

**Development Control Committee**  
Meeting to be held on 21 January 2015

Electoral Division affected:  
Penwortham South

**South Ribble Borough: application number. LCC/2014/0147**  
**Proposed car park and access track to the west of the existing school building**  
**at Moor Hey Primary School, Far Croft, Lostock Hall, Preston**

Contact for further information:  
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**Executive Summary**

Application - Proposed car park and access track to the west of the existing school building at Moor Hey Primary School, Far Croft, Lostock Hall, Preston.

**Recommendation – Summary**

That subject to the Secretary of State confirming that the application should not be referred to him for determination, planning permission be granted subject to conditions controlling time limits, commencement, hours of use, landscaping and surface of car park.

**Applicant's Proposal**

Planning permission is sought for the construction of a new car park and access track at Moor Hey School, Far Croft, Lostock Hall. The proposed car park would provide for 12 additional parking spaces, with the proposed access track providing access to the car park via the school's existing access area. The car park would be approximately 30m x 12m, with the access track being approximately 35m in length and 6m wide. Both the car park and access track would incorporate a permeable sustainable drainage surface.

Revised plans have been received which provide for a 1.5m landscape strip to the southern boundary and a reduction in width of the access road from 6.1m to 4.1m.

**Description and Location of Site**

Moor Hey School is located off Far Croft Road approximately 1km to the north west of Lostock Hall. The existing school is a large single storey complex with residential properties to the south, west and east and agricultural fields to the north. The proposed car park and access track would be located on the school playing field to the west of the existing school buildings.

The nearest residential properties are located adjacent to the application site.

## **Background**

Planning permission for a similar proposal to the current application was refused at the meeting of the Development Control Committee on 3 September 2014 (ref. LCC/2014/0113).

The reasons for refusal were:

1. The development would result in an unacceptable loss of open space contrary to Policy OSR6 of the South Ribble Local Plan.
2. The development would have a negative impact upon local amenity as a result of the loss of open space, and disturbance associated with vehicle movements and parking contrary to Policies QD1, C1 and OSR6 of the South Ribble Local Plan.
3. The development does not incorporate sustainable drainage within the design contrary to Policies 17 and 29 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy.

Planning permission was granted in May 2004 for security fencing on the school boundary (ref no. 07/04/0272).

Planning permission was granted in January 2005 for a car park extension to provide 12 additional car parking spaces (ref no. 07/04/1217).

Planning permission was granted in October 2005 for the construction of a single storey extension to provide 4 additional classrooms and toilet facilities (ref no. 07/05/0728).

## **Planning Policy**

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Paragraphs 11-14 and 56-64 are relevant with regard to the requirements for sustainable development, core planning principles and good design. Paragraphs 72 and 74 are relevant in relation to the promotion of healthy communities.

Central Lancashire Core Strategy

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

South Ribble Local Plan

Policy OSR6      Private, Educational and Institutional Recreational Open Spaces  
Policy C1          Community Facilities  
Policy QD1        Design Criteria for New Development

South Ribble Development Framework (LDF)  
Site Allocations Partial Version 2013

Policy G7	Green Infrastructure Existing Provision
Policy H1	Protection of Health, Education and Other Community Services and Facilities
Policy G17	Design Criteria for New Development

### **Consultations**

South Ribble Borough Council - No objection - the proposed car park would not be lit and therefore it is considered that the development would not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of nearby residential properties.

LCC Developer Support (Highways) - No objection.

Sport England - No objection subject to a community use condition being imposed.

Penwortham Town Council- Fully support the application

Representations – The application has been advertised by site notice, and neighbouring residents informed by individual letter. Initially, one letter of representation was received objecting to the car park on the playing field and requesting to speak at the Committee meeting. A further letter was received from the same resident withdrawing the letter of objection providing that the following would apply:

- That suitable screening is placed in front of 12 Round Acre
- That the continued practice of locking the school gates at weekends is included as a condition
- That the school grounds are only used at weekends for school functions such as school events and school fairs.

Two letters of support have been received which make the following summarised points:

- The car park would alleviate problems caused by school staff parking on Far Croft.
- School transport has not been able to gain access to the school grounds due to the on street car parking issues.
- The proposal would ease access to the school for the many goods vehicle deliveries to the school.

The applicant has submitted a petition with 51 signatories in support of the application.

### **Advice**

Planning permission is sought for the construction of a car park to provide 12 additional spaces at Moor Hey Special School. The main issues are the principle of the development, the loss of open space and the impact upon residential and visual amenity.

