



Report of the Chief Planning Officer

Plans Panel East

Date: 5th January 2012

Subject: Full application 11/03952/LA – Proposed two storey primary school with external soft and hard play areas, staff and parent car parking, new access and service roads – Former Braim Wood High School, Wetherby Road, Roundhay LS8 2LE

APPLICANT

Children's Services

DATE VALID

28th September 2011

TARGET DATE

28th December 2011

Electoral Wards Affected:

Roundhay

Yes

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve in principle subject to the expiry of the extended public consultation period and no new material planning issues being raised and refer to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government as a Departure from the Development Plan; and delegate approval to the Chief Planning Officer should the Secretary of State decide not to call-in the application for determination, and subject to the following conditions:

1. Time Limit (3 years).
2. Development to accord with approved plans.
3. Samples of walling and roofing materials to be submitted.
4. Details of levels to be submitted and approved.
5. Details and samples of surfacing materials to be submitted.
6. Details of fencing and/or walls to be provided.
7. Details of staff and visitor parking, including entry control, to be submitted.
8. Details of loading and unloading facilities to be submitted.
9. Details of school bus/parent drop-off and pick-up facilities to be submitted.
10. Area to be used by vehicles to be laid out prior to school being brought into use.
11. Provision of cycle storage, lockers, showers and changing rooms.
12. Submission of updated school travel plan.
13. Submission of scheme to detail off site highway improvements, traffic and parking management measures including formal pedestrian and cycle crossing point and changes to speed limit.

14. Improvement and widening of existing footpaths and bridleways to allow pedestrian and cycle use.
15. No pedestrian access to be taken from Elmete Lane.
16. Details and method statement for providing construction access.
17. Means of preventing mud etc. on the highway.
18. Details of site compound and contractors' parking to be submitted.
19. Restriction of construction traffic times.
20. Details of external lighting to be submitted.
21. Submission of landscape scheme.
22. Implementation of landscape scheme.
23. Preservation of existing trees and other vegetation.
24. Protection of existing trees and other vegetation.
25. Notwithstanding submitted details no trees to be removed unless otherwise agreed.
26. Arboricultural method statement to be submitted.
27. Landscape management scheme.
28. Replacement tree scheme to be submitted.
29. Protection of nesting birds.
30. Details of playing field layout to be submitted.
31. Management of sports pitches and other facilities including community use agreement.
32. Surface water drainage details including flow restrictions to be submitted.
33. No surface water discharges prior to completion of drainage scheme.
34. Separate system of drainage.
35. Oil/grit interceptor for parking/ hard standing areas.
36. Use of Sustainable Urban Drainage methods.
37. No development within 3.5 metres of a public sewer.
38. Surface water run-off restriction.
39. Litter Control Action Plan.
40. Condition(s) to deal with ground conditions should any contamination be present.
41. Archaeological recording scheme to be submitted and approved in writing.
42. Submission of sustainability scheme to minimise carbon output and deliver renewable energy.
43. Parent car parking to be made available and retained for the life of the development.
44. Vehicular access and egress points to be gated and opened at times to be agreed with the LPA.
45. Access gradient levels to parent car park to be agreed.

This application has been considered in accordance with the requirements of the RSS and UDPR 2006 and policy guidance within PPS1, PPG2, PPS5, PPG13, PPG17 and the policy statement Planning for New School Development. It is considered very special circumstances exist to grant permission for a primary school in this location in this instance. It is also considered that the proposal is of an acceptable scale, design and quality as to not injure the openness of the green belt and will have a neutral effect upon the Roundhay Conservation Area. It is also considered that it would not have a detrimental impact on the residential amenity enjoyed by nearby properties or cause any additional harm to highway safety. The application is considered to comply with the following policies:

BD5,GP5, N6, N12, N13, N19, N33, T2, T5, T6, T7A and T24

On balance, the City Council considers that there are material considerations to justify a departure from the Development Plan.

i. SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND MEMBER COMMENTS ARISING FROM PLANS PANEL MEETING HELD ON THE 1ST DECEMBER 2011

- i.i Members did not object to principle of providing a new school on this site but sought clarification that a thorough and extensive site selection process had taken place in the catchment area to ensure that this was the only site available and capable of delivering a new primary school. Members requested details of these sites as part of the sequential approach together with the reasons why such sites have been discarded.
- i.ii Members recognised that this is a sensitive location given its location within the green belt and also within a conservation area. Additional contextual images were requested together with a palette of proposed materials to ensure that the proposed design solution could be fully assessed.
- i.iii Members expressed major concerns in relation to the implications the development would have upon the surrounding road network. Members accepted that a scheme for delivering traffic management measures had been put forward but raised significant concerns that no provision had been made for parent parking or drop off facilities within the site. It was considered unacceptable by Members for parent parking to be displaced on to the public highway. Members also sought further assurance that a robust and meaningful travel plan would also be put forward as part of a package of a broader package of measures to deal with highway issues.

