



**Report of the Chief Planning Officer**

**NORTH AND EAST PLANS PANEL**

**Date: 19<sup>th</sup> June 2014**

**Subject: Application 13/02721/FU – Five single storey extensions to school building at Green Lane Primary Academy, Ribblesdale Avenue, Garforth, Leeds, LS25 2JX**

<b>APPLICANT</b>	<b>DATE VALID</b>	<b>TARGET DATE</b>
Mrs Joanne Pitchfork	12/6/13	2/7/14 (Extension agreed)

<p><b>Electoral Wards Affected:</b></p> <p><b>Garforth and Swillington</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes Ward Members consulted (referred to in report)</p>	<p><b>Specific Implications For:</b></p> <p>Equality and Diversity <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Community Cohesion <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Narrowing the Gap <input type="checkbox"/></p>
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**RECOMMENDATION: GRANT PERMISSION subject to the following conditions:**

1. Standard time limit.
2. Details of external materials.
3. Parking layout to be implemented prior to first use of extensions.
4. Maximum number of children on-site
5. Delivery of off-site access measures/restrictions.
6. Compliance with the Travel Plan.
7. Tree protection.
8. Tree retention.
9. Construction management plan.
10. Contaminated land conditions.

**1.0 INTRODUCTION:**

1.1 The application proposes five single storey extensions to Green Lane Primary Academy, Garforth. The extensions are to create improved and additional teaching space to allow expansion from a one and a half form entry school to a full two form

entry school. The application has generated letters of support and objection including an objection from the Ward Member, Councillor Dobson, who has requested the application be presented to North and East Plans Panel and that a site visit also be undertaken to appreciate the highway concerns which have been expressed.

## **2.0 PROPOSAL:**

- 2.1 Five single storey extensions are proposed to the existing school building to provide additional teaching accommodation and improved facilities to allow a move from a one and a half form entry to a two form entry school. In terms of teaching accommodation, 2 new classrooms and an extended classroom (with WC and cloaks) are proposed along with a new music room (through the part conversion of the existing library). Other improvements include a new/larger staffroom, school office and staff work room, 2 small meeting rooms and entrance enhancements.
- 2.2 The extensions would be attached to various parts of the building and have been designed to reflect the general appearance of the existing school. Externally they are shown to be finished in a white render with window and roof details to match the existing (white upvc and flat roof).
- 2.3 In addition to the extensions, the existing staff and visitor parking area at the front of the school is to be reconfigured and expanded to create an additional 17 spaces. This would increase the off-street parking provision from the current 28 bays to 45 bays (including 2 x disabled spaces). Improved on-site turning and delivery facilities are also proposed.
- 2.4 The school have submitted a Travel Plan as part of the application to help reduce car usage by both staff and parents and has also agreed in principle to fund any required off-site traffic restrictions in the surrounding streets that would help prevent undesirable parking.

## **3.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:**

- 3.1 The application relates to Green Lane Primary Academy, on Ribblesdale Avenue in Garforth. The school is currently a one and a half form entry with reception, nursery classes plus an out of school club. Vehicular access is from Ribblesdale Avenue to a parking area at the front of the site. Pedestrian access can also be obtained from the residential streets to the north. There are playing fields to the rear (east) of the school buildings that are designated as Protected Playing Pitches in the UDPR.
- 3.2 The school consists of two linked single storey buildings and 1.5 storey sports hall. The single storey buildings are finished in grey concrete panels with flat roofs and white upvc windows.
- 3.3 To the north and west of the site is a large residential estate whilst to the south and east land is designated as Green Belt. To the immediate south of the school building is the former caretaker's bungalow that has recently been sold by the school.

## **4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:**

4.1 None

## **5.0 HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS:**

5.1 Since the original submission the scheme has been revised to increase parking on site and a parking survey and travel plan have been submitted to allow detailed consideration of the highways implications in acknowledgement of the third party representations that have been received.

## **6.0 PUBLIC/LOCAL RESPONSE:**

6.1 The application was originally advertised by site notices on 5/7/13 and the revised plans with advertised by site notices on 9/5/14 with letters also sent to those that had already commented on the original proposals posted 1/5/14.

