

## Development Control Committee

Meeting to be held on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2018

Electoral Division affected: Ribble Valley South West
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### **Ribble Valley Borough: Application Number. LCC/2018/0028**

**Two single storey extensions with link corridors to the main building. Extension to the existing car park, the provision of an all-weather multi use games area and 2.4 metre high security fencing.**

**St Mary's RC Primary School, Whalley Road, Langho, Blackburn.**

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### **Executive Summary**

Application - Two single storey extensions with link corridors to the main building. Extension to the existing car park, the provision of an all-weather multi use games area and 2.4 metre high security fencing.

St Mary's RC Primary School, Whalley Road, Langho, Blackburn.

### **Recommendation - Summary**

That planning permission be granted subject to conditions controlling time limits, working programme, hours of working, building material, fencing colour, landscaping, drainage and highway matters.

### **Applicant's Proposal**

The proposal is for the erection of a single storey extension and a single storey modular building with link corridors to the existing building, a car park extension, provision of a multi-use games area and new fencing. The development proposals would allow the yearly intake at the school to be increased from 40 to 45 pupils in each year group. This would increase the total number of pupils at the school from 265 to 315.

The single storey extension would measure approximately 22m x 11m with a varying height from 3.3m to 4.5m due to the sloping ground. The external walls would be constructed from blockwork with a cream render finish with a flat reinforced PVC roof with fascia panels coloured grey. The building would be finished with timber doors and PVC windows with obscure glazing. The total floor space of the extension would be approximately 182m<sup>2</sup>.

The modular building would measure approximately 20m x 9.4m with an approximate height of 4.3m. The building would be constructed from timber cedar board cladding with a mono pitched steel fascia roof. The total floor space would be

approximately 139m<sup>2</sup>. Both extensions would be located on the north west side of the existing school building in close proximity to residential properties on Whalley Road.

The development proposals also include the creation of a multi-use games area which would be sited on part of the school playing field. The multi-use games area would measure approximately 37m x 18.5m and would be sited to the south of the existing school buildings on part of the school field and would have 3m high heavy duty mesh fencing coloured (Green - RAL 6005) situated around its perimeter. It is also proposed to extend the existing car park with 18 additional car parking spaces, increasing the total number of parking spaces at the school to 25 spaces. Additional 2.4m high security fencing would be erected (Green - RAL 6005) to the south east of the proposed car parking area, separating the car park area from the school playing field and would measure a total linear distance of 20m.

### **Description and Location of Site**

St Mary's Primary School is located off Whalley Road in the centre of Langho approximately 3.5km southwest of Whalley and 3.5km northwest of Great Harwood. The school site is accessed via Whalley Road (A666). The school is bounded by residential properties on all sides with York Lane located to the south, St Marys Drive and Tudor Close located to the east and Whalley Road to the north. The existing school comprises of a range of building designs and materials and the proposals intend to incorporate these materials to complement the existing design of the school.

The majority of the school buildings and existing car park are located to the north eastern side of the school site with the school playing field located to the south. The single storey extension would be located approximately 3.85m from the boundary of the nearest houses at 70 - 72 Whalley Road, the boundary in this area consisting of a 1.8m high fence.

The single storey modular building would be located approximately 10m away from the nearest properties (64 - 66 Whalley Road), the boundary in this area consisting of a 2.1m high conifer hedge.

The extension to the car park would be located on the eastern edge of the school in close proximity to residential properties on Tudor Close. The Multi Use Games Area would be sited immediately south of the existing school building on part of the school playing field and at its closest point would be approximately 30m from the nearest house. The proposed 2.4m high security fencing would be situated along the southern edge of the extended car park.

### **Background**

The site is an established educational facility.

Planning permission was granted in May 2015 for the installation of a mono pitched canopy at the school. (LCC/2015/0042)

## **Planning Policy**

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraphs 11-14, 94, 97, 102 - 107 124 - 132 are relevant with regards to the definition of sustainable development, the need for new school places, open space and recreation, promoting sustainable transport and achieving well designed places.