Summary update

- Children's Services have provided an extended supporting statement setting out their very special circumstances based on demographic pressures throughout the catchment area. The statement indicates sites that have also been considered which include: the former Fir Tree Primary School – Alwoodley, Allerton Grange and Moor Allerton Hall, Gledhow Primary School and land adjacent Moortown Primary School. Full details of the supporting statement and the reasons why these have been discarded are contained in section 10.3 of this report.
 - Changes to the external appearance of the building have resulted in some slight design changes to re-order and simply arrangements. Natural timber has been introduced to replace timber 'effect' cladding and is restricted to the first floor level, elsewhere brick work and soft coloured panels are proposed to help create some visual interest. The original steel profile roof has also changed to a weathered slate effect tile. Improved images have also been produced for presentation to Panel Members together with a palette of materials. Full details are covered in section 10.18 of this report.
 - The scheme has been amended to provide a dedicated parent drop-off facility at the front of the school which accommodates 36 car parking spaces including 3 disabled bays. This has resulted in the introduction of a new access point off Wetherby Road. The detailed site layout is still being developed at the time of writing this report including the work to update the submitted travel plan. These works will also be complemented by a package of off site highway measures to deliver traffic management improvements. Sections 10.26 – 10.33 of this report address wider highway issues.
- i.iv An updated version of the previous report is set out below for Members information.

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

- 1.1 This application is re-presented to Members for determination following a previous application presentation to Panel Members on the 1st December 2011. Member comments have been summarised in this report as well as detailing amendments to the scheme in response to the issues and observations raised. These changes have resulted in a material change to the description of the development and as a consequence the proposal has been re-advertised. This consultation extends beyond the date of Plans Panel.
- 1.2 Members are aware that the application site is within the Green Belt – where inappropriate development would not normally be allowed and, even where very special circumstances to justify development can be demonstrated, the impact on the open character of the Green Belt should be minimised. A statement has been submitted with the application, setting out the very special circumstances leading to the decision to pursue development on this site. However for this reason the application is a Departure from the adopted UDP and is on land controlled by the Local Authority. In these circumstances and under the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2010, if Members are minded to approve this scheme, it will need to be referred to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to enable him to consider whether it should be “called in” before a decision can be issued.
- 1.3 Members are also aware that the proposal relates to a substantial and significant redevelopment proposal affecting the nearby local community of Roundhay as well as its conservation area and the setting of listed buildings.

2.0 PROPOSAL:

- 2.1 Children’s Services have concluded a statutory process which aims to deliver additional primary provision on the former site of Braim Wood High School, as part of a 4-18 years through school from 2012. All buildings associated with its former use have however now been cleared albeit floor slabs, retaining walls and access points remain in situ. This proposal was approved by Executive Board at their meeting of 27 July 2011.
- 2.2 The scheme under consideration consists of a new two storey primary school, which is proposed as part of a through school for Roundhay School Technology and Language College. The proposed design adopts a simple architectural style and consists of three blocks, each with a shallow pitched roof, which are linked to small flat roofed elements (in part) which allows the building to be cranked slightly. The proposed materials include a brick plinth, render and timber cladding. The roofing materials are still under discussion, but will either respond to buildings sustainability needs or consist of traditional materials. The demand for additional primary school places is set out in an accompanying supporting statement prepared by Children’s Services which indicates that within this catchment a two form entry to accommodate around 420 children is required.
- 2.3 Vehicular access to the site is proposed via Elmete Lane effectively utilising the existing access point. The proposal provides a serviced area and staff / visitor car park. The proposal also includes the provision for cycle and scooter storage, staff cycle stores and cycle racks. A dedicated parent car park is proposed with access directly off Wetherby Road as well as a segregated pedestrian access which utilises the existing site entrance. Internally the pedestrian route is effectively then divided into two. The first utilises the slope of the land to create a meandering DDA

complaint route that has to cross the aisle of the drop-off facility. The second is more direct and much shorter.