6.2 Ward Councillor Mark Dobson objects to the proposals due to the adverse impact on highway safety and the amenity of local residents due to the lack of parking and drop off area. Cllr Dobson also states there is sufficient capacity in the area to accommodate additional children and requests the application be determined by the Plans Panel and that a site visit also take place at school drop off time.

6.3 In addition to the above, 27 letters of objection have been received raising the following main issues:

- Lack of parking on site and inconsiderate parking/dropping off in the surrounding residential streets including parking across driveways, parking over the footpath, blocking emergency vehicles.
- Concerns regarding a fall in the quality of teaching if more children are admitted to the school.
- Increase in pupils from outside of Garforth to the detriment of those in Garforth.
- Traffic problems also caused due to out of school hours activities such as extracurricular clubs and coaches parking on street.
- Concerns regarding any proposals to create a music hub on the site of the caretaker's bungalow.
- Rude and insulting parents when asked to move their cars.
- East Garforth Primary are reducing intake.
- The caretakers bungalow should be knocked down and the site used for drop off/pick up.
- Adequate provision for school places in Garforth.
- Increased noise.

6.4 Alec Shelbrooke MP supports the proposals stating the school is outstanding. Any decrease at East Garforth is because it does not have sufficient space or the means to increase their intake. The expansion would give parents greater choice and most new pupils will be for children in the early years entering school for the first time and not those switching schools. The S106 for the Ben Bailey development at Garforth Cliff has a contribution to the provision and/or improvement to education facilities specifically at Green Lane and Kippax Infant and Junior School. There will not be a music hub at the bungalow.

6.5 10 letters of support have been received stating the following main points:

- Welcome much needed additional places in Garforth
- Refusing the application will not remove the parking problem
- The school is committed to promoting non-car modes of transport in its new Travel Plan.
- Green Lane is an outstanding school therefore more provision at this school should be supported.
- There are no plans to convert the bungalow to a music centre.
- If Garforth children cannot secure a place at the primary they will struggle to get a place at the secondary academy in Garforth.
- The increase to year groups of 60 pupils will allow for two classes in each year rather than the current arrangement of mixed classes across year groups.
- This increases choice for pupils.
- There have been accidents in the past.
- Never experienced any parking problems in the area.

## **7.0 CONSULTATIONS RESPONSES:**

### **Statutory:**

- 7.1 Sport England: No objection.
- 7.2 Coal Authority: No objection.

### **Non-statutory:**

- 7.3 Highways: Highway officers have advised that in the past there have been several attempts by the Traffic Section to manage the existing on-street parking issues with the relatively recent introduction of expanded 'school keep clear' markings and waiting restrictions on Ribblesdale Avenue/Severn Drive. However these measures have not fully resolved the issues and there is limited scope to introduce physical measures beyond the introduction of further waiting restrictions that would help ease the situation. However, following consideration of a number of factors such as; existing conditions at the parent drop-off and pick up times (which are acknowledged to be difficult for local residents), the limited scale of expansion proposed, the short term nature of the parent parking, accident statistics, the on-site increase in staff/visitor parking and improved servicing arrangements, and the proposed Travel Plan Highway officers do not object.
- 7.4 Contaminated Land: A Phase 1 desk study should be submitted prior to determination, if not one should be sought by condition.
- 7.5 Travelwise: The Travel Plan meets the criteria required and should be secured with a monitoring and evaluation fee of £2,500.

## **8.0 PLANNING POLICIES:**

- 8.1 The development plan is the adopted Leeds Unitary Development Plan (Review 2006) and the Natural Resources and Waste Local Plan 1013. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

- 8.2 The draft Core Strategy sets out strategic level policies and vision to guide the delivery of development investment decisions and the overall future of the district. On 26th April 2013 the Council submitted the Publication Draft Core Strategy to the Secretary of State. The Inspector examined the Strategy during October 2013. The weight to be attached is limited where representations have been made. There are no emerging policies that are considered to have any direct bearing on this development proposal.
- 8.3 UDPR Designation: The eastern part of the site is designated as Protected Playing Pitch.
- 8.4 Relevant Policies:  
GP5: General planning considerations to be addressed  
T2: Development should not create new, or exacerbate existing, highway problems.  
T24: Parking guidelines for development proposals.  
BD6: Extensions and alterations must respect the existing building.

#### National Planning Guidance

- 8.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) came into force on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2012. The NPPF states that unless material considerations indicate otherwise development proposals which accord with the Development Plan should be approved. Achieving sustainable development is at the heart of the NPPF. In addition the NPPF has recently been supplemented by the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).

## **9.0 MAIN ISSUES**

1. Background regarding school provision/principle of development.
2. Highways implications/residential amenity.
3. Visual amenity.
4. Letters of representation.

## **10.0 APPRAISAL**

### Background regarding school provision/principle of development

- 10.1 Green Lane Primary Academy (GLPA) stresses that it has a high demand for school places and all year groups are indicated to be full with the exception of year 6 that has just two spaces. It is therefore proposed to increase the Pupil Admissions Number (PAN) from 50 to 60 across all year groups to move from a one and a half to a two form entry school. This change would allow two full classes to be offered to each year group rather than some split year classes as is currently the case.
- 10.2 The school also states that it regularly receives requests for additional places that cannot be accommodated at the current time. This is demonstrated by the 60 places now offered for the 2014 Reception class having already been filled.
- 10.3 The GLPA highlight a high demand for places at the school and Children's Services have already accepted the request to raise the PAN from 50 to 60 pupils for the Reception Class. However, the general advice from Children's Services is that there

is currently sufficient capacity within Garforth and accordingly it does not support the expansion of all year numbers as it believes the majority of the demand comes from outside the local area.

- 10.4 Whilst the comments from Children's Services are noted about overall capacity in the area, the school is understood to have a good reputation which no doubt contributes to the continued high demand for places that it experiences. The issue of need in its wider sense is not however a central consideration in respect of this application and accordingly the scheme has been assessed on its own planning merits.
- 10.5 In the light of the above and noting the school is both long established and not designated for any other purpose on the UDPR proposals map there is no objection in principle to the provision of new and improved school facilities on this site subject to all other material planning considerations being adequately resolved. The introduction of purpose built, integrated extensions is also preferred to the now common practice of providing additional accommodation via temporary prefabricated structures.

#### Highways implications/residential amenity

- 10.6 Highways officers have visited the site at various times of the day including the pick-up/drop off periods and acknowledge there are on-street parking issues that exist on the streets surrounding the school, caused primarily by parents dropping off and picking up pupils but there also appears to be a small element of long stay parking associated with staff.
- 10.7 In the past there have been several attempts by the Traffic section to manage the situation and the recent introduction of the 'school keep clear' markings and waiting restrictions on Ribblesdale Avenue / Severn Drive have led to some improvement. However, these measures have not fully resolved the issues and Highway officers note there is limited scope to introduce physical measures beyond the use of further waiting restrictions to help to ease the situation.
- 10.8 Notwithstanding the above, highways officers have considered the merits and impacts of the current application to expand the school. The school has a current capacity of 350 pupils with nursery provision for 52 children (402 places in total). The information submitted in support of the proposals indicate the planning application has been made due to the school being 99% full and regularly turning children away. The development proposals seek to increase the number of school places to 420 over the next three academic years with no increase in the nursery capacity (i.e. 472 places in total). As such, the proposed enlarged school, if run at its maximum, would result in an approximate 17% increase on the current pupil capacity compared to the existing situation.
- 10.9 In considering this proposed increase, there are currently 28 car parking spaces within the grounds of the school, with some staff parking known to be taking place on-street. To address this issue and also the anticipated increase in staff numbers that would result from the school's expansion (indicated to be 6 full time equivalents) the application has been amended and the on-site parking provision increased to 45 spaces which represents an increase of just over 50%. In addition, internal turning would now be available for delivery vehicles. This would help address existing issues within the site where internal turning for delivery vehicles cannot safely take place. The additional parking should also remove the small element of undesirable on-street long stay staff parking. These are positive physical measures associated

with the proposal that together with a new school Travel Plan designed to achieve a modal switch from the private car to other more sustainable forms of transport (by staff/visitors and parents) will help mitigate the basic increase in movements associated with the increase in pupil and staff numbers at the school.

