

 **Planning Committee Map**  
Site address: Maple Walk School, Crownhill Road, London, NW10 4EB  
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This map is indicative only.

**RECEIVED:** 7 June, 2011

**WARD:** Harlesden

**PLANNING AREA:** Harlesden Consultative Forum

**LOCATION:** Maple Walk School, Crownhill Road, London, NW10 4EB

**PROPOSAL:** Erection of single-storey extension to main school building to provide 1 additional classroom, and erection of detached single storey building containing 2 classrooms

**APPLICANT:** The Craigmyle Charitable Trust

**CONTACT:** Christopher Wickham Assocs

**PLAN NO'S:**

See condition 2

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

Approval

## **EXISTING**

The subject site is a triangular plot abutting the rear boundaries of the residential properties along St Johns Avenue, Harlesden Gardens and Crownhill Road. The site is occupied by the Maple Walk School which comprises of a part single, part two-storey school building with associated landscaping and play areas. The site has an area of 0.2ha and is accessed from a service road leading from Crownhill Road.

## **PROPOSAL**

See above

## **HISTORY**

Planning permission (08/2168) for the erection of the school building on the site was approved by the Council on the 27th February 2009. Prior to this the site had been occupied by the Crownhill Sports & Social Club. There is no other planning history on the site considered to be of particular relevance to the determination of the current application.

## **POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

### **London Borough of Brent Unitary Development Plan 2004**

BE2 Townscape: Local Context & Character  
BE9 Architectural Quality  
CF8 School Extensions

## **SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT**

N/A

## **CONSULTATION**

### **EXTERNAL**

Consultation letters, dated the 22nd June 2011, were sent to Ward Councillors and 86 neighbouring owner/occupiers. Five letters of objection have been received in response. The concerns of the objectors include:-

- The proposed extensions would cause a loss of light, outlook and privacy to neighbouring occupiers
- The building works would cause noise disturbance to neighbouring occupiers.
- The proposed development would involve building over an existing sewer pipe.
- The proposed development would exacerbate existing problems of noise and a loss of privacy associated with the existing school.
- The proposed development would remove the possibility of providing a second entrance to the school which could act as a fire escape.

### **INTERNAL**

#### Highways & Transport Delivery

The Highways & Transport Delivery unit have confirmed that Maple Walk School appear to be actively implementing and enforcing their Travel Plan, agreed as part of the planning permission to erect the school, and that from the available data and observations made during recent site visits that good progress is being made towards meeting the agreed targets. On this basis H&TD raise no objection to the proposed extensions.

#### Landscape Design Team

The Landscape Design Team have inspected the proposals and confirm that they have no adverse comments to make on the application. They welcome the provision of a sedum roof to the extensions.

## **REMARKS**

The current proposal seeks planning permission for the erection of a single-storey extension to the northern end of the main school building in order to provide one additional classroom and the erection of a detached single-storey building in the southern corner of the site which would accommodate a further two classrooms. The applicant states that the additional classroom space is required to allow a greater degree of dedicated space for particular activities, reducing the reliance on the dual-use of space, and to assist in more comfortably accommodating minor fluctuations in pupil numbers.

## **IMPACT ON ADJOINING OCCUPIERS**

The proposed single-storey extension would be located towards the northern end of the main school building. The extension would have a footprint of approximately 6m by 6.5m and would have a flat roof with a height of approximately 2.7m. At this end, the site narrows to a point between the rear gardens of the residential properties located on either side. At the closest point, the proposed extension would be approximately 1.5m from the boundary with the rear gardens of the properties along Harlesden Gardens. However, due to the modest height of the proposed extension this relationship would comply with the guidance contained in SPG17 which recommends that new development should be set below a line of 45 degrees taken from a height of 2m along the garden boundary. The proposed extension would also comply with 30 degree guidance contained in SPG17 in terms of its relationship with the habitable room windows at the rear of the properties along Harlesden Gardens. As such, overall it is not considered that the proposed extension would have an unreasonable impact on the daylight or outlook of the

neighbouring properties. In terms of privacy, the classroom extension would have a set of glazed doors facing towards the boundary with the rear gardens along Harlesden Gardens, as do the other existing classrooms along this elevation. However, considering that the boundary treatment along this elevation consists of a substantial close boarded fence and that the extension will largely be occupied by primary school children, it is not considered that any significant loss of privacy would occur.

The proposed single-storey detached classroom building would be located in the southern corner of the site, on part of the existing playground. The building would measure approximately 13m in width, 6m in depth and 2.9m in height. Although the proposed building would be close to the boundary with the rear gardens of the properties along St John's Avenue and Crownhill Road, the existing playground level is substantially lower than the level of the surrounding gardens. As such, the roof of the proposed building would be set approximately 1m below the top of the existing garden fences and there would be no loss of daylight, outlook or privacy to the neighbouring properties.

