

PLANNING COMMITTEE

10 September 2019 at 7.30 pm

MEMBERS: Councillor Kevin Burke (Chair), Councillor Drew Heffernan (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Ben Andrew, Vincent Galligan, Jill Whitehead, Eric Allen, Peter Geiringer and Tim Foster

ABSENT Councillor(s) Amy Haldane and Tony Shields

33. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair, Councillor Kevin Burke, welcomed those present.

34. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Tony Shields with Councillor Catherine Gray attending as substitute, Councillor Amy Haldane with Councillor Steve Cook attending as substitute.

35. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

36. APPLICATION NO. DM2019/00985 - ROSEHILL RECREATION GROUND ROSE HILL SUTTON SM1 3HH

The Committee considered a report on the above application for the erection of a four-storey building creating a new eight form entry secondary school, including a sixth form, a Special Educational Needs (SEN) school for secondary age students and a detached part-one, part-two storey sports hall (Use Class D1), modification of existing access from Rose Hill, provision of areas of hard playing space, car parking, cycle parking and hard and soft landscaping works and other associated works.

The application was presented to the Committee as the application is a departure from the Development Plan.

Sarah Buxton, presented the report and drew attention to the addendum report. Members clarified:

The weight to be applied to the need for school places in the borough and design quality.

Education experience included both the need for school places and the educational experience provided by the design of a school.

The site in this application is on the edge of Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) in a location not allocated as being suitable for taller buildings and that policy required the design to be exceptional. Advice taken from the Independent Design Panel reported the quality of this design did not meet these standards. The design in the application created various compromises.

Construction of a four storey building on the current flat parkland would create a significant impact.

The design in the application had not made use of the whole of the site, and suggested the design was a template design.

The design included several classrooms with no windows or natural ventilation, in addition to other concerns relating to the internal layout such as the corridors, and exits.

There were concerns in the report about the design supported by the report produced by the design review panel.

The design presented would impact on other users of the site, the Sports Village and park users.

Andy Webber, Head of Development Management and Strategic Planning drew attention:

To the Local Plan, and that the application site had been allocated in the plan for a secondary school, sixth form and SEN accommodation, and no objection was raised by the Department for Education (DfE) to the proposed site area set out at the Examination in public. A site search of the borough for land suitable for a school had been conducted, including both private and public land, during the review of the Local Plan. Two sites were identified, the site in this application and the Belmont site. This application had not made use of the whole of the site allocated by the Local Plan .

Concerns raised included the lack of a car park management plan and the proposed use of the shared car park by staff, which it was suggested could be addressed if the northern area of the site had been included in the application. Officers' expressed concern relating to the shape and form of the design in this application. Officers and the Design Review Panel had offered guidance to the applicant advising how these issues could be addressed. acknowledged there were challenges created by the site, which included ensuring the main built form was neither too close to the railway line, the park edge and the tree line.

The applicant had been aware of the site allocation in the Local Plan since September 2017. Attention was drawn to statutory timescales, timescales which the applicant was aware of, it was suggested that much of the information submitted by the applicant to officers by the

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applicant, (including information provided on 6 September), had not allowed officers time to consider all of this information fully but they had presented a lengthy addendum report in response.

It was noted that any appeal process would be lengthy.

Robert de Castro, Senior Engineer (Development Control) explained the travel plan and parking management plan provided by the applicant had not been fully developed, it was not detailed, specific or supported by evidence. A concern of the transport plan related to the basic assumption made about trips generated by both staff and pupils.

TfL and Sutton Highways had raised concerns regarding overspill parking, and also on street pick up and drop off in the wider area, and noted the parents would be encouraged to park in neighbouring residential streets which themselves were not identified.

Members felt the poor transport plan outlined in the report did not allow air quality impacts to be understood.

Members discussed bus stop P, and that it was not able to support the volume of users, and the lack of suitable mitigations for the issues of overcrowding. The Senior Engineer (Development Control) suggested the footway would require widening, but as the applicant had not submitted a detailed design it remained unclear how this would be managed. Gavin Chinniah, Planning Manager - Development Management suggested the lack of detail and significant number of concerns not addressed in the application resulted in the transport plan being unable to be covered by condition.