- 10.10 In addition to the above, it is clear from the representations received that the main highway issue associated with the proposed development is a concern that increases in the current practice of on-street parking associated with parents dropping off and picking up children will take place. It is acknowledged previous attempts to introduce further parking restrictions within the area have not been fully successful due to objections from local residents but with further public consultation and the involvement of Ward Members it is considered a scheme that balances all the issues could be successfully brought forward. In this respect a condition requiring a package of off-street access/parking restrictions to be agreed is advanced as part of the officer recommendation.
- 10.11 Overall the assessment of the proposal has considered a number of factors such as; existing conditions at the parent drop-off and pick up times (which are acknowledged to be difficult for local residents), the limited scale of expansion, the short term nature of the parent parking, accident statistics, the on-site increase in staff parking and improved servicing arrangements, and the proposed Travel Plan.
- 10.12 In view of the above, it is considered a highway safety reason for refusal would be inappropriate as the impacts would not be expected to be 'severe' which is the planning test as set in the NPPF. This approach also accords with the view taken on a number of other school applications where highway challenges are known to exist with parent parking in particular but where there is a clear desire for a school to expand. A consistent approach is therefore considered to have been taken in terms of assessing the highway implications of this application relative to other similar schemes.

#### Visual amenity

- 10.13 The proposed extensions are individually relatively modest and have been designed to be in keeping with the single storey scale of the existing school building. Each extension essentially replicates the existing window arrangements and basic design for the corresponding part of the original building and do not significantly alter its overall scale, massing or wider impact within the streetscene.
- 10.14 In terms of the external materials proposed, the walling materials are to be white render which is supported and considered to be an improvement over the existing somewhat dull and dated grey concrete panels which makeup the main school. Furthermore, the extensions are generally within the development envelope of the existing building and therefore have little impact on the overall character of the school or its relationship with the wider streetscene.
- 10.15 The proposed increase in off-street parking, although sizeable would be well contained within the confines of the school's frontage and subject to appropriate landscaping (to be secured by condition) also raises no visual amenity concerns.

#### Letters of representation

- 10.16 The main issue raised in the majority of the letters of objection relates primarily to parking and access arrangements and have been addressed in the highway section

of this appraisal. The issue relating to need is not one which officers consider reasonably applies to this application.

- 10.17 The school has confirmed it has already sold off the land currently occupied by the caretaker's bungalow therefore this site cannot be used as a school drop-off/pick-up area as has been suggested. Its use as a music centre is also ruled out for the same reason.
- 10.18 The proposed increase in pupils is not considered to significantly increase the noise impact on nearby residents during times of outdoor play over and above the existing situation.
- 10.19 It is not considered that an increase in pupils will result in a fall in quality of education as the extensions should allow for improved facilities and teaching. Some of the issues raised such as any changes to the admissions policy and any reduction in intake at East Garforth are not considered to be material planning consideration.

## **11.0 CONCLUSION**

- 11.1 GLPA is experiencing high demand for its school places and is seeking to increase capacity by introducing five small extensions. The extensions themselves are considered to be well-designed and in keeping with the existing building.
- 11.2 It is acknowledged that, as with most schools, there are issues in the surrounding streets caused by parents dropping off/picking up children. However, in light of the relatively small percentage increase in total pupil numbers proposed, the provision of a travel plan, improved staff/visitor parking at the school in addition to a commitment to introduce further TROs in the area a highways objection is not considered to be appropriate. The application is therefore recommended for approval subject to the conditions specified.