Ribble Valley Core Strategy

Policy DMG1 - General Considerations

Policy DS1 - Development Strategy

Policy DS2 - Sustainable Development

Policy DME1 - Protecting Trees and Woodlands

Policy DME3 - Site and Species Protection and Conservation

Policy DMB4 - Open Space Provision

Policy DMI2 - Transport Considerations

Policy EN2 - Landscape

## **Consultations**

Ribble Valley Borough Council - Objection raised as the Borough Council consider that the single storey extension would have an overbearing impact and affect residential amenity of nos. 70 - 72 Whalley Road.

Billington & Langho Parish Council - No observations received.

County Ecology Service - No objection, the site is generally of limited biodiversity value, such that the proposals will not result in any significant harm to biodiversity interests. No habitats of significant conservation value will be lost.

Lancashire County Council Highways Development Control - No objection, a construction method statement and travel plan should be submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Wheel cleaning facilities should be made available and an electrical supply for charging points should be provided in two car parking spaces.

Sport England - No observations received.

Representations - The application has been advertised by site notice and neighbouring residents informed by individual letter. Four objections have been received from local residents which are summarised as follows:-:

- The proposed car park area is in close proximity to the nearest houses on Tudor Close which would disrupt residential amenity.
- Flooding impacts from the proposed development to nearest houses.
- The Multi Use Games Area would affect residential amenity with potential floodlights and out of school hour's usage.
- Traffic impacts associated with the increase in pupil numbers and closure of the main school access during construction will cause disruption on other roads such as St Marys Drive and York Lane.

## Advice

The primary aim of the proposal is to increase the capacity of St Mary's RC Primary School through the erection of a single storey extension and a single storey modular building, both with link corridors to the existing school building to allow the yearly intake at the school to be increased from 40 to 45 pupils in each year group. This would increase the total number of pupils at the school from 265 to 315.

Lancashire County Council has a statutory duty to provide a school place to every child of statutory school age living in Lancashire. The need for the new primary school places has been identified through a basic needs assessment which has been undertaken to establish the future demand for primary school places in this area. On 5 November 2015, the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools approved a capital improvement programme that would provide additional places to regularise admission numbers in areas of growth. At the time, the Langho and Whalley planning area was identified as an area where local primary schools had admission numbers that were difficult to manage and where the significant level of housing development planned in the area within the next five years combined with new births would result in a shortage of primary school places. The pupil projections have been monitored and, as a result, a shortfall in school places is anticipated to occur in September 2019.

As a result, it was agreed that proposals should be put forward to increase the number of pupils admitted to Reception Class at the following primary schools which serve the Whalley area:-

- Langho and Billington St Leonard's Church of England (CE) Primary School from 40 to 45 pupils from Reception Class onwards with effect from September 2018 and for each subsequent year. An extension to the school was granted planning permission in November 2017.

- Whalley CE Primary School from 40 to 45 pupils from Reception Class onwards, with effect from September 2019 and for each subsequent year. The school was granted planning permission in May 2018 for additional classroom space to accommodate an increase in their pupil numbers.

- Langho St Mary's Roman Catholic (RC) Primary School from 40 to 45 pupils from Reception Class onwards, with effect from September 2019 and for each subsequent year.

Paragraph 94 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that it is important that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities and Local Planning Authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement and to development that will widen choice in education. Also they should give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools through the preparation of plans and decisions on applications.

The County Council's general strategy towards providing new education provision is to provide additional places at existing schools rather than construct new schools in

order that new places can be delivered more quickly and to achieve best value for money by reducing infrastructure and land acquisition costs. However, it is also important to balance the need for the proposal against the impacts of the development which relate to traffic and associated impacts on traffic, highway safety and protecting residential amenity to the nearest houses.

Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy identifies the general considerations that development proposals must comply with. This includes a high standard of building design, which is sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of size, intensity, nature, scale, style and use of building materials. There should be consideration of traffic and parking issues, and there should be no adverse effect on local amenity and the environment or heritage assets. There should be no net loss of important open space including playing fields. The policy also requires that consideration should be given to the likely effect on existing trees and other natural features on the site, visual appearance and in relation to surroundings and local landscapes and landscaping.

The majority of the school buildings and existing car park are located to the north eastern area of the school site. No trees or any form of landscaping would be removed to facilitate the proposed development. However the proposed single storey extension and proposed modular building are sited in close proximity to residential properties on Whalley Road. The extensions have been proposed in this area to improve access into the existing school building and improve staff accommodation.

Concerns have been raised by Ribble Valley Borough Council that the close proximity of the proposed single storey extension would result in an unacceptable impact on the nearest residential properties which are nos. 70 and 72 Whalley Road.

The application originally proposed the single storey extension being located approximately 2.5m away from the northern boundary of the school. The applicant has since moved the building to increase the separation to the boundary to 3.85m to minimise impact on the houses on Whalley Road. Due to the existing layout of the school buildings and the proposed use of the extension which would form as a new entrance and reception area it would not be possible to locate this extension elsewhere on the school site, without impacting existing teaching space.

House numbers 68, 70 and 72 Whalley Road were informed of the application by letter but no representations have been received from any of these properties. Currently the boundary in this area consists of a 1.8m high fence and the applicant has proposed further hedging to be planted along the boundary of properties 68, 70 and 72 Whalley Road to minimise impacts on residential amenity. It is also proposed to use obscuring film on the windows that face the houses to minimise overlooking on the nearest properties. It should also be noted that this extension would not be used as teaching space but as staff accommodation facilities. Provided that the boundary treatment and control of the design of the windows on the north west elevation is controlled through planning condition, it is considered that the impact of the single storey extension on the nearest properties is acceptable and the objection raised by Ribble Valley Borough Council is therefore not supported.

The applicant has also revised the location of the proposed modular building which has increased the distance of the modular building to the boundary from 6m to 10.5m. This increase would allow an existing sycamore tree to be retained. It is considered that the increase in standoff from the boundary would result in acceptable impacts on residential amenity when also considering the screening provided by the existing 2.1m high conifer hedge on this part of the boundary with the nearest properties. Ribble Valley Borough Council have raised no objection to this aspect of the proposal.

This proposal also raises impacts in relation to traffic and impacts on highway safety. The development proposals would allow the yearly intake at the school to be increased from 40 to 45 pupils in each year group. This would increase the total number of pupils at the school from 265 to 315. Even though this is not a significant increase in pupil numbers and would be a gradual increase, the impacts of the additional traffic arising from the expansion of the school on highway safety and residential amenity are matters of concern to the residents who live near to the school.

The issues raised by representations include that the additional pupils will worsen an already unacceptable traffic problem on the local highway network. Highways Development Control have not raised an objection to the application but request a condition to be added asking for further details of traffic management during construction of the development, for the school to submit a school travel plan promoting other forms of transport during peak times and for wheel cleaning facilities to be available during construction. They have also requested that two of the parking spaces have an electrical supply installed to provide for electric vehicle charging points.

Any parking issues that are currently experienced by residents close to the school would not be made materially worse by the development and the increase in pupils would probably only extend existing parking impacts over a slightly wider area than currently occurs. It should also be recognised that these impacts occur for a comparatively small part of the day and that it would take a number of years for the full traffic impacts of the development to materialise as the additional classroom accommodation is utilised. Also the school is located within the main urban area of Langho and is therefore proximate to the locations where many children attending the school will reside and therefore there is potential to encourage children to travel to school by means other than private car.

The school also propose to extend the existing school car park with 18 extra car parking spaces, increasing the total number of parking spaces at the site to 25 which would relieve some of the existing parking deficiencies at the school and would reduce the likelihood of staff needing to park on local roads. During the construction phase of the proposed development which is expected to last between 9 - 12 months, the applicant proposes to restrict the existing main access onto Whalley Road to use by building contractors. The secondary access to the rear of the school off St Marys Drive would be left open for pupils and pedestrians. This would reduce congestion and traffic impacts during construction by providing separate entrances for parents and contractors. St Marys RC Church which is located south west of the school site off St Marys Drive and York Lane have agreed to let staff park in their car

parking during construction which would accommodate approximately 35 parking spaces. Whilst this is not a matter that can be secured through planning controls, a similar system was used during a previous building contract at the school and was effective in managing traffic impacts during construction works. Highways Development Control have requested signage on Whalley Road to the temporary access during construction and for measures to improve highway safety to be implemented on St Marys Drive during the temporary construction period. These matters can be the subject of planning conditions.

Overall there will be some impacts on the highway and the amenity of local residents. However, these would only occur for relatively short periods in each day and are not considered to be of such severity that the development is unacceptable. Whilst these impacts cannot be fully mitigated, due to the scale of the development it is considered that the need for the additional school places carries substantial weight which is sufficient to outweigh the highway impacts of the development. The traffic impacts during the construction phase are temporary and it is considered that these can be adequately managed and mitigated through the use of planning conditions.

With regard the installation of electric charging points, the school have requested that such facilities are not installed as part of this application due to their cost. There is no requirement within the National Planning Policy Framework or in local policy that requires such facilities to be installed as part of car parking developments.

The proposal also provides for the construction of a multi - use games area with 3m high mesh ball stop fencing which would provide an enhancement to the existing sports and recreation provision at this school. The development is intended to provide an area for ball games during periods when the school field is unusable. Paragraph 97 of the National Planning Policy Framework 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 suitable location; or
- The development is for alternative sports and recreation provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.'

The proposed games area would be relatively small and it would have limited impact upon the openness of the area. Also due to the nature of the development there would be limited impact on the green space as the development would be at ground level and covering a small area of land. The development would also comply with policies within the National Planning Policy Framework due to it providing an alternative sports and recreation facility during times when the playing field is unusable due to wet conditions.

At its closest point the multi-use games area would be approximately 30m from the nearest house. The multi-use games area would also be partially screened by a hedge on the nearest site boundary and its use would not be expected to raise any amenity impacts for local residents especially considering that this area is already in use as a school playing field with play equipment and hard play areas in and around this part of the school. The applicant has confirmed that the development would only be used during schools hours therefore no floodlighting would be needed to facilitate the use of the development. This can be the subject of a planning condition.

Policy DME6 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy requires that development includes Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). Concerns have been raised by local residents that the proposed increased areas of hardstanding could result in increases in surface water run off to the nearest houses. To address this issue, a condition is recommended requiring further details of drainage to be submitted and implementation as part of any approved design.

### Conclusion

Lancashire County Council has a statutory duty to provide a school place to every child of statutory school age, living in Lancashire who requests one. A combination of sustained increase in the number of births together with the development of new housing in the area is resulting in an increase in demand which current primary schools in the area cannot accommodate. The provision of the additional school places should be given great weight and there is a lack of alternative sites. The impacts in terms of highways would have a comparatively short duration and are not considered to be of such severity that the development is unacceptable.

The layout, scale and design of the development would ensure a suitable educational setting. The new car parking arrangements would relieve some of the existing parking deficiencies at the school to reduce the need to park on local roads. Overall through the imposition of planning conditions, the impacts on local residents from the proposed development would be minimised and would be acceptable. It is therefore considered that the proposal is acceptable in terms of the policies of the Development Plan.

In view of the scale, location and nature of the development it is considered that no Convention Rights 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 in accordance with the following documents:

a) The Planning Application received by the County Planning Authority on 18th January 2018.

b) Submitted Plans and documents:

Drawing No - A01 / Site & Location Plan

Drawing No - A05 (Rev E) / Elevations as Proposed

Drawing No - A04 (Rev G) / Plan as Proposed

Drawing No - A06 / Plan as Proposed New Build EYFS Unit

Drawing No - A07 (Rev E) / Elevations as Proposed New Build EYFS Unit

Drawing No - A08 (Rev D) / Site & Location Plans as Proposed

Drawing No - L04 / Proposed Extent of Tarmac Resurfacing Works

*Reason: To minimise the impact of the development on the amenities of the area and to conform with Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.*

## **Hours of Working**

3. No construction development shall take place outside the hours of:

08.00 to 18.00 hours Monday to Friday (except Public Holidays),

08.00 to 14.00 hours on Saturday.

No construction development shall take place at any time on Sundays or Public Holidays.

This condition shall not however operate so as to prevent the carrying out, outside of these hours, of essential repairs to plant and machinery used on the site.

*Reason: To safeguard the amenity of local residents and adjacent properties and land users and to conform with Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.*

4. The multi-use games area shall only be used between the hours of 08.00 - 18.00 Mondays to Fridays and at no other times. No floodlighting shall be erected to illuminate the multi-use games area.

*Reason: To protect the amenities of local residents and to conform with Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.*

## **Building Materials**

5. No development of the single storey extension shall commence until details of the glazing to be fitted to the windows on the north west elevation of the single

storey extension have been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority.

Thereafter only those materials approved shall be used in the development. The approved glazing methods shall be retained in these windows thereafter

*Reason: To protect the amenities of local residents and to conform with Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.*

## **Fencing**

6. The 2.4m and 3m high fencing as shown on 'Drawing No - A08 (Rev D) / Site & Location Plans as Proposed' shall be coloured Green (colour code RAL 6005) and retained in that colour thereafter.

*Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the area and to conform with Policy DS2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.*

## **Landscaping**

7. Within six months of the date of this planning permission a scheme and programme of landscape screening on the boundary with adjacent properties at nos 70 - 72 Whalley Road shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The scheme and programme shall include details of location of planting, numbers, sizes and types of species, planting techniques and protection measures.

The approved landscaping works shall be undertaken in the first planting season following completion of construction works 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 EN2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.*

8. Trees and hedges on the boundaries of the site shall be retained and protected from damage throughout the duration of construction works as detailed in the BS5837 Tree Survey with Constraints submitted on 25th October 2018 (Job Ref - 1201).

*Reason: To protect existing trees within or adjacent to the site in the interests of the visual amenities of the area and to conform with Policy DME1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.*

## **Drainage**

9. No development of the car park extension or multi use games area shall commence until details of a surface water sustainable drainage system for

these areas 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) Details of flood water exceedance routes, both on and off site;

Thereafter the construction of the car park extension and multi-use games area 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 DME6 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.*

### **Highway Matters**

10. No development shall commence until a construction management plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The construction management plan shall contain details of the following:-
  - a) details for the routing of construction vehicles to the site
  - b) measures to be taken to control the routing and timing of HGV movements to avoid school opening and closing times
  - c) details for the parking of construction traffic during construction activities
  - d) Details of the measures to be implemented to safeguard highway safety during the period when the St Mary's Road access is being used as the main staff and pupil access to the school.

The measures contained in the approved scheme shall be implemented prior to construction works commencing and retained at all times during the duration of construction works.

*Reason: In the interests of highway safety and local amenity and to conform with Policy DMI2 of the Ribble Valley Local Plan.*

11. Measures shall be taken at all times during construction works to ensure that no mud, dust or other deleterious materials are tracked onto the public highway by vehicles leaving the site.

*Reason: In the interests of highway safety and local amenity and to conform with Policy DMI2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.*

12. Within three months of the development being brought into use, a School Travel Plan, as defined by this permission, 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) A brief description of the school, its location and a summary of the particular transport and road safety issues at the site;
- b) Evidence and results of consultation with staff, parents and other interested parties;
- c) Targets and measures to minimise the impact of/reduce private car use for the journey to and from the school by staff, parents and other visitors;
- d) A summary of the school's current road safety policies and practices, details of any new or proposed initiatives including a planned timetable of introduction;
- e) Proposals for monitoring progress of the School Travel Plan including a timetable for its review.

The measures contained in the approved travel plan shall thereafter be implemented throughout the operation of the school.

*Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to conform with Policy DMI2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.*

## **Definitions**

Planting Season: The period between 1 October in any one year and 31 March in the following year.

## **Notes**

The applicant's attention is drawn to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the British Standards Institution Code of Practice for Design of Buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of Disabled People (BS8300:2009). The design of the building will also need to comply with Part M of the Building Regulations 2010. In the

case of educational buildings, the applicant's attention is drawn to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 and the guidance prepared by the Department of Education and Skills Building Bulletin 91 (Access for the Disabled to School Buildings) and Building Bulletin 94 (Inclusive School Design).

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

None

Reason for Inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A