Officers confirmed that if this application were refused, there would be implications for the funding of a temporary school. The provision in a temporary school would be for years 7 and 8 only without SEN provision.

Objectors, Phil Robinson, resident, Charlie Mansell, Sutton and Cheam Labour Party, Bonnie Craven, Sutton and Cheam Labour Party and Gerald Tasker, resident, Supporter Nick Matthey and Councillor Steve Penneck, a ward councillor, addressed the meeting under Standing Order 31, and the applicant replied.

The principal issues raised by the Objectors were:-

The loss of open space

- Concerns about parking in the surrounding streets
- The appearance of the application
- Air quality impacts of the application
- The area was congested already, with current hazards for cyclists and particular difficulties for traffic approaching from the south
- Fire concerns as the design of the application would lead to enclose the sports village
- Green land should not be used for development in the current climate emergency
- Green space should be retained as it supports good mental health,

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- The area is a known accident blackspot
- Additional traffic would impede emergency vehicles
- The selective schools in Sutton lead to the shortage of school places in the borough for local children
- Noise would be created which would disturb residents, this would be at a higher level than that created by the trainline.

In response to questions from Members:

Mr Gupta, local resident explained that he felt that the single lane road in the area already created slow moving traffic in the area ,which would be made worse by the application.

The Head of Development and Strategic Planning reported the statutory consultation period had been extended for this application.

Nick Matthey, Supporter addressed the meeting the principal issues raised were:

- The aesthetics of the design in the application are not a concern, being only four stories and not adjacent to the road.
- Additional housing being built and planned creates the need for school places.
- The school at Hackbridge had been built on MOL land
- Transport in the area is adequate.

In response to questions from Members:

The Head of Development and Strategic Planning and Allison Letts, Legal Advisor drew attention that the Local Planning Authority was not party aligned. He also drew attention to differences between the Belmont site and this site in terms of their character and surroundings, as well as the constraints. Members attention was also drawn to the relative length of pre-application discussion on the Belmont school which was more than double the amount of time allowed by the DfE on the Rosehill site, and the relative difference in design quality as a result.

Members drew attention to a report to the 2017 Strategy and Resources Committee which states the site is suitable for a school of ergonomic and compact in design, they were aware this would be subject to planning permission.

Ward Councillor Steve Penneck addressed the meeting, the principal issues raised were:-

- There are residents in the area who feel the site is not suitable for a school, but others who would like a school near to them.
- The ward Councillor and residents are aware the site is allocated for a school in the Local Plan.
- There is a need for a school, however, a better design could be used on the site.

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- There are concerns about the transport plan presented by the applicant, and assumptions such as where children who would attend the school would travel from and how they would cross roads in the Angel Hill area.
- The shared use car parking, and use of local streets for car parking.
- Bus stop P is not suitable for the additional volume of use that would be created, the road can not be narrowed in that area.
- It is not an appropriate or sustainable solution for staff to manage pedestrian flows created in the area when pupils leave the site.
- The Committee's attention should be focussed on the Officer report, and survey of residents carried out by Officers.

It was clarified to Members that:

- The land to the north was included in this application.
- It could be assumed there would be additional costs in using of the land in the north of the site.
- The application had not considered using a staggered school day to spread and ease congestion.
- The assumptions of how pupils would travel in the application is not supported by data.

Members suggested as it is accepted there is a need for a school, the application should be deferred until design issues can be addressed by the applicant. The Head of Development and Strategic Planning suggested that the number of issues, in addition to design which required significant amendment meant this might not be resolved by deferral based on the unwillingness of the applicant to make those changes to date.

Members drew attention to concerns in the transport plan relating to parking, congestion, pupil safety and air quality in the Rose Hill area and safety at bus stop P. Members gave consideration to the responsibilities of a school and of the Local Authority who have allocated the site in addressing these issues. They were aware that site allocation does not provide planning permission.