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

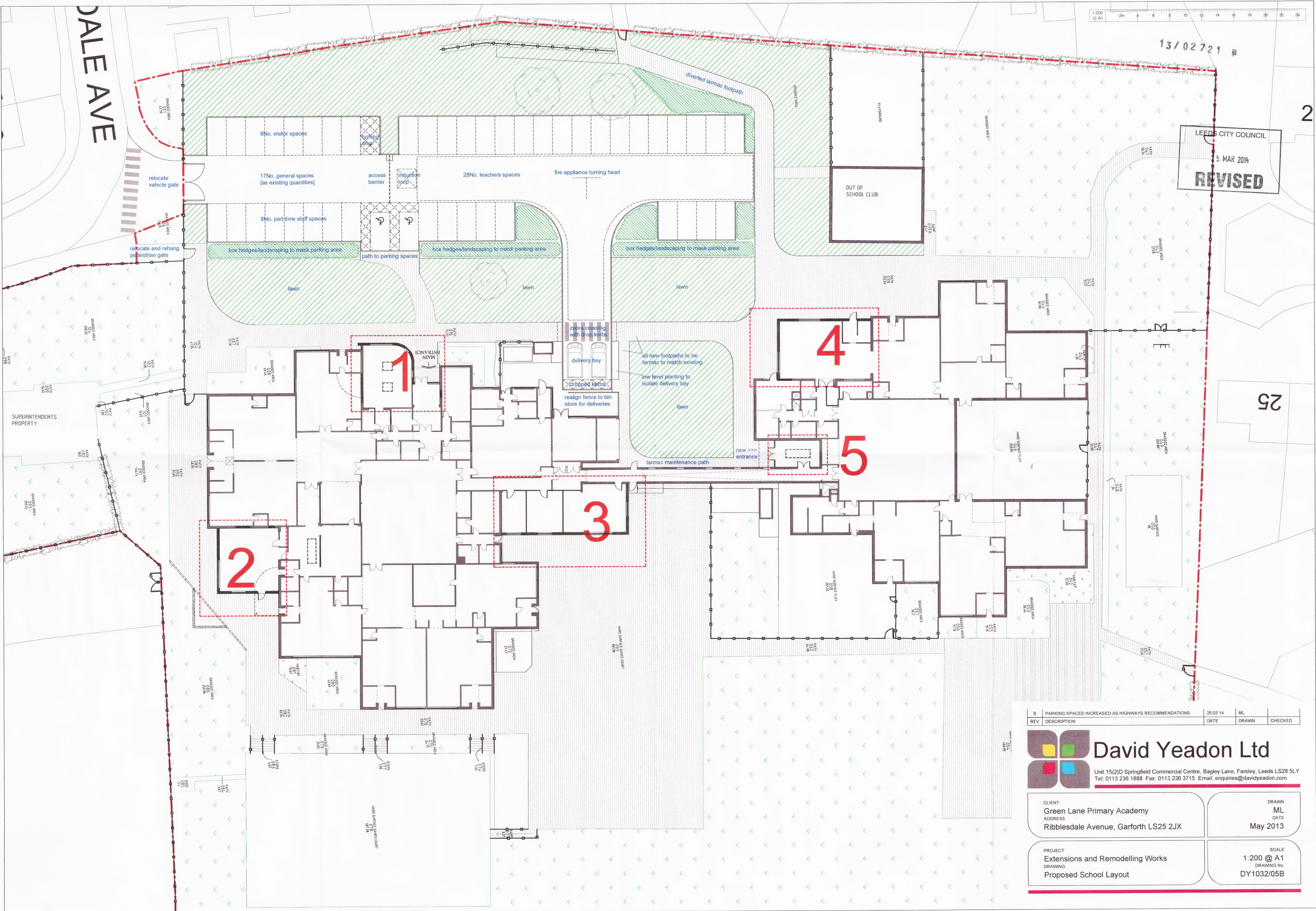
Application files 13/02721/FU.

Certificate of Ownership: Notice served on Leeds City Council.

