local Plan in view of the proposed total number of classrooms. (Policy ST4). There is no requirement to provide parking for parents/carers dropping off and picking up pupils. It is considered that the proposed new staff and visitor parking arrangements would relieve some of the existing parking deficiencies at the school to reduce the likelihood of staff needing to park on local roads.

The applicant has submitted a transport statement to assess the implications of the proposed development. In terms of pupil related car movements, it is inevitable that parents/carers would continue to drive close to the school for drop-off/pick up.

Evidence from school questionnaires indicates that approximately 55% of pupils are dropped off by car (including 3% by car share) and approximately 50% live within 1 mile of school. Furthermore, approximately 180 siblings travel to school together and added to that the school operates a breakfast and afterschool club, and there are extra-curricular activities after school, which results in a staggering of the drop off and pick up. So of the 276 pupils at the school this can result in around 93 staggered car trips to and from school in the morning and in the evening.

The proposed expansion of the school could result in an additional 144 pupils at the school and a corresponding figure of around 48 additional staggered car trips morning and evening.

The transport statement concludes that there are currently high levels of on street parking available in the vicinity of the school and that parking does not result in any significant operational or safety issues on the local highway network. Additionally, there should be more than sufficient road space to accommodate the forecasted additional parent parking.

The lawful use of the public highway and parking of vehicles where it is permitted cannot be controlled through the planning process and the short term disruption experienced in the locality would be similar that experienced at other primary schools. Unfortunately there is a need for additional school places in the area, and the applicant has satisfactorily demonstrated that, in the short term at least, there are no realistic viable alternatives. This being the case, it is considered that the need for the additional school places outweighs the impact of the projected additional traffic particularly bearing mind the additional staff parking that would be created. The transport statement recommends that consideration could be given to a traffic regulation order to restrict or prohibit waiting at the Cotswold Avenue junction and existing yellow lines should be refreshed. Similarly, the County Council Highway Development Control raises no objection subject to a number of conditions relating to parking restrictions. These should be considered by the school and Lancashire County Council as the Local Highway Authority as general highway improvements outside the planning application process but are not necessary to make the development acceptable. Furthermore, off-site highway works such as yellow line markings would be subject of separate assessment and consultation through other legislative means and may not be given approval.

LCC Highways Development Control has also recommended conditions controlling construction management. In most cases, the provision on land of buildings, moveable structures, works, plant and machinery required temporarily in connection with operations is permitted development subject to their removal following completion of the operation. The applicant indicates that temporary construction access would be taken off Balshaw Lane and a compound would be formed on the site for the new MUGA. The temporary access arrangements and management of traffic on Balshaw Lane would have to satisfy separate highway legislation requirements. However, to seek to ensure protection of local amenity, conditions are recommended to control hours of construction working, to prevent construction access to the site via Bredon Avenue and to prevent construction related mud and debris being tracked onto the highway.

In conclusion, the proposed development would provide additional teaching areas to enable the primary school to increase the school's admission number. The layout, scale and design of the development would ensure a suitable educational setting. The traffic associated with the development would increase when compared with existing levels but the highway impacts of the development would be outweighed by the need for the additional school places. The new car parking arrangements would relieve some of the existing parking deficiencies at the school to reduce the likelihood of staff needing to park on local roads. It is considered that the proposed development complies with the policies of the NPPF and the development plan.

In view of the scale, location and nature of the proposed development it is considered no Convention Rights as set out in the Human Rights Act 1998 would be affected.