Members expressed concerns about the need for school places in Sutton North ward, and reported there are residents in the ward who support a school on site.

The applicant, Alan Gunne Jones and Will Smith addressed the meeting, the principal issues raised were:

- The applicant has conducted a range of engagement events.
- Technical information was provided to Officers, which was not assessed.
- The application is a technically sound and is on an allocated site.
- Design is a subjective issue.
- The application is policy compliant.

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- The proposed building is excellent and similar in design to other schools locally and regionally which deliver a good education.
- Parents of children with SEN like the design presented, there is an acute need for SEN school places in Sutton.
- Parents of both mainstream and SEN pupils are relying on this application to provide school places.
- This application would allow a temporary school to open in 2020.
- The design met current design standards.

It was clarified to member that:

There were approximately ten classes with no window in the design, which would be for specialist provision and would have mechanical ventilation systems. Neither staff or pupils would be in these rooms all day, there are schools currently in Sutton with no external windows.

Members asked about the use of template design as Will Smith - Greenshaw Learning Trust had explained the design was similar to other schools in Sutton, and also why the whole site was not used. Will Smith - Greenshaw Learning Trust reported the design was similar rather than identical to that used for other schools, and that the design presented in the application did not require the use of the land to the north of the site. It was acknowledged the land at the north is in third party ownership, is contaminated and would add expense to the application.

Gillian Horn, Design Review Panel Member explained to members that the panel are aware that within a building of this type there would be rooms which do not require natural light, but it is not inevitable that the design includes rooms without windows, but this may reduce costs. It was suggested that if the whole of the site were used there would be less rooms without windows. The panel were also of the view that the application should provide more direct access routes to playgrounds and expressed concern about the quality of the external environment. They acknowledged producing an exemplar design would add to costs.

The DfE representative advised members that they considered the design to be acceptable and did not feel it was necessary to change it.

Kieran Holiday, Head of Pupil Based Commissioning answered questions from Members, he reported that if the application were to be refused he would approach the schools in Sutton and ask if they would provide additional places. It is known that there is little capacity in the current Sutton schools, some of which are on constrained sites. The current relationship between the Local Authority and the schools is good, there is no certainty that the schools would offer additional places. Serious concerns for school places would arise if the application were refused. Any provision of additional places at the current schools would impact communities in those areas.

Members moved to debate:

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Members expressed disappointment in the design in this application, which showed poor layout of corridors and windowless classrooms. They also mentioned the issues around the bus stop and lack of detailed transport plan. Members agreed there was a serious and important need for an additional school in Sutton, this site is allocated in the Local Plan for a school. Members suggested that good education delivery is the most important aspect of a school, rather than design, however, that good design supports good education.

Attention was drawn to the 11 reasons for refusal given in the report, and it was suggested this is too many to be considered as conditions particularly as they are in addition to design issues. Members noted that condition 6 and 7 had now been removed.

RESOLVED:

That planning permission be refused for application No. DM2019/00985, ROSEHILL RECREATION GROUND ROSE HILL SUTTON SM1 3HH, subject to there being no additional representations raising material planning considerations that have not been addressed within this report being received by 12 September 2019. If these are received these will be considered at the following committee meeting.

APPLICATION NO. DM2019/00985 - Rosehill Recreation Ground Rose Hill Sutton SM1 3HH (Committee Report)	
A poll vote on the officers' recommendation to refuse permission was held in accordance with Standing Order 31.4 when there voted:	
RESOLVED:	
that planning permission for application number APPLICATION NO. DM2019/00985 - Rosehill Recreation Ground Rose Hill Sutton SM1 3HH be refused.	
Councillor Kevin Burke	For
Councillor Drew Heffernan	For
Councillor Ben Andrew	For
Councillor Vincent Galligan	For
Councillor Jill Whitehead	For
Councillor Eric Allen	Against
Councillor Peter Geiringer	Against
Councillor Tim Foster	Against
Councillor Steve Cook	For
Councillor Catherine Gray	Against

Agreed

37. ANY URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

The meeting ended at 11.42 pm

Chair:

Date: