

Development Management Sub Committee

Wednesday 7 March 2018

**Application for Planning Permission 17/05182/FUL
At Currie Primary School, 59 Curriehill Road, Currie
Construction of a new educational building with 8 (eight)
classrooms and ancillary accommodation, within the
grounds of Currie Primary School.**

Item number	7.2
Report number	
Wards	B02 - Pentland Hills

Summary

The proposal does not comply with the development plan or the non-statutory guidelines. The proposal will result in the loss of open space which is not considered to be of limited amenity or leisure value and its loss cannot be justified in this instance. The application does not propose an alternative provision or to significantly improve the existing provision to compensate for the loss. There are no material considerations that outweigh this conclusion and refusal is recommended.

Links

Policies and guidance for this application	LDPP, LDES01, LDES03, LDES05, LEN08, LEN18, LEN19, LTRA02, LTRA03, NSGD02,
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Report

Application for Planning Permission 17/05182/FUL At Currie Primary School, 59 Curriehill Road, Currie Construction of a new educational building with 8 (eight) classrooms and ancillary accommodation, within the grounds of Currie Primary School.

Recommendations

1.1 It is recommended that this application be Refused for the reasons below.

Background

2.1 Site description

The application site is located within the existing school grounds on the eastern side of Curriehill Road. The site is positioned to the south of the existing school building on an elevated area of land currently used as school playing fields. To the east of the site lies residential properties on Riccarton Crescent and to the west are residential properties on Curriehill Road. The site is allocated open space.

2.2 Site History

November 2017 - An application for the construction of a new two storey educational building (Embankment Option) in a single unit of 8 classrooms incorporating ancillary accommodation, within the grounds of Currie Primary School, is currently pending consideration (application number 17/05183/FUL).

Main report

3.1 Description Of The Proposal

The application proposes the erection of two buildings containing a total of eight new classrooms, a central hub/learning space and ancillary accommodation. The buildings are proposed in two phases which are generally of the same scale and design. Each phase will be 13.5m x 28.4m with a sloping roof 4.6m at the highest reducing to 3.2m. The buildings would be single storey and finished in a fibre cement cladding system with aluminium windows.

The existing open space area would be reduced to two grass pitches of 36m x 55m. The existing rubber ground sports area would be removed from the site.

A hardstanding perimeter will be erected around the buildings. A new access is provided from the site to Curriemuir Hill. A 2m high ball stop fence will be positioned 2 metres from the buildings.

Supporting Statement

A Design and Access Statement, Site Investigation, and Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy have been submitted in support of the proposals.

These documents can be viewed on Planning and Building Standards On-line Services.

3.2 Determining Issues

Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 states - Where, in making any determination under the planning Acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Do the proposals comply with the development plan?

If the proposals do comply with the development plan, are there any compelling reasons for not approving them?

If the proposals do not comply with the development plan, are there any compelling reasons for approving them?

3.3 Assessment

To address these determining issues, the Committee needs to consider whether:

- a) the proposal is acceptable in principle;
- b) the proposal has an adverse impact on protected open space;
- c) the proposal will be of a suitable quality in terms of design;
- d) the proposal will result in an unreasonable loss of privacy or natural light to neighbouring properties;
- e) the proposals affect road safety and car parking;
- f) other matters have been addressed;
- g) the proposal will have any detrimental impact on equalities and human rights;
and
- h) comments raised have been addressed.

a) Principle

The existing land use is educational and the extension of this use is supported. The site lies within the urban area and the proposal will continue to provide accommodation for the school within the existing site.

The proposal is therefore acceptable in principle subject to compliance with relevant policies of the Edinburgh Local Development Plan (LDP).

b) Protected Open Space

The site is identified as 'open space' within the LDP. Policy Env 18 and Env 19 relate to the protection of Open space and Protection of Outdoor Sports Facilities.

Policy Env 18 provides that, *"proposals involving the loss of open space will not be permitted unless it is demonstrated that:*

- a) there will be no significant impact on the quality or character of the local environment;*
- b) the open space is a small part of a larger area or of limited amenity or leisure value and there is a significant over-provision of open space serving the immediate area; and*
- c) the loss would not be detrimental to the wider network including its continuity or biodiversity value; and either*
- d) there will be a local benefit in allowing the development in terms of either alternative equivalent provision being made or improvement to an existing public park or other open space, or*
- e) the development is for a community purpose and the benefits to the local community outweigh the loss."*

In considering the proposal there will be no significant impact on the quality or character of the local environment or any biodiversity value.

The current site is well utilised as a sports facility for both the school and community. The Council's Open Space Audit, December 2016 categorises the playing field quality as a C, A being the highest and D the lowest. The proposed building would result in the loss of approximately 15% of the existing sports pitches. This area currently provides two grassed pitches measuring 31m by 58m and a small synthetic surface pitch measuring 14m by 28m. The two replacement grass pitches will measure 36m by 55m and do not meet the good practice guidance set out by SportsScotland for a three stream school which would require one synthetic and one grass or three grass. Whilst SportsScotland are not objecting to the proposal, the loss of these facilities, which are not considered to be of limited amenity or leisure value, cannot be justified.

With regard to the second element of the policy, (e) identifies that the development should also be for a community purpose where the benefits to the local community outweigh the loss of open space.

The loss of this area of land has to be balanced against the proposal for the additional classroom accommodation to the school. The proposed development represents a suitable community purpose. However, the benefits to the local community do not outweigh the loss of this land which would have an impact on the availability of open space within the wider area and therefore does not comply with part (e) of LDP policy Env 18.

Policy Env 19 outlines that the loss of pitches to development cannot be justified in principle. However, the loss might be acceptable if alternative equivalent provision is to be made in an equally convenient location. The application does not propose an alternative provision within the area or to significantly improve the existing provision to compensate for the loss.

The proposal does not comply with LDP Policy Env 18 and Policy Env 19.

c) Design, Form, Materials and Positioning

The contemporary design of the proposed buildings reflects the modern style of the existing school buildings whilst being an interesting architectural addition. The proposed height is in keeping with the adjacent school buildings and the overall scale is appropriate.

The materials proposed reflect the contemporary character of the proposal and will create interest within this part of the school grounds.

If Committee is minded to grant the application a condition should be added for the submission of samples of the external materials prior to the commencement of the development to ensure a suitable finish.

The flexible internal space will meet future needs of the school and the ground level has been designed around accessibility.

The proposal is therefore acceptable in terms of positioning, design and materials in accordance with Policy Des 12 of the LDP.

d) Residential Amenity

Residential properties lie to the east of the new classroom block. The development will sit 9 metres away from the boundary with these properties. The applicant has demonstrated that the development will not have an adverse impact on these properties in terms of daylighting or overshadowing.

The proposal will not therefore have any detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents and is in accordance with LDP Policy Hou 7 and the Non-statutory Edinburgh Design Guidance.

e) Road Safety

There is limited parking available and this will not change as part of this application. The existing access arrangements to the school are maintained. There are no road safety issues arising from this proposal.

The car parking and cycle parking on site will meet current standards.

f) Other matters

Flood Planning

No objection has been raised to the application subject to the inclusion of a 75mm hydrobrake/orifice. If Committee is minded to grant the application, an informative should be added in respect of this.

Contaminated Land

Environmental Protection recommends that a condition is attached to ensure that contaminated land is fully addressed. If Committee is minded to grant the application a condition should be added in respect of this.

g) Equalities and Human Rights Impacts

This application was assessed in terms of equalities and human rights and no impact has been identified. An Equality and Rights Impact Assessment Summary is available to view on Planning and Building Standards online services.

h) Public Comments

Material Objections

- Option should be found that does not remove either playground or playfield.
- reduction in open space - assessed in section 3.3 (b).
- increased traffic - assessed in section 3.3 (e).
- privacy issues - assessed in section 3.3 (d).
- proximity to adjacent boundary - assessed in section 3.3 (d).
- bats - impact on foraging area - assessed in section 3.3 (b).

Non- Material Comments

- Disturbance during construction - not relevant to the planning process.
- Lack of foresight in the delivery of housing without associated infrastructure - not relevant to this application.

Support Comments

The majority of the comments received in support of the application mention that this proposal is the preferred option of the options presented to them by Education as part of the consultation on the application. However, the application needs to be considered on its own merits.

- Pitches currently unusable and this option would allow an upgrade to the pitches.
- Area under used.
- More appropriate relationship to the school.
- Safe collection space.

Conclusion

The proposal does not comply with the development plan or the non statutory guidelines. The proposal will result in the loss of open space which is not considered to be of limited amenity or leisure value and its loss cannot be justified in this instance. The application does not propose an alternative provision or to significantly improve the existing provision to compensate for the loss. There are no material considerations that outweigh this conclusion and refusal is recommended.

It is recommended that this application be Refused for the reasons below.

3.4 Conditions/reasons/informatives

Reasons:-

1. The proposal is contrary to the Local Development Plan Policy Env 18 in respect of Open Space Protection, as the proposal will result in the loss of open space which is not considered to be of limited amenity or leisure value and the benefit to the local community does not outweigh this loss.
2. The proposal is contrary to the Local Development Plan Policy Env 19 in respect of Playing Fields Protection, as the application does not propose an alternative provision within the area or to significantly improve the existing provision to compensate for the loss.

Financial impact

4.1 The financial impact has been assessed as follows:

The Council are the applicant for the proposal and there are financial implications in terms of the delivery of the school programme.

Risk, Policy, compliance and governance impact

5.1 Provided planning applications are determined in accordance with statutory legislation, the level of risk is low.

Equalities impact

6.1 The equalities impact has been assessed as follows:

The application has been assessed and has no impact in terms of equalities or human rights.

Sustainability impact

7.1 The sustainability impact has been assessed as follows:

This application is not subject to the sustainability requirements of the Edinburgh Design Guidance.

Consultation and engagement

8.1 Pre-Application Process

There is no pre-application process history.

8.2 Publicity summary of representations and Community Council comments

The application attracted 54 letters of representation of these 34 were in support and 18 provided objections to the scheme.

Background reading/external references

- To view details of the application go to
- [Planning and Building Standards online services](#)
- [Planning guidelines](#)
- [Conservation Area Character Appraisals](#)
- [Edinburgh Local Development Plan](#)
- [Scottish Planning Policy](#)

Statutory Development

Plan Provision

The site is located within an area of open space.

Date registered

14 November 2017

Drawing numbers/Scheme

01-12,

Scheme 1

David R. Leslie

Chief Planning Officer

PLACE

The City of Edinburgh Council

Contact: Lynsey Townsend, Senior Planning Officer

E-mail:lynsey.townsend@edinburgh.gov.uk Tel:0131 529 3905

Links - Policies

Relevant Policies:

Relevant policies of the Local Development Plan.

LDP Policy Des 1 (Design Quality and Context) sets general criteria for assessing design quality and requires an overall design concept to be demonstrated.

LDP Policy Des 3 (Development Design - Incorporating and Enhancing Existing and Potential Features) supports development where it is demonstrated that existing and potential features have been incorporated into the design.

LDP Policy Des 5 (Development Design - Amenity) sets criteria for assessing amenity.

LDP Policy Env 8 (Protection of Important Remains) establishes a presumption against development that would adversely affect the site or setting of a Scheduled Ancient Monument or archaeological remains of national importance.

LDP Policy Env 18 (Open Space Protection) sets criteria for assessing the loss of open space.

LDP Policy Env 19 (The Protection of Outdoor Sports Facilities) sets criteria for assessing the loss of outdoor sports facilities.

LDP Policy Tra 2 (Private Car Parking) requires private car parking provision to comply with the parking levels set out in Council guidance, and sets criteria for assessing lower provision.

LDP Policy Tra 3 (Private Cycle Parking) requires cycle parking provision in accordance with standards set out in Council guidance.

Non-Statutory guidelines Edinburgh Design Guidance supports development of the highest design quality and that integrates well with the existing city. It sets out the Council's expectations for the design of new development, including buildings, parking, streets and landscape, in Edinburgh.

Appendix 1

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Consultations

Sportscotland

I refer to the planning applications as above. As you may be aware, Sportscotland has been involved in pre-application discussions about these proposals, and had previously advised that we would be concerned about the potential loss of pitch space, particularly given that the development is to allow an increase in school roll.

I would note first that we are not a statutory consultee for planning application ref 17/05183/FUL (embankment option) - this does not have any impact on any outdoors sports facilities and so Sportscotland does not have any comments to offer regarding that application.

In relation to 17/05182/FUL; this proposal would involve the loss of one grass pitch, and also the small, synthetic surface, pitch (dimensions 14m x 28m) on the western boundary. The plans show that the remaining area could be used to accommodate 2 No. 36x55m pitches. These dimensions accord with Sportscotland's design guidelines for minimum-sized 7-a-side pitches, but are slightly smaller than our recommendations for primary school pitches (60m x 40m).

The proposed provision will cater for an increased school roll, with the potential of taking the school from 2 stream to 3 stream. For information, Sportscotland's guidelines for pitch provision in primary schools are:

- o 2 stream school - 1 synthetic or 2 grass*
- o 3-stream school - 1 synthetic and 1 grass, or 3 grass*

The proposal does not meet our good practice guidance (for the proposed increase in school roll), but would if one of the two pitches was a synthetic surface.

We note the proposal involves the loss of a small synthetic surface pitch. We assume the school is comfortable that its PE requirements can be delivered with the 2 grass pitches proposed.

We are also aware that there is community use of the school pitches; and we understand that the proposals reflect discussions the Council has had with community users, and that these users are content with the proposals on the basis that they will still have access to 2 grass pitches.

In conclusion, the proposal does not meet our good practice pitch guidance for 3 stream primary schools. Providing 1 synthetic surfaced and 1 grass surface pitch would provide what our guidance recommends, and would provide good facilities for school and community use. We would recommend that this option is delivered if at all possible.

However, at minimum we require that the following condition is attached to any grant of planning permission:

o The 2 No. new 36m x 55m grass pitches will be designed and constructed by a recognised (e.g. SAPCA registered) specialist pitch contractor(s), details of contractor(s) and pitch specification shall be submitted for the written approval of the planning authority prior to the commencement of development*

**SAPCA is The Sports and Play Construction Association (www.sapca.org.uk)*

We request this to reflect that a smaller overall playing field area will be available, including the loss of the small synthetic surfaced pitch. The provision of properly constructed pitches will provide increased capacity in the remaining area.

Subject to the above condition, and given the level of consultation and support from the local community including the school and Currie Boys Club outlined by the agent, I confirm that Sportscotland does not object to the proposal.

Flood Planning

No objection, CEC Flood Prevention would be happy with the inclusion of a 75mmm hydrobrake/orifice and the subsequent increase in discharge flow off site.

Archaeology

Further to your consultation request I would like to make the following comments and recommendations concerning this application for the construction of a new educational building with 8 classrooms and ancillary accommodation within the grounds of Currie Primary School.

The Primary School was constructed in the 1960's on open ground (farmland?) to the north of the original Victorian School for Currie located at the north end of the historic village. This location places the site to adjacent to but out with the historic core for Currie which dates back to the early medieval period. Therefore, having assessed the application it has been concluded that although physical impacts will occur such ground-works are considered unlikely to have any significant archaeological impact.

Therefore I have concluded that here are no known archaeological implications regarding this application.

Environmental Assessment

The proposal is for two standalone single storey buildings each containing four classroom spaces, plus a central hub/ learning space and ancillary accommodation. The proposed buildings are to be constructed in two phases, with the Phase 1 building required for the start of the 2018 school year. The second phase building and joining canopy will be constructed later when the rising school roll requires it. The proposed location for the new buildings is to the south of the main school, sited on the edge of the existing embankment. This location is currently a grass playing field area.

Currently the pitch area is lined with 2 no. non-standard sized football pitches as shown below. The applicant proposes that the existing (un-lined) rubber crumb play surface on the pitch area is removed and grass re-instated - this will allow 2 no. Sports Scotland standard minimum size pitches be re-instated with no floodlighting.

It is understood that there is no additional car parking proposed as part of this development. However, the applicant should be made aware that grants are available for the installation of Electric Vehicle (EV) charge points from the Scottish Energy Saving Trust. This would be a good opportunity to integrate EV charging inot the school for staff. More information can be found at:

<http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/scotland/Organisations/Transport/Electric-vehicles/Electric-Vehicle-Charge-Point-Funding>

The Scottish Government in the 'Government's Programme for Scotland 2017-18 has a new ambition on ultra-low emission vehicles, including electric cars and vans, with a target to phase out the need for petrol and diesel vehicles by 2032. This is underpinned by a range of actions to expand the charging network, support innovative approaches and encourage the public sector to lead the way, with developers incorporating charging points in new developments.

The applicant has not provided details of the proposed energy plant serving the building and Environmental Protection will need to be satisfied that it meets the requirements of the Clean Air Act 1993, it should be noted that Environmental Protection do not support the use of biomass.

Environmental Protection will provide separate comments with regards contaminated land. The applicant has submitted a Ground Investigation Report which is currently being assessed by Environmental Protection. Until this has been completed Environmental Protection recommends that a condition is attached to ensure that contaminated land is fully addressed.

Therefore, Environmental Protection offer no objection subject to the following condition and recommend the following informative is included;

i) Prior to the commencement of construction works on site:

a) A site survey (including intrusive investigation where necessary) must be carried out to establish, either that the level of risk posed to human health and the wider environment by contaminants in, on or under the land is acceptable, or that remedial and/or protective measures could be undertaken to bring the risks to an acceptable level in relation to the development; and

b) Where necessary, a detailed schedule of any required remedial and/or protective measures, including their programming, must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.

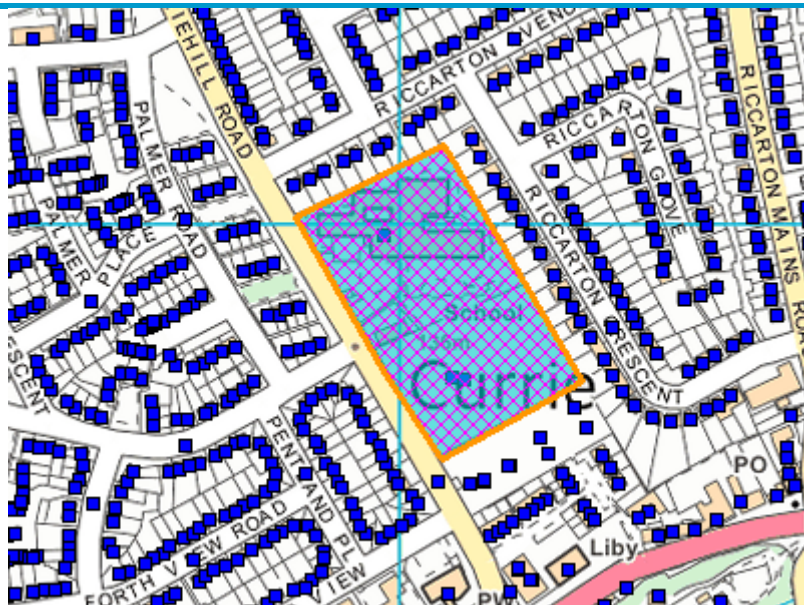
ii) Any required remedial and/or protective measures shall be implemented in accordance with the approved schedule and documentary evidence to certify those works shall be provided for the approval of the Planning Authority.

Informative

1. The applicant should consider the installation of 7Kw electric vehicle charging points for use by staff. There is grant funding available through the Energy Saving Trust for such works.

2. The applicant will need to provide confirmation the proposed fuel and power input of any energy system and boilers. This must comply with the Clean Air Act 1993.

Location Plan



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