

Committee Report

Planning Committee on 25 November, 2009 Case No.

09/2222

RECEIVED: 9 September, 2009

WARD: Welsh Harp

PLANNING AREA: Willesden Consultative Forum

LOCATION: School Main Building, St Margaret Clitherow Jmi School, Quanton Street, London, NW10 0BG

PROPOSAL: Demolition of existing school and erection of new single-storey school building with 12 parking spaces, refuse storage and habitat area/vegetable garden to front, hardsurfaced playground to side, seating and play areas to rear and associated landscaping

APPLICANT: The Governors

CONTACT: DHP (UK) LLP

PLAN NO'S: Letter from Rachel Banfield, DHP (UK) LLP, dated 5th November 2009
E-mail from Rachel Banfield, DHP (UK) LLP, dated 12 October 2009
Planning Statement by DHP dated 19 August 2009
Renewable Energy Feasibility Report by DHP dated July 2009
4282/01; 4282/02; 4282/03; 4282/04; 4282/05; 4282/06; 4282/07

RECOMMENDATION

Grant planning permission subject to the completion of a satisfactory Section 106 or other legal agreement and delegate authority to the Director of Environmental Services to agree the exact terms thereof on advice from the Borough Solicitor

SECTION 106 DETAILS

The application requires a Section 106 Agreement, in order to secure the following benefits:-

- (i) Payment of the Council's legal and other professional costs in (a) preparing and completing the agreement and (b) monitoring and enforcing its performance;
- (ii) Prior to any occupation; submission of and compliance with an agreed management plan to cover community access to the on-site indoor facilities. The plan will include rates of hire, hours of operation and can be reviewed on a yearly basis.
- (iii) Prior to any occupation; the submission and approval and implementation of a School Travel Plan, with provision for effective implementation.
- (iv) A requirement to implement sustainability measures indicated on TP6 Form "Sustainability Checklist" dated 21/08/2009 and measures to ensure that a minimum BREEAM Excellent rating has been achieved.
- (v) A requirement to offset 20% of the developments CO2 production through the use of on-site renewables during the lifetime of the development.

And, to authorise the Director of Environment and Culture, or other duly authorised person, to

refuse planning permission if the applicant has failed to demonstrate the ability to provide for the above terms and meet the policies of the Unitary Development Plan and Section 106 Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document by concluding an appropriate agreement.

EXISTING

The site is located at the end of Quanton Street in Neasden, and is currently occupied by a one-form entry primary school. The site is bounded by a railway to the south, a residential flatted development, the River Brent, and a sports ground to the west, residential properties on Lawrence Way to the north, and a canal feeder and industrial area to the east. The main site access is off Quanton Street, near its junction with Lawrence Way, with an additional emergency vehicle access on Lawrence Way. The site is not within a Conservation Area, and does not contain any Listed Buildings.

PROPOSAL

Full planning permission is sought for demolition of the existing school and erection of a new single-storey school building with 12 parking spaces, refuse storage and habitat area/vegetable garden to front, hardsurfaced playground to side, seating and play areas to rear and associated landscaping. The development is proposed to be carried out in 3 phases, details of which will follow in the Remarks section below.

HISTORY

Planning permission was granted in 1975 to erect temporary classrooms for a period of 5 years, under reference LE89939975.

Permission was then granted in 1976, for the erection of extensions to complete the one-form entry primary school, under reference H1658 1144.

Planning permission was granted in 1990 for erection of a single-storey building to provide a nursery unit, under reference 89/1288.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Brent's Unitary Development Plan - 2004

STR11 - The quality and character of the Borough's built and natural environment

STR12 Protecting public health and safety

STR13 - Environmentally sound

STR34 - Protection of sports facilities

STR35 - Improvements to Brent's open space and sports facilities

STR37 - Accessible community facilities

STR38 - Major regeneration should include proper provision for community facilities