3.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:

- 3.1 The former school is situated in a semi rural location within the Roundhay Conservation Area. Bounded by Wetherby Road and Elmete Lane, the site is formed by extensive landscaped grounds and forms an attractive parkland setting with widespread and mature attractive groups of trees situated predominantly along the majority of its boundaries. The site previously contained a number of utilitarian school buildings including a main three-storey school block which occupied an elevated position on the site. To the rear of the former school is a raised playground which was separated from the main three storey block by a walkway. The playground, walkways, retaining walls and former car parking remain in situ today. All buildings have been demolished due to issues relating to vandalism and anti social behaviour.
- 3.2 The application site is bordered by open fields to the south and east, both the listed St John's Vicarage and St John's Church to the west as well as an attractive terrace of cottages 'almshouses' which front onto Wetherby Road and are also listed. To the north lies a park / common area of land. A striking feature of the site is the difference in levels across the site, which slopes upwardly in a northerly direction from Wetherby Road initially gradually, but then more dramatically and effectively three terraces have been formed to accommodate these levels. The lower terrace previously occupied buildings associated with the school, the middle terrace hard surfaced play areas and with the upper terrace occupied by an overgrown former playing pitch. In total the difference in levels is approximately 20m.
- 3.3 The site is fairly open in nature but bounded to the east and south by mature trees. Beyond the site boundary to the north lies a further group of trees. An access point currently exists to the south, off Wetherby Road, and characterised by an attractive stone wall feature and was the former principal entrance to the school whereas the Elmete Lane access would have been a service road entrance.
- 3.4 The site lies within the designated Roundhay Conservation Area which has a diverse and varied landscape and is described as having five distinct character areas. The application site lies within area two. The conservation area appraisal indicates that the area is characterised by farmhouses and well spaced villas located in a agricultural setting. It also notes that the openness around buildings is an important character feature.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

- 4.1 The site has been the subject of a number of applications associated with its former use.

5.0 HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS:

- 5.1 Negotiations have taken place during the course of the application to revise the internal servicing, turning arrangements and to provide additional car parking as well as the omission of a pedestrian access point off Elmete Lane. In addition a package of external highway improvements has also been sought.
- 5.2 Following the Plans Panel meeting of the 1st December 2011 further revisions to the scheme have been made. These include the provision of a new access

arrangement to serve a dedicated on site parent car park / drop off facility to accommodate 36 spaces, changes to the external appearance of the building and further details relating to the site selection process.

6.0 CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

6.1 Statutory Consultations:

- 6.2 Highways: Initially objected to the proposal due to the absence of supporting information and highway improvement/mitigation measures within the local area. These measures are required to facilitate a safe means of access to the site by all modes of travel.
- 6.3 The applicant then subsequently carried out a transport appraisal of the issues raised which has resulted in a scheme of measures to address the concerns raised through the consultation processes which resulted in the scheme presented to Members at the Plans Panel of 1st December 2011.
- 6.4 The scheme has also been re-appraised in the light of Member concerns expressed at Plans Panel on the 1st December 2011 where it was determined that a dedicated parent drop-off facility capable of resolving on-street parking issues would be provided. Highways advise that a car park in the order of 114 spaces would be required to accommodate all parent parking associated with the school. However, Children's Services cannot accept a car park of this scale as the space required would remove the junior pitch from the front of the school. A parent drop-off of this scale is therefore not an option that highways can consider.
- 6.5 The applicant has instead sought to maximize a parent drop-off facility in the space available at the front of the school. This has resulted in the introduction of a new access off Wetherby Road, to serve a dedicated parent car park. The detailed site layout was still being developed at the time of writing including the work to update the submitted travel plan. While the drop-off facility is not considered to be the preferred solution, Highway colleagues have raised no objection to the amended plans subject to the parent drop-off route also being capable of accommodating a school bus and off site highway works to deliver traffic management improvements, the implementation of the proposed park and stride car park and the updating of the travel plan.
- 6.6 Environment Agency: No objection in principle subject to conditions.
- 6.7 Sport England: No initial objection to the original scheme. The proposal has been amended however to introduce a parent car park which impinges into protected playing pitches. Sport England have been re-consulted and formal comments are yet to be issued. A verbal update will be provide to Panel.
- ### **6.8 Non Statutory Consultations:**
- 6.9 WYAS - No objection in principle subject to a condition requiring secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological recording.
- 6.10 Yorkshire Water: No objections subject to conditions.
- 6.11 Access Officer: No objection subject to introduction of hand rails and tactile paving where steps are required.