Recommendation

That planning permission be **Granted** subject to the following conditions:

Time Limits

1. The development shall commence not later than 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: Imposed pursuant to Section 91 (1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Working Programme

2. The development shall be carried out, except where modified by the conditions to this permission, in accordance with the following documents:

a) The planning application form dated 11/11/2016

b) Submitted drawings:-

- Drawing no. A01 - Location Plan
- Drawing no. A06, Rev B - Site Elevations - Cross Section 1
- Drawing no. A07, Rev B - Site Elevations - Cross Section 2
- Drawing no. A20, Rev D - Proposed Site Plan
- Drawing no. A22 - Proposed Classrooms - New Build
- Drawing no. A23 - Proposed Plan - Existing School
- Drawing no. A27 - Proposed Elevations
- Drawing no. A29, Rev D - Proposed Car Park and MUGA
- Drawing no. A33, Rev C - Proposed Demountable
- Drawing no. L01, Rev D - External Works and Landscaping and Planning
- Drawing no. L02 - Surrounds to Extension
- Drawing no. L03 - External Works to North Side of Buildings
- Drawing no. L04 - External Works to South Side of Buildings

c) All details approved in accordance with this permission.

Reason : To minimise the impact of the development on the amenities of the area and to conform with Policies 17 and 29 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and Policies V2, BNE1, HW2 and ST4 of the Chorley Local Plan.

3. No development shall commence until details of a surface water sustainable drainage system have been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The details shall include:
 - a) Information about the lifetime of the development, design storm period and intensity (1 in 30 & 1 in 100 year +30% allowance for climate change), discharge rates and volumes (both pre and post development), temporary storage facilities, the methods employed to delay and control surface water discharged from the site.
 - b) Demonstration that the surface water run-off will not exceed the pre-development greenfield runoff rate.
 - c) Details of flood water exceedance routes, both on and off site;

Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and the surface water sustainable drainage system shall be retained, managed and maintained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To seek to ensure that drainage from the site can be adequately controlled and to minimise flood risk and to conform with Policy 29 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy.

4. The building materials used for the external elevations and roof of the extension shall match those used on the existing building.

Reason; In the interests of the visual amenities of the area and to conform with policy BNE1 of the Chorley Local Plan.

5. Construction development, delivery, or removal of materials shall only take place between the hours of:

0730 to 1800 hours Monday to Friday (except Public Holidays),
0800 to 1300 hours on Saturday.

No construction development, delivery or removal of materials shall take place at any time on Sundays or Public Holidays.

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of local residents and adjacent properties/landowners and land users and to conform with Policy BNE1 of the Chorley Local Plan.

6. The school extension shall not be brought into use until the car parking, including the disabled parking provision, has been marked out and made available for use in accordance with the details shown on drawing no L.01, Rev D - External Works and Landscaping for Planning.

Reason: To ensure the provision of adequate car parking on site and in the interests of local amenity and to conform with Policy ST4 of the Chorley Local Plan.

7. The temporary mobile classroom shown on drawing A33, Rev C - Proposed Demountable shall be removed from the site within two months of the new extension being brought into use.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the area and to conform with Policy BNE1 of the Chorley Borough Local Plan.

8. Landscaping shall be carried out as shown on drawing no L.01, Rev D - External Works and Landscaping for Planning, within the first available planting season following completion of the MUGA and building extension.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the area and to conform with policy BNE1 of the Chorley Local Plan.

9. Measures shall be taken at all times during the construction phase of the development to prevent debris from the site being deposited by vehicles upon the public highway.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to safeguard the amenity of local residents and adjacent properties/landowners.

10. No construction traffic shall access the school site via Bredon Avenue.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to safeguard the amenity of local residents and adjacent properties/landowners.

11. Within one year of the bringing into use of the new extension, a review of the School Travel Plan shall be submitted to the County Planning Authority for approval in writing

The School Travel Plan shall include details of the measures to be implemented to reduce the highway impacts of the school and to encourage sustainable modes of travel and shall include:

- a) Evidence and results of consultation with staff, parents and other interested parties to determine existing patterns of travel to school
- b) Targets and measures to minimise the impact of/reduce private car use for the journey to and from the site by staff, parents and other visitors
- c) Any new or proposed initiatives for reducing the impacts of vehicle traffic associated with the operation of the school including a planned timetable of introduction
- d) Proposals for monitoring progress of the School Travel Plan including a timetable for its review.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to conform with Policy 3 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact
LCC/2016/0090	Feb 2017	R Hope/34159

Reason for Inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A