BE2 - Townscape: Local Context & Character

BE4 - Access for Disabled People

BE6 - Public Realm: Landscape Design

BE7 - Public Realm: Streetscape

BE9 - Architectural Quality

BE12 - Sustainable Design Principles

TRN22- Parking Standards – Non-residential Developments

TRN34- Servicing in New Development

TRN35- Transport Access for Disabled People & Others with Mobility Difficulties

PS12 - Non-residential Institutions (Use Class D1) and Hospitals

CF8 - School extensions

Supplementary Planning Guidance

SPG17- Design Guide for New Development

SPG19-- Sustainable Design and Construction

SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT

The development is acceptable in sustainability terms and achieves the required 50% on the Council's TP6 Checklist. It is recommended that the development uses a mix of technologies to achieve a 20% CO2 reduction from renewable-energy measures, specifically Air Source Heat Pumps and photovoltaic panels. This will need to be demonstrated in a detailed Sustainability Implementation Strategy. The applicant will also need to sign up to the agreed Head of Terms in the S106 agreement.

CONSULTATION

205 premises in the vicinity of the site were consulted. No objections were received. In addition, a petition comprising 455 signatures in support of the proposal was submitted with the application. A pre-application consultation exercise with residents and parents was undertaken by the applicant. Concerns raised were primarily in relation to construction traffic/hours of work; and traffic flows, particularly on Quinton Street.

The following parties were also consulted:

Internal:

Environmental Health - No objection. Conditions proposed in order to address air quality and noise concerns;

Transportation Unit - No objection. School Travel Plan to be secured by legal agreement;

Policy and Research - No objection. Sustainability comments given;

Landscape and Design - No objection. Revisions requested and conditions proposed;

Design and Regeneration - No objection. Revisions requested;

Sports Service - No comments;

Children and Families - No comment;

External:

Ward Councillors - No comments;

Brent Police Secure By Design - No comments;

Thames Water - No objection - Informative proposed;

London Underground Limited - No objection;

Environment Agency - No objection - Suggestions made for potential sustainability improvements.

REMARKS

The existing primary school is accommodated in outdated and undersized buildings which were built as temporary classrooms in the 1970s. There is insufficient space to provide adequate teaching facilities for the one-form entry (1FE) of pupils, and the facilities are of a poor quality. The proposal therefore seeks to demolish the existing buildings and build replacement buildings that will provide adequate facilities for staff and pupils into the future. The need for this development is clear. It is proposed to undertake the development in phases, which will allow the school to remain open without the need for temporary classrooms.

The proposed school will provide facilities for 1FE, as existing, therefore there will be no increase in pupil or staff numbers. As there is no change of use or increased intensity of use related to the proposal, the primary considerations are:

1. Whether the scale and layout of the proposed buildings will cause any additional impact on the amenities of neighbouring residents.
2. Whether the proposal exhibits an acceptable design and landscape quality, which is fit for its end use, is appropriate to its surroundings, and is visually attractive.
3. Whether the development is acceptable in terms of sustainability - contributing toward the Borough's sustainability objectives and providing a safe environment for staff and pupils on site.
4. Whether the development will make a positive contribution to the local community.

Phasing

The development is proposed to be built in 3 phases, for reasons relating to funding and the need to provide additional teaching space as a priority. This will also allow the school to operate during construction. Phase 1 would be undertaken without the need for any prior demolition, as this part of the development is proposed on the existing open space to the west of the site. The extent of works proposed under the proposed 2nd and 3rd phases are detailed below under *Design*.

Funding has only been secured for the first phase of the proposal. While it is accepted that the intention of the applicant is to complete all 3 phases of the development, it must be considered a possibility that funding will not be forthcoming for the second and third phases of the development immediately after the implementation of the first phase, or possibly at all. As such, it must be considered how each phase of the development would read in relation to the existing buildings, and what implications this may have on the development overall. It is also key that any conditions imposed relate back to this possibility. These themes will be explored in more depth later in the report.

Scale and massing

The existing buildings are single-storey, and are positioned toward the centre and east of the site. The most sensitive boundaries are to the north and the west, which adjoin residential properties. The eastern and southern boundaries are shared with an industrial area and the railway. The existing buildings are in close proximity to the flank wall and rear garden of neighbouring dwellinghouse at 15 Cambridge Close to the north.

The proposed layout withdraws from this boundary somewhat, but extends further to the west, resulting in a reasonably deep-plan east-west oriented building. The proposal results in an increase in the existing building footprint from 1219m² to 1572m². The proposed layout allows for adequate circulation space and outdoor play areas surrounding the buildings.

The proposed buildings are single-storey, however, the main hall, which is situated centrally, has a vaulted ceiling which results in an overall external height of 7.3m. All parts of the development comply with massing/scale guidance provided by SPG17, which is based on the angle of sight-lines from the rear windows or side boundaries of neighbouring residential dwellings.

The proposed phase 1 buildings will extend further toward the west of the site, into what is currently open space. This will be closer to the rear gardens of 16-26 Cambridge Close to the north of the site, and to the flank wall of 27-35 Cambridge Close to the west. This part of the development has a curved roof which reaches a maximum height of 5.5m above ground level. A rooflight feature in the centre extends a further 1.3m. As the height of the building is not excessive, and an appropriate space is to remain between the building and the site boundaries, no significant impact on neighbouring amenity is expected. Both the eastern and northern boundaries have significant existing vegetation which is proposed to be retained, and will provide ongoing screening of the site.

Although higher than existing, the main hall is situated further from the site boundary than its existing counterpart, meaning that the impact on the amenities of the nearest residents (at 15 Cambridge Close), will not be significantly affected. This part of the development is proposed under phase 2.

Phase 3 of the development has a similar roof design to phase 1, and being situated to the east, will not have a significant impact on any adjoining residential properties.

Design

Overall, the design of the proposed buildings is considered acceptable. The buildings are of an appropriate scale for primary children to relate to and have an interesting and contemporary design. Materials are shown as a combination of rainscreen cladding, natural wood, and render, which are considered acceptable although specific details will be required to be submitted for approval later, should permission be granted. Suggestions have also been made as to how the overall elevational design could be lifted slightly, and a condition proposed to require further submission of such details.

The buildings can be broken down into 3 distinct parts, which correspond to the various phases of the development. The Phase 1 area consists of 4 junior classrooms, 2 group rooms, and a central atrium group area. The exterior is characterised by an arched sedum roof with a domed rooflight in the centre. Rooflights and windcatchers increase natural light and ventilation to internal spaces. Classroom break-out areas are provided to the north and south. If implemented independently of the other 2 phases, this building would be free standing. As this phase would be constructed prior to demolition of the existing buildings, this would result in an additional 4 classrooms in excess of current provision. The governors of the school have given confirmation that if this eventuates, that the school will not be used to accommodate more than 1FE of pupils, and a condition is proposed to control this, the reason being that additional pupil numbers would have follow-on impacts related to transportation and neighbouring amenity, and would be considered to be inappropriate to such a constricted site.

The Phase 2 area includes the main hall (which doubles as an indoor PE area), 2 infant classrooms, WCs and a food-science room. The south side of the building, which contains the classrooms, is similar in design to the Phase 1 building. The north side (main hall) is higher, with a flat roof. A condition is proposed, requiring further details of how this roof could be used for either rainwater harvesting or as a green roof.

The Phase 3 part of the proposal incorporates the main entrance, nursery, ICT suite, library, offices, and ancillary rooms of various types. It is also similar in design to the Phase 1 building. Amendments were requested in order to make the proposed main entrance more expressive and legible, further details of which are required by condition

Landscape

The proposal results in an increased building footprint and an increased area of hard landscaping, on a relatively constricted site. Consequently, the remaining soft landscaping must be of a high quality in order to balance this and create an acceptable development overall in terms of visual amenity and sustainability. Various improvements to the scheme have been suggested, and the incorporation of these suggestions into the final landscaping scheme is required by condition.

Sustainability

As outlined above, a sustainability score of 50% is likely to be achieved by the development. The Section 106 agreement, for which the heads of terms have been agreed, will require the provision of on-site renewables to off-set 20% of the development's carbon production for the lifetime of the development, in addition to achieving a BREEAM Excellent rating. A Site Waste Management Plan has is required by condition. The development results in an increase in the proportion of the site covered by buildings and hardsurfacing, however, this additional impact is balanced by the provision of sedum roof on much of the development, which slows the overall run-off rate for the site. Details of either rainwater harvesting or green roofs for additional roof areas, and details of

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems where possible are required by condition. The proposed draft landscape scheme indicates an increase in the overall number of trees on site, particularly natives, and the provision of a natural wetland habitat area. The final landscape scheme will be required to include these provisions and improve on them where possible. In sustainability terms, the scheme is considered to be acceptable.

Transportation

As no increase in numbers are proposed, transportation impacts will not be expected to increase as a result of the proposal. The school is currently preparing a School Travel Plan in conjunction with the Council's Transportation Unit, the implementation, monitoring, and review of which will be secured by legal agreement for the lifetime of the development. The proposed car- and cycle-parking provision has been brought in line with the appropriate parking standards for this type of development. No change to existing access arrangements are proposed, although an additional pedestrian accessway will be provided in order to improve car-free access. Servicing provision is adequate.

Noise and air pollution

The application site lies within an Air Quality Management Area. The proposal is for the same use and intensity as the existing use of the site, so would not be expected to contribute to any additional air quality impacts. Conditions are proposed, however, to ensure that construction works do not have an unacceptable impact on air quality, particularly as the school would be likely to be in use during this time. Details of how noise from the adjacent railway will be mitigated are also to be submitted.

Community use

The school is able to provide a small number of facilities which may be of benefit to the wider community. These include the ICT suite, main hall (with single indoor sports court), and meeting rooms. Existing facilities at the school are available on an ad hoc basis, however the management and availability of the proposed facilities will be formalised and secured by legal agreement in the form of a Community Use Plan.

Conclusion

The need for new school facilities at this site is accepted, and it is considered that the proposed development would be successful in terms of providing for this need. The main issues surrounding the proposal, being the quality of design and landscaping, impact on neighbours, sustainability and community benefit, have been adequately addressed.

It is considered that the delivery of only 1 or 2 of the proposed phases, while less than ideal, would result in the provision of the required educational facilities, without any significant harm to the amenities of neighbouring residents. It has been demonstrated that the required sustainability requirements can be achieved for each proposed phase. The proposed landscaping plan will be required to be implemented as part of the Phase 1 works, ensuring that the loss of existing green space would be mitigated in the event of the subsequent phases not being implemented.

The proposal is considered to comply with the relevant policies in Brent's UDP, and guidance provided by SPG17 and SPG19. Approval of the application is accordingly recommended.

RECOMMENDATION: Grant Consent

REASON FOR GRANTING

(1) The proposed development is in general accordance with policies contained in the:-

Brent Unitary Development Plan 2004
Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance SPG 17 - Design Guide for New
Development

Relevant policies in the Adopted Unitary Development Plan are those in the following chapters:-

Built Environment: in terms of the protection and enhancement of the environment

Transport: in terms of sustainability, safety and servicing needs

Community Facilities: in terms of meeting the demand for community services

CONDITIONS/REASONS:

- (1) The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning on the date of this permission.

Reason: To conform with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- (2) Details of materials for all external work, including samples, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before any work is commenced. The work shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory development which does not prejudice the amenity of the locality.

- (3) Notwithstanding any details of landscape works referred to in the submitted application, a scheme for the landscape works and treatment of the surroundings of the proposed development (including species, plant sizes and planting densities) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of any site clearance, demolition or construction works on the site. The submitted plans shall clearly indicate the extent of landscaping that will be undertaken as part of each of the 3 proposed phases of development, and shall achieve an acceptable standard of visual appearance and amenity for each respective phase. Any approved planting, turfing or seeding included in such details shall be completed in strict accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of the relevant part of the development or in accordance with a programme agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. Such a scheme shall include:-

(a) the identification and protection of existing trees and shrubs not directly affected by the building works and which are to be retained;

(b) further details of proposed areas of additional planting, including proposed species, numbers, and densities;

(c) proposed walls and fences (both boundary and within the site) indicating materials and heights;

(d) screen planting along the boundary adjoining residential properties;

(e) adequate physical separation, such as protective walls and fencing between landscaped and paved areas;

(f) existing contours and any proposed alteration to ground levels such as earth mounding;

(g) areas of hard landscape works and proposed materials, which must also provide for the sustainable drainage of surface water where practicable. Details should show the omission of hard surfacing within proposed habitat area;

- (h) additional seating, shelter, and play features;
- (i) details of the proposed arrangements for the maintenance of the landscape works.

Any planting that is part of the approved scheme that within a period of five years after planting is removed, dies or becomes seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species and in the same positions, unless the Local Planning Authority first gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance and setting for the proposed development and ensure that it enhances the visual amenity of the area.

- (4) Detailed drawings showing all existing trees which are not directly affected by the building(s) and works hereby approved shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority prior to demolition and construction works. Such trees shall be retained and shall not be lopped, topped, felled, pruned, have their roots severed or be uprooted or their soil levels within the tree canopy altered at any time without prior approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. Any such tree which subsequently dies, becomes seriously diseased or has to be removed as a result of carrying out this development, shall be replaced in the next planting season with a tree of a similar species and size in the same position, or in such position as the Local Planning Authority may otherwise approve in writing.

Detailed drawings of all underground works and additional precautions to prevent damage to tree roots, if any, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before any work is commenced on site. Such details shall include the location, extent and depth of all excavations for drainage and other services, in relation to the trees to be retained on site, and these works shall be carried out and completed in all respects in accordance with the drawings so approved, unless otherwise approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the existing trees are not damaged during the period of construction, as they represent an important visual amenity which the Local Planning Authority considers should be substantially maintained as an integral feature of the development and locality and kept in good condition.

- (5) Prior to commencement of any demolition or construction works on site, details of suitable and sufficient lighting, appropriately baffled where necessary to avoid glare, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Submitted details shall include light-spill drawings and proposed hours of use. Such details shall be designed to ensure adequate security, safety, and convenience on roads, footpaths, carparks and other pedestrian and vehicular routes within the site, and so as to not harm the amenities of neighbouring residents, and shall be in accordance with "Secured By Design" guidance. The approved details shall be fully implemented.

Reason: In the interests of safety, amenity and convenience.

- (6) Prior to the commencement of development on site, a Noise Assessment shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, which shall conform with the guidance outlined in PPG 24 and BS 8233:1999, and shall include all attenuation measures to be incorporated into the building to protect the future occupiers from exposure to railway noise and vibration and interim measures to ensure an environment conducive to learning can be maintained during later construction phases. The approved details shall be fully implemented.

Reason: To protect the amenities of the occupiers of the building hereby approved and nearby residents from noise and general disturbance.

- (7) Prior to commencement of the development, a Demolition & Construction Method Statement, including hours of operations, measures to suppress dust and noise, measures to preserve air quality, and details of on-site wheel-washing equipment for construction vehicles, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All operations shall conform with the Method Statement approved.

Reason: To ensure considerate construction and protect the amenities of the occupiers of the building hereby approved and nearby residents

- (8) The noise from all new building services and plant shall be maintained at a level 10dB(A) below the typical underlying background-noise level (LA90) during its operation at a position one metre away from the nearest habitable room in adjacent dwellings or other noise-sensitive receivers. The LA90 level shall be determined in the absence of the new plant noise. Assessment shall conform in all respects with advice in BS4142: 1997.

Reason: In the interest in preserving the amenities of neighbouring residents.

- (9) Notwithstanding the plans hereby approved, revised plans shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of any demolition or construction works on site, which illustrate the following improvements to the scheme:

(a) Elevational changes to lift the overall design appearance of the proposal, in particular to make the proposed entrance more expressive and articulate.

(b) Provision of either green roofs or rainwater harvesting to flat roof elements of proposal.

These approved details shall be fully implemented.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenity and legibility of the development.

- (10) Prior to the commencement of development, an appropriate Site Waste Management Plan shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall be fully complied with.

Reason: In the interest of ensuring the sustainability of the development.

INFORMATIVES:

None Specified

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS:

Brent's UDP 2004;
SPG17 - Design Guide for New Development;
SPG19 - Sustainable Design, Construction, and Pollution Control.

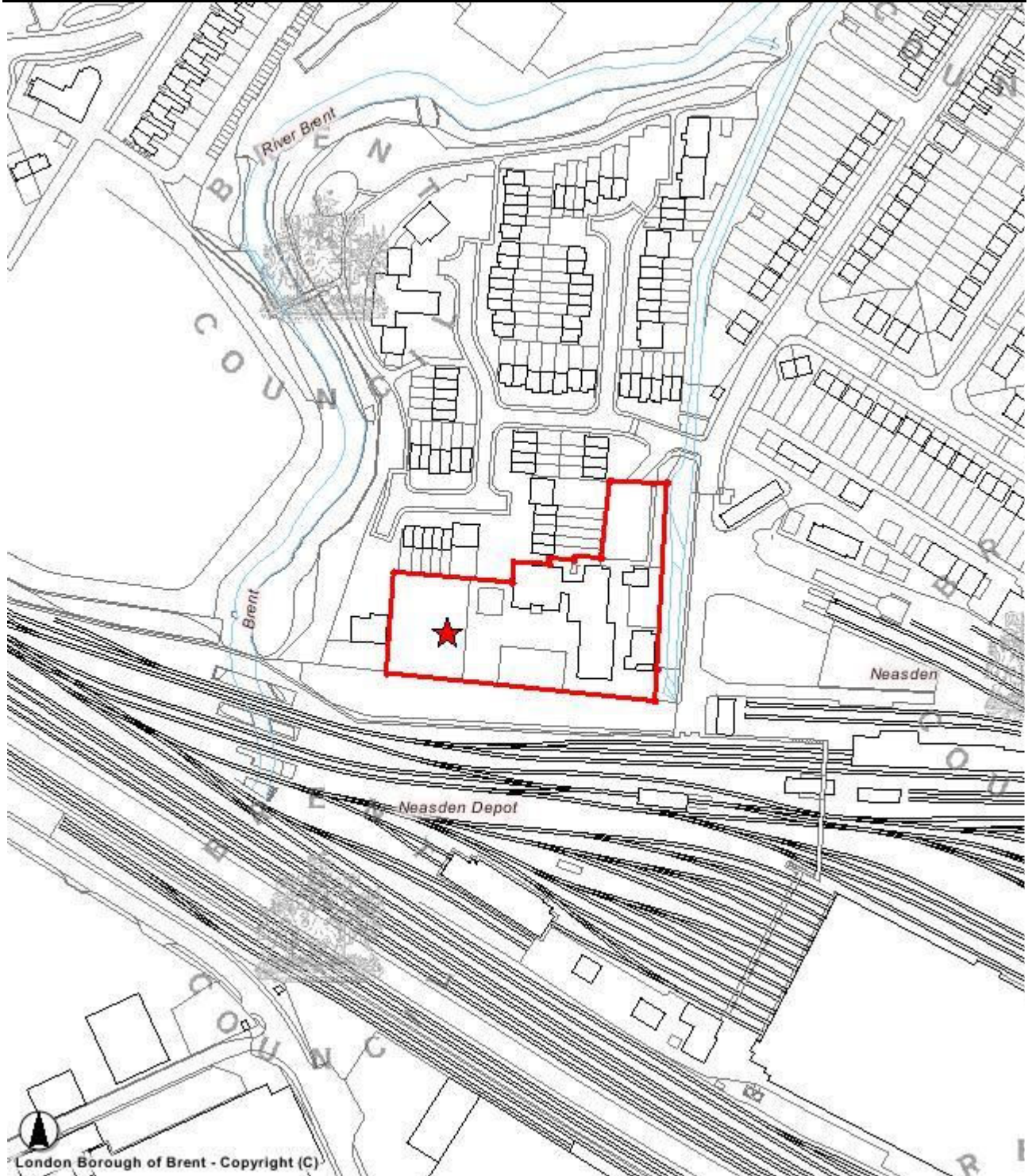
Any person wishing to inspect the above papers should contact Hayden Taylor, The Planning Service, Brent House, 349 High Road, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 6BZ, Tel. No. 020 8937 5345



Planning Committee Map

Site address: School Main Building, St Margaret Clitherow Jmi School, Quanton Street, London, NW10 0BG

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