An application for a similar development was refused in September 2014 and the reasons for refusal are set out in the background section of this report. In order to address the reasons for refusal, the current application provides for a landscape strip of 1.5m between the residential property known as 12 Round Close, the access road has been reduced in width from 6.1m to 4.1m and permeable surfacing is proposed. The applicant has also provided a statement to further justify the proposed location.

The applicant states that the proposed additional parking is required because of the difficulties the school faces regarding lack of parking space. The school currently has 17 car parking spaces available within the school site, yet has 36 permanent staff and approximately 7 visiting professionals each day. This results in staff and visitors parking on Far Croft Road, creating a busy and overcrowded road within the residential area.

The proposed development would be located within a designated Open Space area as identified on the proposals map that accompanies the South Ribble Local Plan and as Green Infrastructure on the Site Allocations Partial Version policies map 2013.

Currently, South Ribble Local Plan February 2000 is the adopted local plan. South Ribble together with Preston City and Chorley district councils jointly produced a Central Lancashire Core Strategy and South Ribble BC is currently preparing a Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan document. A partial version of the plan has been produced entitled "Site Allocations Partial Version 2013" and although not formally adopted, carries significant weight in the planning process.

Policy OSR6 of the South Ribble Local Plan states that development on open space will not be permitted unless the existing facilities can be fully retained through the development of only a small part of the site, or that the site of development is not required to satisfy a recreational need, or that the development would not detrimentally affect the amenity value of the site. Policy G7 of the Site Allocations Partial Version 2013, also seeks to protect and enhance the existing Green Infrastructure from Development unless the following criteria can be met:

- a) Alternative provision of similar and/or better facilities for the community will be implemented on another site or within the locality; or*
- b) It can be demonstrated that the retention of the site is not required to satisfy a recreational need in the local area; and*
- c) The development would not detrimentally affect the amenity value and the nature conservation value of the site.*

Paragraph 74 of the NPPF states '*Existing 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 sustainable location; or*

- *the development is for alternative sports and recreation provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.'*

The proposed car park and access track would be located on the school playing field with the access track running parallel to the school's educational garden area, before reaching the proposed car park area which is adjacent to the residential properties on Far Croft and Round Lane. Whilst the car park would not affect the actual pitch, the location of the car park on the playing field is contrary to Policy ORS6 of the South Ribble Local Plan, Policy G7 of the Site Allocations Partial Version 2013, and to the NPPF.

Sport England objected to the previous planning application reference LCC/2014/0147 on the basis that the proposal would be unacceptable and that they had offered an alternative solution. The applicant has been in extensive negotiations with Sport England who has stated that subject to the following condition which provides for community use, they would raise no objection.

*The construction of the car park and access road shall not commence until a community use agreement prepared in consultation with Sport England has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and a copy of the completed approved agreement has been provided to the Local Planning Authority. The agreement shall apply to the playing field and include details of pricing policy, hours of use, access by non-educational establishment users, management responsibilities and a mechanism for review, and anything else which the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Sport England considers necessary in order to secure the effective community use of the facilities. The development shall not be used at any time other than in strict compliance with the approved agreement."*

*Reason: To secure well managed safe community access to the sports facility/facilities, to ensure sufficient benefit to the development of sport and to accord with Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.*

One letter of objection has been received which was subsequently withdrawn provided that the following aspects formed part of the operation of the school.

- That suitable screening would be placed in front of the property known as 12 Round Acre
- That the continued practice of locking the school gates at weekends is included as a condition
- That the school grounds are only used at weekends for school functions such as school events and school fairs.

The applicant has provided revised plans to incorporate a landscape strip of 1.5m in width. However, the two other requests conflict with the requirements of Sport England. If planning permission were to be granted without the condition that Sport England request, the application would have to be referred to the Secretary of State to provide the opportunity to call in the application.

Concern has been raised about the impact of the car park in terms of residential amenity. Policy G17 of the South Ribble Development Framework Site Allocations Partial Version 2013 states that development should not cause harm to neighbouring

property by leading to undue overlooking, overshadowing or have an overbearing effect. The use of the car park would be likely to lead to disturbance of an overbearing effect due to manoeuvring of cars and headlight glare at times of darkness. The proposed screening would provide a degree of mitigation particularly when it matures over time.

Policy C1 of the South Ribble Local Plan states that development of community services is encouraged providing that the development does not have an adverse effect on the amenity of adjoining properties. This is supported by Policy H1 of the Site Allocations Partial Version 2013. The applicant has provided a landscape strip to mitigate against the impact of the car park upon the residential amenities and has advised that the application details include gates to the proposed access road to restrict access to the car park outside of the school day. The applicant has also confirmed that the access road and car park would be constructed from permeable materials.