6.12 Land Contamination: Desk-top study recommends full site investigation. No objection subject to condition requiring this and other appropriate conditions

6.13 Flood Risk Management: No objection subject to conditions.

7.0 PUBLIC / LOCAL RESPONSE:

7.1 The application was advertised as a Major Development, Departure and as affecting the setting of a listed building / conservation area by site notice on the 14th October 2011. Following the receipt of amended plans which introduces a significant and material change to the development proposed, the scheme has also been re-advertised. At the time of writing this report three representations have been received.

7.2 The first is comments received from Cllr Lobleby who states that he fully supports the principle of reusing the site for a school provision and feels that the layout, keeping the school to the footprint of the previous building, to be sympathetic to the site's location on the edge of the park. The further following points are raised:

- The pitch at the front of the school should be opened for booking by the public outside of school hours
- The gate to the east should not allow pedestrian access onto the Elmete Lane.
- Most important of all, car parking should not be pushed onto Wetherby Road for parents dropping off and collecting their children.
- car park for parents should be laid out in suitable materials with parking bays either side and footpaths along the front of the spaces allowing children to alight cars and get onto the footpath without encountering moving vehicles.
- A traffic light controlled junction at the Wetherby Road / Elmete Lane would be excessive
- The proposed 'park and walk' car park is supported.

7.3 The other two representations are comments from local residents who indicate that the existing site is environmentally poor and at odds with the character of the conservation area. In broad terms the new school is welcomed. The design is also considered to be acceptable but concern is expressed in relation to its flat roof elements. The only reservation expressed relates to the highway proposals where it is considered that further work needs to be done to take account of traffic speeds, picking up and dropping off arrangements, general highway safety and better transport links. Concern has been expressed that parking by parents on Wetherby Road should be resisted.

7.4 Since the receipt of these public representations further supporting information has been prepared by the applicant to address the highways safety comments that have been received by both the representations and highway officers. These matters are discussed in more detail in the appraisal.

8.0 PLANNING POLICIES:

Development Plan

8.1 The development plan includes the Regional Spatial Strategy to 2026 (RSS) and the adopted Leeds Unitary Development Plan (Review 2006) (UDP). The RSS was

issued in May 2008 and includes a broad development strategy for the region, setting out regional priorities in terms of location and scale of development. In view of the relatively small scale of this proposal, it is not considered that there are any particular policies which are relevant to the assessment of this application.

- 8.2 The site, including that previously occupied by buildings and immediate surrounds, together with the main existing car parking area and hard plays areas, is within designated Green Belt. Policy N33 of the UDP sets out a presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
- 8.3 As the redevelopment of the site for a school is inappropriate, the applicant will need to demonstrate very special circumstances to justify such development in the Green Belt.
- 8.4 The site also contains playing fields which are allocated as a Protected Playing Pitches (UDP Policy N6). The policy states that:

“Development of playing pitches will not be permitted unless:

- i. There is a demonstrable net gain to overall pitch quality and provision by part-redevelopment of a site or suitable relocation within the same locality of the city, consistent with the site’s functions; or*
- ii. There is no shortage of pitches in an area in relation to pitch demand locally, in the context of the city’s needs, and city wide, and development would not conflict with UDP policies concerning protection of the Green Belt, protection and enhancement of Greenspace and provision of additional Greenspace, Urban Green Corridors and other open land”.*

- 8.5 Other relevant policies are:

BD5: New buildings should be designed with consideration of their own amenity and surroundings.

GP5: General principles regarding matters to be resolved as part of planning applications.

N12: Priorities for Urban Design to be respected.

N13: New buildings to be of high quality and have regard to character and appearance of surroundings.

N19 New buildings within conservation areas.

T2: Development to be adequately served by existing or proposed highways, capable of being served by public transport and have provision for safe and secure cycle use and parking.

T2C: Planning applications which are significant generators of travel demand must be accompanied by a Travel Plan.

T5: Safe and secure access for pedestrians and cyclists to new development.

T6: Satisfactory access to new development for disabled people and people with mobility problems.

T7A: Secure cycle parking required in new developments, to reflect standards in UDP Appendix 9.

T24: Parking provision to reflect the guidelines set out in UDP Appendix 9.

National Planning Policy Guidance

PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development.

PPG2 Green Belts.

PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment

PPG13 Transport.

9.0 MAIN ISSUES

1. Principle of development.
2. Suitability of the site and relationship to adjacent area.
3. Siting, design, external appearance and conservation area issues.
4. Landscape and tree issues.
5. Access to the site, public transport, traffic and car parking.
6. Sustainability of the building.
7. Conclusion.

10.0 APPRAISAL

Principle of development

- 10.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, indicates that in considering planning applications the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 10.2 The construction of a new school in the Green Belt is inappropriate development and, therefore, not normally acceptable unless there are very special circumstances to justify allowing the development to proceed. The alternative to undertaking the proposed development on the existing school site would have been to build a new school on a non-Green Belt, brownfield site that was still capable of serving the proposed revised catchment area, and being far enough away from other existing schools to be viable and sustainable.
- 10.3 The application has been submitted with a supporting statement where the applicant has put forward a case for very special circumstances as a justification to outweigh any harm caused by reason of inappropriateness and harm to the openness of the Green Belt. The supporting statement makes it clear that there are no other suitable and currently available sites capable of accommodating a new school within the area. In response however to Panel Member comments in this regard, the applicant has made the following statement:-

'Many of the existing schools have constrained sites which rule out any expansion. The site of the former Fir Tree school was discussed, but this is outside the ring road, in the Alwoodley area, where we have sufficient capacity for the time being - it would not meet the need for places in Roundhay. Having exhausted the options for expansion, consideration of sites in council ownership was given. The proposal to create capacity using land adjacent to Allerton Grange and Moor Allerton Hall was explored, but was unable to proceed due to deliverability issues. There is some land adjacent to Gledhow which might offer the potential for 30 places, but the layout of the site means the scheme would be difficult and expensive, and we cannot be sure we could overcome all planning issues as the land is currently used as public green space.

In addition the school are strongly opposed to expansion, and the best chance of delivering good outcomes for children arise when a governing body is supportive of the proposals. Land to the rear of Moortown Primary could offer some potential for expansion, but is in private ownership, and whilst we remain engaged in discussion about potential for obtaining part of the land, it cannot be guaranteed and is on a totally unknown timeframe. This left just the site of the former Braim Wood school as available and offering sufficient capacity for the 60 places in time. Whilst there were

a number of ways this could have been used, and different schemes could have been taken forward, the site offered the only opportunity to realise sufficient primary places in time.

A full statutory process was conducted which led to the decision by Exec Board to approve the proposal for Roundhay school to manage the provision at the site of the former Braim Wood school.'

- 10.4 The proposal for new primary school provision has been put forward based on a rising birth rate in the Roundhay area. Birth rates locally have risen from a low of 372 in September 2002 to a high of 572 in the year September 2009. Overall the demand for primary places supports the provision of a new two form of entry school to meet the local demand of the area. Additionally schools in the locality are also popular with parents from the Harehills area where birth rates have risen also. In this context, it is clear, based on the evidence provided, that a new school outside the Green Belt would not be possible for a September 2012 completion. Failure to provide sufficient school place provision could result in the Council unable to comply with its legal requirements.
- 10.5 Whilst all former buildings on site have been demolished, due to issues relating to vandalism and anti social behaviour, a photographic record of the buildings was kept as it was recognised that the site would be redeveloped at some point in the future. Prior to this demolition taking place the Council's Chief Asset Management Officer sought written comfort from the Planning Authority that would permit demolition without prejudicing any potential future development. An email was issued by the Planning Authority dated 13th June 2007 which sets out the pragmatic approach it would take in assessing any future redevelopment scheme whilst acknowledging public concerns about the condition of the existing buildings and public disorder issues. The approach sets out the following considerations:-
- a) any future development should have no greater impact than the previous development on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including the land within it, and where possible have less;
 - b) not exceed the height of the existing buildings and;
 - c) not occupy a larger area of the site than the previous buildings (unless this would achieve an overall reduction in height which would have a visual benefit).
- 10.6 In assessing the historic photographic records it is clear that the former school buildings occupied a prominent position in the landscape and would have been visible from an extensive area around the site, it is also true that the buildings were of a poor design, utilitarian and unsympathetic to the character of the area. It is, therefore, essential that the siting and design of the new buildings, car parking and servicing arrangements ensure that, the impact on the openness of the Green Belt is no greater than that of the former school buildings. In assessment and in making such a comparison, it is considered, taking into the account also the additional parent car park and servicing arrangements, that the development is not as obtrusive and aesthetically more sensitive to its setting than its predecessor.
- 10.7 In terms of the impact of the development upon protected playing pitches, the site forms part of, or constitutes a playing field as defined in Article 10(2) the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 (as amended by SI 1996/1817 and SI 2009/453), in that it is on land that allocated for the use as a playing field in a development plan.

- 10.8 The protection of allocated playing pitches is a key planning consideration. The opportunity to provide a dedicated parent car park on this site is severely limited for a number of reasons including highway, tree issues and protected playing pitches. In reconciling these issues, the only part of the site where a dedicated parent car park could be sited is on part of the protected playing pitch. The extent of such must therefore be carefully balanced against the educational needs of the school and Sport England considerations.
- 10.9 Following verbal discussions with Sport England on the revised plan layout, it is considered that the impact of the new school, associated infrastructure and the new additional car park remains acceptable. Members should note however that this is finely balanced matter as the remaining protected playing pitch available is only capable of accommodating a junior sized pitch. If there were to be any further encroachment into this area it would hinder the ability to provide a Sport England compliant pitch and generate a statutory objection or require compensatory measures which would compromise the educational requirements of the school.
- 10.10 Sport England accept that the focus of formal outdoor sport will be through the introduction of a junior football pitch as well as informal hard play areas. Sport England are also of the view that once both facilities are in use they will offer benefits to community sport and they strongly encourage the Council to use a condition to secure community access if the Council are minded to approve the application. The proposal is not therefore in conflict with policy N6 (protected playing pitches) of the Revised UDP.
- 10.11 Members should also be mindful of a new policy statement issued jointly by the Secretary of State for Education and the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government on the 15th August 2011. This sets out the Government's commitment to support the development of state-funded schools and their delivery through the planning system. It states that the Government is firmly committed to ensuring there is sufficient provision to meet growing demand for state-funded school places, increasing choice and opportunity in state-funded education and raising educational standards. It goes on to say that the Government believes that the planning system should operate in a positive manner when dealing with proposals for the creation, expansion and alteration of state-funded schools, and that the following principles should apply with immediate effect:

i) There should be a presumption in favour of the development of state-funded schools, as expressed in the National Planning Policy Framework.

ii) Local authorities should give full and thorough consideration to the importance of enabling the development of state-funded schools in their planning decisions. The Secretary of State will attach significant weight to the need to establish and develop state-funded schools when determining applications and appeals that come before him for decision.

Suitability of the site and relationship to adjacent area

- 10.12 The site is a former school site, and as such, no objections (Green Belt issues aside) are raised in principle to the proposed development in respect of its impact on the immediate environment and local highway network subject to appropriate mitigation measures.

Siting, design, external appearance and conservation area issues

- 10.13 As was noted above, given the proposed school's Green Belt location and conservation area status, the siting, scale, design, appearance and landscape

treatment will be critical considerations. In assessing proposals which affect a Conservation Area it is noted that Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the Local Planning Authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the Conservation Area as well as the setting of adjacent listed buildings.