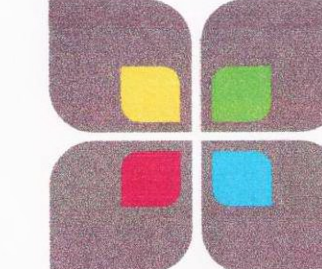


13/02721 #

LEEDS CITY COUNCIL  
5 MAR 2014  
**REVISED**



REV	DESCRIPTION	DATE	ML	CHECKED
B	PARKING SPACES INCREASED AS HIGHWAYS RECOMMENDATIONS	25.03.14	ML	



**David Yeadon Ltd**

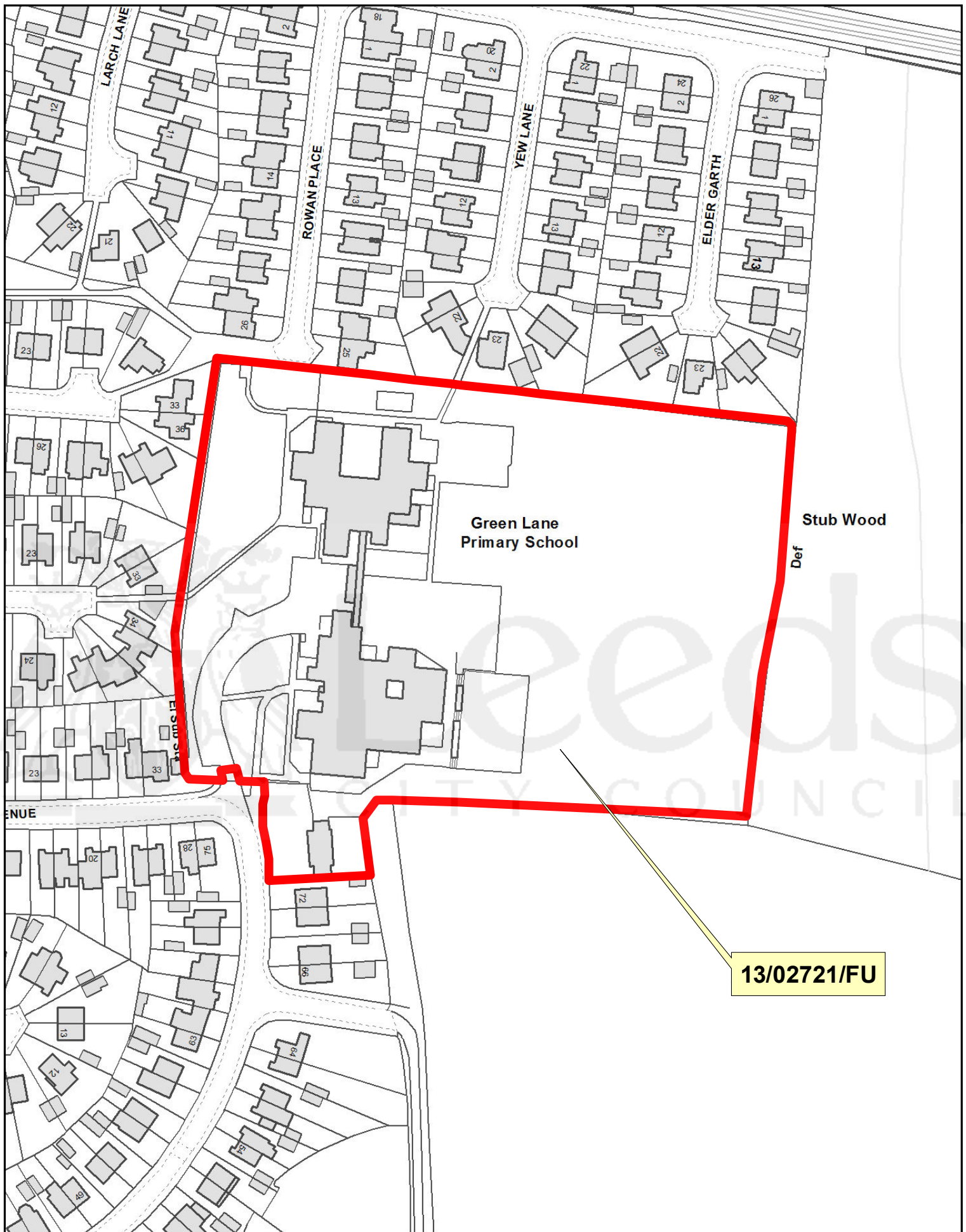
Unit 15(2)D Springfield Commercial Centre, Bagley Lane, Farsley, Leeds LS28 5LY  
Tel: 0113 236 1888 Fax: 0113 236 3715 Email: enquiries@davidyeadon.com

CLIENT  
**Green Lane Primary Academy**  
ADDRESS  
Ribblesdale Avenue, Garforth LS25 2JX

DRAWN  
ML  
DATE  
May 2013

PROJECT  
**Extensions and Remodelling Works**  
DRAWING  
Proposed School Layout

SCALE  
1:200 @ A1  
DRAWING No.  
DY1032/05B



13/02721/FU

# NORTH AND EAST PLANS PANEL

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SCALE : 1/1500