It is acknowledged that a school which caters for children aged between 4-16 with learning, behavioural, social and emotional difficulties can have higher parking demands than other types of schools due to the additional staffing required to help support these children. More space is also needed for minibuses. Far Croft is a cul de sac with limited on-street parking and as such there would be some merit providing additional car parking within the school grounds to ease highway safety and local amenity concerns on Far Croft.

There are other locations within the school grounds that have been considered for the car park which would not impact upon the residential amenities of Round Lane and Far Croft and as part of this application process these have been considered by the applicant. However, the school is adamant that the only location that is available for the car park is the location subject to this application and the other locations have been dismissed due to health and safety reasons, impact on existing play space and on impact of curriculum delivery. The applicant is of the opinion that a location close to the existing horticultural area would create risk associated with pupils throwing gardening implements onto cars.

There are three competing interests involved with this application: Sport England who would not raise an objection to this development on the playing field subject to a condition being imposed about community use: The local resident who does not wish to see the playing field used outside of school hours, and the school who are insistent that that the application site is the only suitable site.

The only area considered appropriate by the school for further parking affects part of the school playing field. Sport England do not object to the development of this site provided a condition is imposed requiring the applicant to submit a community use agreement which would encourage the sports facilities to be more widely available for the community. However, it is considered that such a condition would not be appropriate in the circumstances given the small area of playing field that would be affected. Furthermore, it is considered that a condition of this nature would actively promote a more intensive use of the school pitch and potentially lead to a change of use towards 'leisure use' (class D2) from that of purely 'non-residential institution' (class D1).

In coming to a view on the competing interests, on balance, it is considered that there is a need for further parking provision at the school and that such parking would have benefits in terms of easing on-street parking in Far Croft thereby addressing existing highway safety and amenity issues. These benefits need to be balanced against the impacts associated with locating the car park adjacent to residential properties and the loss of a small area of sports field. On balance, it is considered that the benefits of the development outweigh its impacts. In order to mitigate the impacts on local amenity, conditions are recommended controlling the hours of use associated with the car park, details of the landscaping scheme and details of the surface of the car park.

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

### **Recommendation**

That subject to the Secretary of State confirming that the application should not be referred to him for determination, it is recommended 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 received by the Director of Transport and Environment on 22 October 2014 as amended by the email from Cassidy Ashton dated 18 December 2014.
  - b) Submitted Plans and documents:  
  
Drawing Number P5625 L02 entitled `Site Location Plan.`  
  
Drawing Number P5625 LO4 Rev A entitled `Propsoed Site Plan.`
  - c) All schemes and programmes approved in accordance with this permission.

*Reason : To minimise the impact of the development on the amenities of the area and to conform with Policy G17 of the South Ribble Development Framework (LDF) Site Allocations Partial Version 2013*

### **Hours of Working**

3. The car park and access track shall only be available for use between the hours of:

0700 to 1800 hours, Mondays to Fridays except Public Holidays

The car park and access track shall not be used on Saturdays, Sundays or Public Holidays.

*Reason: To safeguard the amenity of local residents and adjacent properties/landowners and land users, and to conform with Policy G17 of the South Ribble Development Framework (LDF) Site Allocations Partial Version 2013.*

### **Landscaping**

4. No development shall take place until a scheme and programme for the landscaping of the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The scheme and programme shall include details of:

- a) details for the planting of trees, shrubs and/or hedging, numbers, types and sizes of species to be planted, location and layout of planting areas, protection measures and methods of planting.
- b) details for the seeding of any landscaping areas including mixes to be used and rates of application.
- c) details for the management of any landscaping areas including maintenance of tree and shrub planting and grazing or mowing of grassland areas.

The approved landscaping works shall be undertaken in the first planting season following the completion of the development and shall thereafter be maintained for a period of five years including weed control, replacement of dead and dying trees and maintenance of protection measures.

*Reason: In the interests of visual and local amenity and the local environment and to conform with Policy G17 of the South Ribble Development Framework (LDF) Site Allocations Partial Version 2013*

5. No development shall commence until details of the permeable materials to be used for the surfacing of the car park and access track have been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. Thereafter, only those materials approved by the County Planning Authority shall be used.

*Reason: In the interest of sustainable drainage and to comply with policy 29 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy.*

### **Definitions**



Planting season : The period between 31<sup>st</sup> October in one year and 31<sup>st</sup> March in the following year.

**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**

**List of Background Papers**

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Ext
LCC/2014/0147	Jan 2015	C Lewis/ENV/30490

Reason for Inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A