## URBAN DESIGN

The proposed extension and single-storey detached building have been designed as simple additions to the site, following the general architectural approach applied to the main school building. The external materials used to finish the structures would also seek to match those of the main school building. Sedum roofs would be installed to both structures which would help soften their appearance when viewed from higher points in the surrounding area. Overall, in urban design terms, it is considered that both structures would constitute sympathetic additions to the site which would not have any significant impact on the overall character of the site.

## TRANSPORTATION IMPACT

Planning permission for the school was granted subject to a s106 legal agreement which committed the school to agree and implement a School Travel Plan. The Council's School Travel Plan team have confirmed that Maple Walk School is doing well in terms of implementing and maintaining the initiatives set out in their approved Travel Plan. The monitoring data from the 2010 Progress Review indicated that the school met its target in terms of reducing the number of pupils being picked up/dropped off by car on Crownhill Road and only failed by 1% to meet its target in terms of reducing the number of staff which travel to the school by car. Further evidence of the successful implementation of the Travel Plan was observed during a random site visit by the Highways & Transport Delivery Officer who observed that the vast majority of the pupils leave the school and the surrounding area on foot, including those children making use of the 'walking train' service, one of the measures secured through the Travel Plan. Overall, it is considered that the approved Travel Plan has been an effective tool in reducing the overall transport impact of the school through the promotion of more sustainable forms of transport.

As discussed above, the applicants have stated that the additional classroom space would, as well as reduce the reliance on the dual use of space, in part help more comfortably accommodate fluctuations in pupil numbers. The school have confirmed that they intend to provide an additional 20 places at reception level in the forthcoming school year regardless of whether planning permission for the extensions is obtained or not. At present over 60% of the school population are siblings and it is the schools intention that 50% of these additional reception places would be ring-fenced for siblings of existing pupils. The applicants have stated that although this increase in pupil numbers is not dependent on the success of the current application the additional accommodation would make the expansion of pupil numbers more comfortable. Given that this increase is likely to have a relatively minor impact on the number of parents collecting and dropping off at the school and the relative success of the measures implemented through the School Travel Plan, the Highways & Transport Delivery Officers have advised that they do not expect that the proposed development would be likely to have an significantly adverse transport impact on the surrounding area.

## CONSIDERATION OF OBJECTIONS

The concerns of objectors in terms of the physical impacts of the proposed extensions on the outlook, daylight and privacy of neighbouring occupiers has been addressed in the report above. Whilst some disturbance from the undertaking of building works is inevitable this is not normally a reason to refuse planning permission. In any case, the Council's Environmental Health unit have powers to ensure that noisy works are only undertaken within the statutory hours of 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 1pm on Saturdays. Noisy works should not be undertaken on a Sunday or Bank Holiday.

Concerns have been raised that the construction of the detached classroom building would interfere with existing sewers discharging from the properties along Crownhill Road. Concerns related to the impact of development on submerged utilities is not normally a planning consideration that would justify the refusal of planning permission as this would normally be a civil matter that would need to be addressed by the applicant. However, in order to address these concerns it is recommended that an informative be placed on any permission advising the applicant of this as a potential issue.

Concerns have been raised that the development of the detached classroom building would remove the possibility that the site could be connected to an existing rear passage which leads on to St Johns Avenue, thus providing a second means of access to the site which could be used as an emergency exit. Whilst it is clearly essential to ensure the safety of all users of the site, the matter of fire escape would normally be controlled through other legislation such as Health & Safety or Building Control and in order to operate it is considered likely that the school would have already passed any required assessments.

**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 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  
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) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved drawings:-

- 10537/TP/01
- 10537/TP/02

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- (3) All new external work shall be carried out in materials that match, in colour, texture and design detail those of the existing building.

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

**INFORMATIVES:**

- (1) The applicant is advised to undertake reasonable checks prior to any building works or excavations to ensure that they do not adversely affect any existing sewers. These checks should include discussing the proposal with Thames Water.
- (2) The provisions of The Party Wall etc. Act 1996 may be applicable and relates to work on an existing wall shared with another property; building on the boundary with a neighbouring property; or excavating near a neighbouring building. An explanatory booklet setting out your obligations can be obtained from the Communities and Local Government website [www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)

**REFERENCE DOCUMENTS:**

London Borough of Brent Unitary Development Plan 2004  
Five letters of objection

Any person wishing to inspect the above papers should contact Ben Martin, The Planning Service, Brent House, 349 High Road, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 6BZ, Tel. No. 020 8937 5231