- 10.14 Policy N19 of the Revised UDP reflects this statutory duty to have regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas. Any new development should therefore be sympathetic in siting and scale and well designed using appropriate detailing and materials.
- 10.15 Panel Members have previously recognised that the site lies within a sensitive and prominent location and have sought assurances that the development can be satisfactorily integrated into the landscape without causing demonstrable planning harm.
- 10.16 The proposed siting, which is based on a site analysis using urban design principles and the Design and Access Statement, both conclude that the new building should be located on the lower building terrace (using the footprint of the former school). The positioning of such helps exploit the changes in land levels as well as external play areas to achieve the best functional arrangements and utilisation of space. Equally, the positioning of such, at the lower plateau level, helps integrate the development into the landscape without adversely injuring the openness of the Green Belt.
- 10.17 The proposed scale of the school is two storey and of domestic proportions effectively comprising of three blocks connected with small flat roofed elements which enable the building to be cranked slightly. In comparison with the former school, which contained large utilitarian three storey elements, the visual impact of such is reduced. In terms of design and appearance the proposal is more subtle compared to the previous arrangement and sits comfortable in the landscape and particularly so given the changes in levels described above. To assist in articulating this point and to address Members concerns in this respect, computer generated images have been produced which superimposes the development into the landscape.
- 10.18 In visual terms the proposed elevations of this building are of a simple architectural design, with timber cladding and rendering used in the main. A brick plinth will anchor the building with the timber elements being sympathetic to the woodland setting. The elements of render are used to help soften the development and to create some subtle visual stimulation. Following Member comments in this regard, the external appearance of the building has been amended slightly to re-order and simply arrangements. Natural timber has also been introduced to replace timber 'effect' cladding and the steel profile roof has also changed to a weathered slate effect tile. In terms of the remaining sections of the building, the three blocks are effectively classrooms and these are connected to two partly flat roofed elements, which contain glazing connecting sections, and form the entrance and library area. These two connections are used to help crank the floor plate of the building which also break up the building frontage to create further visual interest.
- 10.19 Combined with this, the fenestration is also regimented and simple. Composite coloured panels are also proposed to offer further animation to the façade. Overall, the architectural language is considered to be interesting, yet subtle and responds positively to its setting and overall character of the area. In response to Member concerns, additional images have also been produced at a larger scale than

previously presented to assist in illustrating the elemental components of the building.

- 10.20 The proposed development is therefore considered acceptable in terms of its design, style and proportion and as a consequence the Council's Conservation Architect has raised no objection to the principle of development. It is considered that the proposal will have a neutral impact on the conservation area and will not harm the setting of any surrounding listed buildings. It is further considered that the proposed changes to the materials palette and the design changes have sufficiently addressed Member concerns in this regard and improve the design solution. As a consequence the proposal complies with policies GP5, BD5, N12, N13 and N19 of the Revised of the UDP.

Landscape and tree issues

- 10.21 The historical background of the site indicates that it was once part of the grounds of Elmete Hall. Indeed, remnants of this previous association exist to the present day and are characterised by the stone wall frontage and attractive pillared entrance off Wetherby Road. Further evidence also exists in the form of the rich mature parkland planting which exists throughout the site but is particularly dense around perimeter areas.
- 10.22 The landform around this historic framework has been altered over the years to accommodate the requirements of the former Braim Wood High School. This includes a service road area off Elmete Lane, car parking, and the building terrace, external hard playing areas, retaining walls and playing pitches. The pitch to the north of the site (the highest terrace) has been omitted from this application. The former pitch to the south is however included.
- 10.23 The proposal was originally designed to minimise as much as possible tree loss and to both preserve and enhance the landscape amenity. Members should be aware that the amended scheme will result in further tree losses compared to the original submission. The impact of the new car park and the new access will result in the removal of 13 trees in total, 8 of which are positioned close to the site frontage. The original scheme had proposed the loss of 6 trees with 4 of these located close to the front boundary of the site. The 4 trees identified for removal in the initial scheme were generally considered to be in poor condition. The additional trees which will be removed as a consequence of any approval are regarded to be good quality specimens.
- 10.24 The Council's Landscape Architect has re-assessed the proposal following the receipt of amended plans and although it is acknowledged that this loss is regrettable, extensive and well grouped tree cover will remain and particularly so along the periphery of the site. It is considered that to help ameliorate this loss, semi mature tree planting should be introduced and also within the formal parking areas to help break up the visual appearance of such. Careful consideration should also be given to surfacing materials.
- 10.25 The scheme, if approved, will be subject to conditions requiring a detailed landscape scheme, tree protection and a landscape management plan. The protected playing pitch to the south of the site is to be retained reused. A high quality palette of materials is proposed for hard surfaced areas within the site. It is considered that the proposed layout of the school takes advantage of the opportunities offered by the topography of the land and that overall there is a positive connection with the landscape. The Council's Landscape Architect has not raised any objection to the principle of development.

