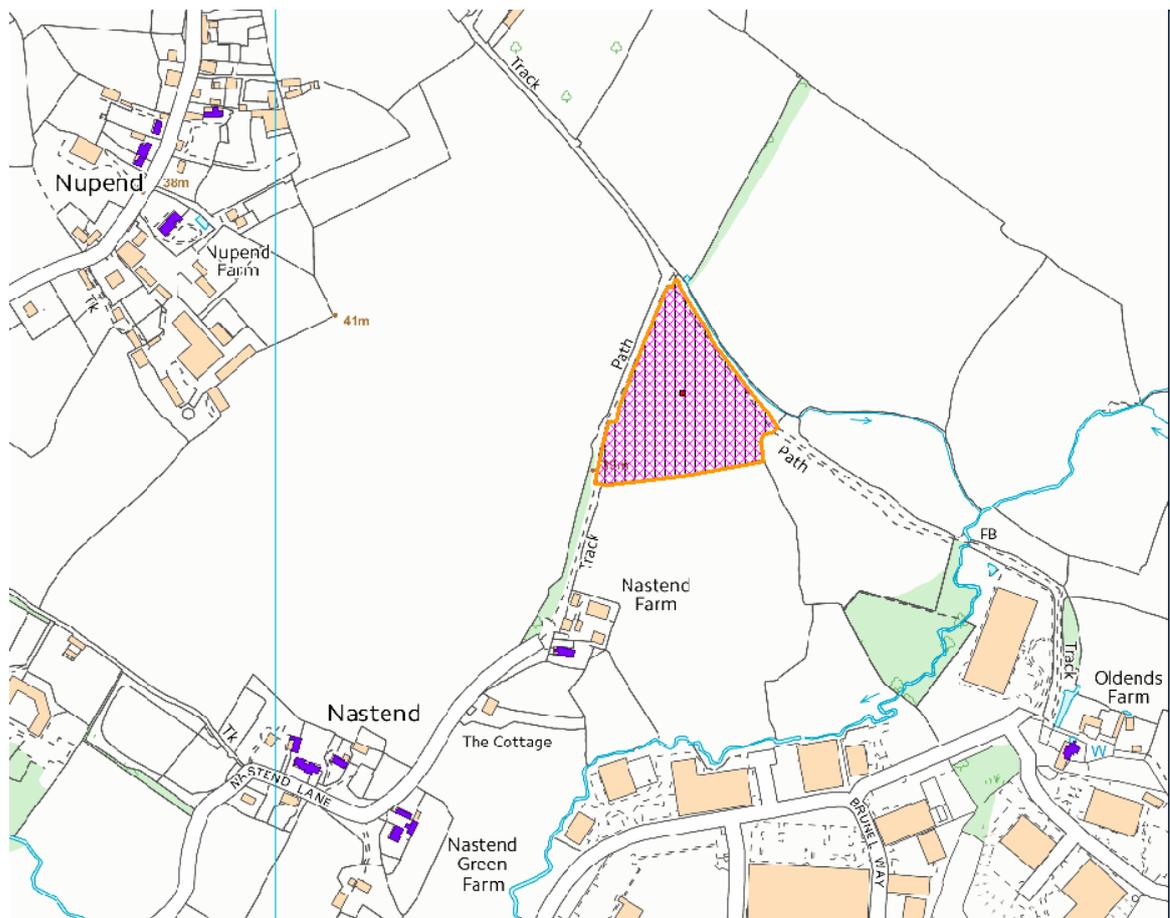




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Item No:	03
Application No.	S.19/1122/REM
Site No.	PP-07684873
Site Address	Parcel PS1 Land West Of Stonehouse, Grove Lane, Westend, Stonehouse
Town/Parish	Eastington Parish Council
Grid Reference	379429,206590
Application Type	Reserved Matters Application
Proposal	Reserved Matters Application for the new primary school and nursery.
Recommendation	Approval
Call in Request	DC Committee





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Applicant's Details	Robert Hitchins Ltd The Manor, Boddington, Cheltenham, GL51 0TJ,
Agent's Details	Quattro Design Architects Ltd Matthews Warehouse, High Orchard Street, Gloucester Quays, Gloucester, GL2 5QY
Case Officer	John Chaplin
Application Validated	24.05.2019
	CONSULTEES
Comments Received	Eastington Parish Council Development Coordination (E) Arboricultural Officer (E) Flood Resilience Land Drainage Stonehouse Town Council Eastington Parish Council
Constraints	Employment Land (LP) Key Wildlife Sites - Polygons Neighbourhood Plan Eastington Parish Council Affecting a Public Right of Way SAC SPA 7700m buffer Single Tree Preservation Order Points
	OFFICER'S REPORT

UPDATE

This application was considered at October Committee (DCC) where Members delegated to Officers to negotiate the addition of solar PV panels on the roof of the proposed school. The case officer has been in discussions with the applicant regarding the solar panels but they have outlined that solar panels are not feasible. As agreed, the application has therefore been brought back to committee to allow Members to determine as originally proposed without solar PV on the development.

The applicant recognises the Climate Emergency and while they have not been able to include solar panels at this stage, their position is that the proposed scheme seeks to address sustainability in a different way. A full copy of their Briefing Note is attached at Appendix 1 to this report.

The proposal seeks to provide a 'fabric first approach'. This seeks to maximise the performance of the building fabric and materials to maximise the energy efficiency of the building. This includes higher levels of insulation than the basic building regulations, making best use of natural light and ventilation, intelligent heating and lighting controls.

The applicant has also outlined the difficulties of adding solar panels at this late stage and how this would conflict with the design and position of the proposed building. To re-orientate the building could require greater soil moved off site, possibly affect the landscape features and hedge retention and would impinge on the roof lights which are part of the design. The school building has a modern/contemporary appearance designed for learning and a sense of community and whilst generation on site would be an advantage, retrofitting it to the current design has the potential to significantly affect the appearance of the building. Officers are therefore supportive of the other measures to make the building sustainable.



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Officers have also been in discussions with colleagues at GCC property/education as GCC are the commissioning client and maybe the future owners/occupiers if the school is not an Academy. Whilst they have signed off the detailed design of the proposed school, solar provision is also something that GCC are investigating to establish how their buildings measure up and how such initiatives would contribute to improving sustainable design. Solar PV also brings the potential for an additional maintenance issue which has not been resolved.

It is unfortunate that the solar panel option requested by Members has not been taken up by the applicant, however, the measures proposed do still make a positive contribution. Whilst there is a degree of control via the agreement by GCC, full details and implementation of the measures outlined can be required via a new sustainability statement condition (no.7).

The officer recommendation to Committee remains unchanged subject to the updated planning conditions listed below.

OCTOBER COMMITTEE REPORT

THE PROPOSAL

This a 1.5 form entry school, with a 2,341sqm floor area, however it is designed with a 2 form entry core to allow for future expansion. The proposal includes a playing field, hard and soft play facilities and covered bike/scooter facilities for 26 bikes and 42 scooters.

37 parking spaces are proposed within the school curtilage for staff/visitors. Two adjacent car parks, approximately 50m away, are intended for dropping off pupils.

The land levels would be similar to the existing.

This is a reserved matters submission giving details of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale.

PLANNING HISTORY

S.14/0810/OUT: 1,350 dwellings, 9.3ha. employment land, community centre uses and a primary school. Permitted 18/4/16.

Condition 46 of the outline permission above requires the submission of Area Master Plans. S.19/0609/DISCON is the Area Master Plan for the local centre which includes the school, retail, public house and community centre. This is also on the committee agenda.

S.19/0831/REM details the road layout around the local centre. This is also on the committee agenda.

CONSULTATIONS

Eastington Parish Council: Hedging should be retained, question drop off arrangements.

Stonehouse Town Council: Question the adequacy of cycle parking and would like to see solar panels.

County Highways: No objection.

County Education: not received.

SDC Arboricultural Officer: no objection.

SDC Biodiversity Officer: no objection conditions recommended on landscaping, lighting, ecological management and bat /bird boxes.

SDC Conservation Officer: no comment



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POLICY

Local Plan policies include:

CP2 allocates the site for development.

CP4 Place Making: Requires development to integrate into the neighbourhood, create/enhance sense of place. Create safe streets and homes.

CP5 Principles for strategic sites: Appropriate density, low impact, accessibility by bus, layout, parking, landscaping and community facilities, use of a design code/framework, sustainability.

SA2. Site allocation: Accessible green space, structural landscaping buffer around Nastend and to the east of Nupend incorporating existing hedgerows and trees, management of open space for biodiversity, use of SUDs, connectivity to adjacent areas, primary access off Chipmans Platt, traffic calming, bus provision.

CP7 Lifetime Communities: Promotion of accessibility. Lifetime accommodation.

CP8 New Housing Development: Range of house types. Appropriate density, layouts to promote cycling/walking, parking appropriate, sustainable principles.

EI12. Promoting transport choice and accessibility. Connectivity for walking, cycling and access to public transport.

CP14. High quality sustainable development: Sustainable design, no increase to flooding, appropriate design respecting surroundings, including topography, built environment and heritage, protection of amenity, sense of place, crime prevention, use of street scenes, master plans, development briefs design concept/codes.

ES1 Sustainable Construction and Design: Promotes energy efficiency.

ES7. Landscape Character: Protection of distinct landscape types, respect setting of the AONB, location, materials and scale are sympathetic. Natural features retained.

ES8 Trees, hedgerows and woodlands: Retention or adequate replacement of trees.

ES12 Better Design of Places: Social integration, high quality places, well planned legible routes, integrated uses, safe spaces, secure private areas. Need for thorough site appraisal, use of design statements/code.

ES14 Public Art: Promotes publically accessible features.

SDC Residential Design Guide: This covers many design aspects, from form, style, detailing, materials to landscaping and amenity.

SDC Landscape Assessment: Defines and highlights the various landscapes in the District. It highlights settlement character as well as vegetation.

Stonehouse Design Guide: Whilst this tends to concentrate on the town itself it does highlight the landscape setting including the AONB and the canal, and the importance of the various outward views.



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Stonehouse Neighbourhood Development Plan, is now part of the Development Plan.

Eastington Neighbourhood Development Plan: Does not have any specific policies for these sites but there are some general policies. EP1 Sustainable development, EP2 Protect and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment, EP7 Siting and Design of new development, EP10 Traffic and Transport, EP11 Public Rights of Way and Wildlife corridors.

Residential Design Guide SPG (2000)
Stroud District Landscape Assessment SPG (2000)
IHCA Conservation Area Management Proposals SPD (2008)

NPPF:

Paragraph 124: creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to planning.

Paragraph 126: use of plans and codes to create a framework to create distinctive places.

Paragraph 127: safe and accessible environments, reflect local context, effective landscaping, function over the lifetime of the development.

Paragraph 128: Design quality should be considered at the outset.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

PRINCIPLE

The outline permission for the West of Stonehouse development includes a school and the associated section 106 requires its delivery. The outline permission includes a master plan which shows the siting and extent of the school.

This reserved matters application accords with the principles in the section 106 agreement and the master plan.

The applicants in their Design and Access Statement refer to positive pre-application consultations with County Education.

ACCESS/PARKING

The proposal does not provide specific school parking for parents/pupils rather facilities would be shared with adjacent shops, community centre, doctors and public house. The following questions then arise. Will the car parks be used (for those not walking), is there enough capacity, and what are the implications for the adjoining roads.

There is an example of a new school at Longford, on the northern edge of Gloucester, which partially relies upon similar shared parking. The case officer observed parking behaviour at school time on a wet Tuesday. Use was made of the parking by the shops, although this was not exclusive as the surrounding roads have no parking restrictions.

In contrast the new school at Hunts Grove has parking within the school curtilage, however the walking distances to the actual school entrance are similar to here. So what is the difference between provision within the school curtilage and shared facilities? The pedestrian links between the school and the car parks need to be well connected and parents must be advised accordingly. The car parks must be free and perceived as available. Given these parameters, then this car parking arrangement will work, particularly because the spaces will be prominent.



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The roads around the school will also have restrictions to prevent parking. The area master plan also shows that the local centre is opposite the school gates rather than residential driveways. This avoids the potential conflicts between neighbouring dwellings and indiscriminate parking which are prevalent with other schools.

The shops/community centre/public house are unlikely to be heavily used at drop off/pick times and master plan suggests that there will be ample spaces. This sharing of the parking spaces also makes more efficient use of the resource.

The covered cycle and scooter parking should encourage sustainable travel to school taking advantage of the good cycling/walking routes across the development.

DESIGN

The internal layout follows the accepted best practice in education and this has in turn influenced the external design.

It is a cruciform shape, which gives the opportunity to maximise the school's communal rooms whilst differentiating other areas for specific needs and offering surveillance at the entrance.

The cruciform massing is broken down further by its roofscape. There is a higher steeper, central section and lower, shallower offshoots. This gives the building interest, without which it would appear overly squat and mundane. The higher element is the hall which lends itself to recreational activity.

The elevations show a contemporary approach. The taller cross gable element would be clad in raised seam sheeting, which should appear as a striking contrast to the more deferential rendered offshoots. The windows are arranged in a fairly uniform pattern to give the building coherency. One larger window is orientated on the main entrance which helps to provide a focal point. The southern end gable wall is cut away to maximise day lighting whilst an overhanging roof reduces excessive solar gain and addresses the viewpoint.

This will provide a landmark which helps define the local centre, commensurate with its elevated and prominent position.

The proposal respects the requirements of Local Plan Policy ES1, by having high insulation, using passive ventilation and using the aspect to maximise day lighting.

LANDSCAPING

A landscaping scheme has been submitted. It shows that the existing trees around the site boundaries would be retained. Similarly the hedges around the application site boundary will be retained and used to demarcate the school curtilage. These hedges would be interspersed with some informal trees, typically "field" specimens.

There is some new tree planting on the eastern frontage around the school entrance, which helps compliment the sense of arrival. The trees would have high crowns which maintain visibility. The proposal also includes some new large specimens within the grounds.

Whilst the landscaping submission is helpful it is felt that the planting details could be refined to maximise this opportunity to establish quality green infrastructure. In particular this application site has sensitive boundaries, which are critical to wider network of open spaces.



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BIODIVERSITY

The boundary vegetation is being retained around the school playing field which offers some potential habitat and foraging. Lighting around the school would be focussed on essential areas to create dark corridors for bats. Similarly bat/bird boxes would be likely to be utilised. Conditions are recommended.

The increased planting should enhance biodiversity, as at the moment the site is part of an intensive agricultural field. The precise species and planting need to maximise this opportunity and similarly must be managed sensitively thereafter.

RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

The proposal does not generate any shadowing, privacy, noise or overbearing implications, being sited well away from the nearest dwelling.

PUBLIC ACCESS AND INCLUSION

There is good flat access for everybody, including those with mobility challenges.

Whilst the sports pitches are higher than the school building, a 1:25 footpath provides an easy gradient.

The open frontage allows social mixing and inclusiveness. The clear visibility and defined boundaries also accord with secure by design principles.

HERITAGE

The proposal is sufficiently distanced from listed buildings, non designated heritage assets and the IHCA to avoid any impact.

CONCLUSION

This is a community facility to serve a substantial housing development. It is placed in a central location to be accessible and support other services. The design provides a landmark for the development and this community.

Approval is recommended.

Human Rights

In compiling this recommendation we have given full consideration to all aspects of the Human Rights Act 1998 in relation to the applicant and/or the occupiers of any neighbouring or affected properties. In particular regard has been had to Article 8 of the ECHR (Right to Respect for private and family life) and the requirement to ensure that any interference with the right in this Article is both permissible and proportionate. On analysing the issues raised by the application no particular matters, other than those referred to in this report, warranted any different action to that recommended.



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Subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to the school being brought into use, secure and covered dedicated scooter and bicycle parking shall be provided in accordance with details submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority beforehand. Provision shall be made for at least 26 bikes and 42 scooters and maintained thereafter.

Reason:

In the interest of sustainable transport.

2. Notwithstanding the submitted details the development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until revised details of a scheme of hard and soft landscaping for the site have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include measures for the sensitive ecological management post planting. Development shall then be carried out in strict accordance with the approved details, and maintained in accordance with the approved ecological management details.

All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first complete planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the buildings, or the completion of the development to which it relates, whichever is the sooner. Any trees or plants which, within a period of five years from the completion of the development, die, or are removed, or become seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.

Reason:

To promote biodiversity and the appearance of the area. The site makes an important contribution to the green infrastructure of the wider development.

3. No external lighting shall be erected unless full details of its design, location, orientation and level of illuminance (in Lux) provided have first been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Such lighting shall be kept to the minimum necessary for the purposes of security and site safety and shall prevent upward and outward light radiation and have regard for the ecological implementations.

Reason:

In the interests of the amenities of local residents and the surrounding area and to minimise light pollution and maintain dark corridors around the site for the benefit of wildlife.

4. Prior to the occupation of the school, bat and bird boxes shall be erected around the site in accordance with details submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority beforehand.

Reason:

In the interest of biodiversity. The site makes an important contribution to the green infrastructure of the wider development.



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5. Prior to the first occupation of the school and nursery, car parking and drop-off/pick up facilities shall be provided for staff and parents in accordance with details submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority beforehand. This shall include details of the ongoing retention and maintenance of the availability of the proposed parking provision.

Reason:

To ensure the efficient operation of the school and highway safety.

6. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in all respects in strict accordance with the approved plans listed below:

5827-P-001A : Site location plan rec'd on 27 Aug 2019.
5827-P-100B : Proposed site block plan received on 19 Aug 2019.
5827-P-110E: Proposed site plan received on 19 Aug 2019.
5827-P-111B: Proposed block plan with landscaping received on 27 Aug 2019.
5827-P-113B Proposed block plan with landscaping received on 27 Aug 2019.
5827-P-700C Proposed elevations received on 26 July 2019.

Reason:

To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and in the interests of good planning.

7. Prior to the above ground level works starting on site a sustainability and energy statement shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. This statement shall include details of all sustainable measures proposed including but not limited those measures outlined in the submitted Briefing Note: Sustainability (PV) received on 29th October 2019 which addressed the 'fabric first' approach. The approved measures shall be fully implemented prior to first occupation of the development and shall thereafter be permanently retained to serve the development and maintained in a working order in accordance with the approved details.

Reason:

To encourage sustain design and construction, maximise energy efficiency and a reduction of CO2 emissions in accordance with Policies CP14 and ES1 of the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015 and paragraph 148 of the revised National Planning Policy Framework.