

**Development Control Committee**  
Meeting to be held on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021

Electoral Division affected: Preston South West
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**Preston City: application number. LCC/2021/0001**  
**Extension to existing infants play area and linking footpaths to wooded area through grassed playing field at St Andrews C of E Primary School, Tulketh Road, Preston.**

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**Executive Summary**

Application - Extension to existing infants play area and linking footpaths to wooded area through grassed playing field at St Andrews C of E Primary School, Tulketh Road, Preston.

**Recommendation – Summary**

That planning permission be **granted** subject to conditions controlling time limits and working programme.

**Applicant's Proposal**

The proposed playground extensions are two infills to the sides of the existing play area and measure approximately 10.5m by 27m and 9m by 27m creating a total playground area of approximately 989sqm. The playground extensions would be surfaced in permeable tarmac.

The proposed paths follow the fence line at each side of the school playing field. Along the tree lined frontage at Tulketh Road, the path would be approximately 47m by approximately 2m, this path will be placed approximately 5m away from the trees to protect the roots. The path behind the properties on Newton Road would be approximately 35m by approximately 2m. Both paths would meet with the entrances leading into the nature trail within the wooded area along the south east boundary of the school. The paths would be constructed from permeable tarmac edged with a pre-cast concrete flat kerb. A field drain will be laid on the outer edge of the path to assist drainage from the waterlogged field. The excavation material produced from the proposed constructions would be used to infill hollows within the nature area to create a more stable surface for the children.

## **Description and Location of Site**

St Andrews C of E Primary school is located within a conservation area off Tulketh Road approximately 3km to the west of Preston City Centre. The proposed development is located to the south east of the infant school building and is bounded by housing on two sides, a wooded area with offices behind to the south east and the Junior School to the north. The nearest properties are approximately 3m away from the proposed development on Newton Road.

## **Planning Policy**

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraphs 11 – 14, 91 and 196 are relevant with regard to the definition of sustainable development to enable and support a healthy lifestyle and impacts on designated heritage assets.

Central Lancashire Core Strategy

Policy 16 - Conservation Area and Street Scene

Policy 24 - Sport and Recreation

Preston City Local Plan

Policy EN8 - Development and Heritage Assets Appropriate use of the Conservation Area.

Policy AD1(a) - Development within (or in close proximity to) the Existing Residential Area.

Policy EN2 - Protection and enhancement of green infrastructure.

## **Consultations**

Preston City Council: - No objection.

LCC Highways Development Control: - No objection.

Lead Local Flood Authority: - No comments to make.

Representations – The application has been advertised by press and site notice, and neighbouring residents informed by individual letter. One representation has been received raising the following comments:-

- The majority of trees in the wooded area to which the proposed footpath will lead are confirmed to be suffering from Ash Die Back and under consideration for removal. This presents issues of safety to teachers and children due to degradation of tree integrity and potential for spreading of the disease, through fungus infected leafy material that may stick to clothes and footwear.

- The wooded area also has a confirmed Japanese Knot Weed infestation. The plant can be spread by transferring from shoes or clothes when people walk through contaminated areas.

## **Advice**

St Andrews C of E Primary School is an established Infant and junior school which serves approximately 420 pupils. The school is situated off Tulketh Road and over the years has been modified and extended.

The Infant school has approximately 180 pupils all using a small hard play area and school field for breaks and exercise. The size of the playground and the problems of a waterlogged field make breaks difficult due to the numbers of pupils using the hard play area. The large number of pupils accessing this restricted play area at one time, playing football and other ball games have created a health and safety issue as there have been a number of accidents due to the overcrowding.

The school recognises that physical activity is associated with numerous health benefits for children. There is also evidence that physical activity and participating in organised sports and after school clubs is linked to improved academic performance. The proposed increase in the play area and access to the nature trail which includes a trim trail via the two new proposed paths would enable the school to tackle obesity levels within the critical infant age groups. The proposed paths would create a circular running track from one end of the playground through the nature area and trim trail and back to the playground. This is something that cannot be achieved at present during winter or wet weather due to the waterlogged conditions. Policy 24 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy states that everyone should have the opportunity to access good sport, physical activity and recreation facilities including children's playing fields. The proposal would meet the aims of this policy.

Policy 16 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy states that development should be supported where it enhances and protects the local character within the Conservation Area. It is considered that the development would not have any material impacts on the Conservation Area due to its scale and lack of any impacts on the trees within the school site. The proposal therefore complies with policy 16.

Policy AD1(a) of the Preston City Local Plan states that development within (or in close proximity to) the existing residential areas should be sensitive in terms of design and scale and in keeping with the area with no adverse impacts on residents from noise, general disturbance and loss of privacy. The new play areas are immediately adjacent to the existing playgrounds and whilst there are nearby properties, the overall number of pupils would not increase and it is considered that noise would not be materially increased at the nearest houses. The proposal is therefore acceptable in terms of policy AD1(a).

One representation has been received raising concerns about diseased trees and Japanese Knot weed. A survey of the trees has been conducted and no trees have been identified as dangerous by this survey. One tree was identified as at risk, but this will be checked on the regular programme of tree surveys. Japanese Knot weed

has been found on the school site which has migrated from the property next door. There is a programme of eradication in place and two applications of herbicide have been applied to the area affected with further applications monthly during the growing season. The school are therefore regularly monitoring the condition of the trees and the Japanese Knot weed and it considered that neither issue would be a reason to refuse the application.

The proposed playground extensions and path are to be surfaced in permeable tarmac which allows drainage into the underlying soil without any inputs into watercourses or sewers. A field drain would be laid on the outer edge of the path to assist drainage from the waterlogged field making the field more useable during the summer months. The material from the creation of the playgrounds and paths would be used to improve the ground of the nature area.

The proposed development is modest in scale and given the location of the proposed development within the school site, the development would not have any unacceptable visual impact or result in any loss of amenities to the surrounding area or properties. The proposal is therefore acceptable in terms of the policies of the Development Plan.

In view of the scale, location and nature of the proposal 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 and supporting statement received by the County Planning Authority on 15 January 2021 as amended by the email from Design and Construction dated 8 February 2021
  - b) Submitted Plans and documents:
    - Plan T-01 site plan and Location Plan
    - Plan T-10 Rev B Proposed site plan and Knot Weed
    - Plan T-11 Proposed Construction

*Reason: To minimise the impact of the development on the amenities of the area and to conform with Policies 16 and 24 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and Policies AD1(a) and EN2 of the Preston City Local Plan*

3. The playground extension and paths shall be surfaced in permeable tarmac materials. No drainage from the playground extensions or paths shall be directed into surface watercourses or to the sewer.

*Reason: In the interests of securing the proper drainage of the site and to prevent flooding and to conform with Policy 29 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy.*

## **Notes**

The applicant is reminded of the controls that exist in relation to notifiable weeds. Japanese Knotweed is present on the site and appropriate precautions should be taken to avoid spreading this plant.

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

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Ext
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None

Reason for Part II

N/A