Access to the site, public transport, traffic and car parking issues

10.26 The Council's Highway Engineer has made the following observations on the initial submission:

“... The main pedestrian/cyclist access to the site is indicated off Wetherby Road, with a secondary such access located off Elmete Lane. Two bus stops are also located on the Wetherby Road frontage in close proximity to the primary entrance. However, the existing conditions along Wetherby Road, in terms of its status as a distributor road, the existing speed limit (40mph) and absence of formal crossing facilities would not provide an appropriate environment for parents/pupils travelling to the site on foot, by cycle or public transport. Accordingly, a scheme of measures to mitigate these unsatisfactory conditions will need to be developed and implemented as part of the development proposals. Consideration should therefore be given to the following:

- A reduction in the speed limit of Wetherby Road, supported by the introduction of traffic management/calming measures.*
- School keep clear markings within the adjacent roads, supported/supplemented by traffic regulation orders.*
- Introduction of bus clearways at the two nearby bus stops on Wetherby Road.*
- A signalised crossing in the vicinity of the school entrance on Wetherby Road.*
- The footway on the northern side of Wetherby Road, between the school entrance and the Wyke Beck Way Cycleway to be made a shared pedestrian/cycleway.*
- The footway on the southern side of Wetherby Road, between the signalised crossing and the Wyke Beck Way Cycleway, to be widened and made a shared pedestrian / cycleway.*

The proposed vehicle access to the school is proposed via Elmete Lane, which joins the external highway network via a crossroads junction with Wetherby Road/Asket Hill. Crossroads have much higher numbers of conflicting traffic movements and therefore tend to perform worse in road safety terms than simple priority junctions. In this case, the poor configuration is further exacerbated by a substandard sightline to the east of the junction and restricted forward visibility for traffic approaching Elmete Lane in both directions along Wetherby Road, due to the position of the junction at a summit in the carriageway. In the light of these deficiencies, it is considered that the junction in its present form would not be suited to providing a means of access to the new school. A scheme to improve conditions at the junction should therefore be developed and submitted for agreement, which should include consideration to the introduction of traffic signals as a starting point, as the most suitable solution.

A plan showing the tracking of a HGV manoeuvring within the service yard should be provided for clarification purposes. As it stands, the hammerhead of the yard would be 6m shorter than the equivalent adoptable turninghead and thus would not be capable of accommodating a standard Leeds City Council refuse vehicle.

Car Parking: In order to fully assess the likely car parking requirement for the site, full details of how many staff, both full-time and part-time, should be provided. On the basis of 52 staff referred to in the Design and Access Statement, the proposed car parking provision would be borderline, as only 2 spaces would be available for

use by visitors. Accordingly, once the number of part-time staff is taken into account, the scheme might actually have an under provision of car parking, which could lead to vehicles over spilling onto Elmete Lane or Wetherby Road....”

- 10.27 The applicant has subsequently carried out a transport appraisal of the issues raised that has resulted in a scheme of measures to address the concerns raised.
- 10.28 The proposed measures have been considered by Highway Development Control with the assistance of the Council’s Traffic, Road Safety, Cycling and Travel Wise sections. The scheme of mitigation has been further amended to include the recommendations of these teams and include:
- The introduction ‘gateway’ features on the approach to the school in both directions to emphasise the expected change in conditions along the frontage.
 - A reduction on the speed limit from 40mph to 20mph in the immediate vicinity of the school.
 - A wider speed limit reduction to 30mph between Oakwood to Easterly Road.
 - A junction improvement at Wetherby Road / Elmete Lane to improve visibility for vehicles leaving the junction.
 - Waiting restrictions as appropriate on Wetherby Road, Elmete Lane and Asket Hill, and at junctions.
 - A proposed ‘Toucan’ crossing on Wetherby road to provide controlled and safe crossing opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists, that will also tie-in to the Wyke Beck Way cycleway.
 - Shared use footway / cycleway on the northern flank of Wetherby Road.
 - Build-outs at junctions to the west of the site to improve visibility for exiting vehicles.
 - Additional build-outs to assist pedestrians crossing Wetherby Road.
 - Proposed coach and bus lay-by to Wetherby Road.
 - Creation of sheltered parking and parking bays along sections of Wetherby Road.
 - Relocation and reconstruction of refuges, and alteration to road makings to provide bus stop clearways, amended central hatching areas etc.
 - Ancillary amendments to signing, lining and drainage etc.
- 10.29 The scheme has also been re-assessed in the light of Panel Members’ comments and following the receipt of amended plans which introduces a dedicated parent car park which provides 36 spaces including 3 disabled bays as well as new servicing arrangements on to Wetherby Road. In assessing this revision the Council’s Highway Engineer recognises Member concerns, and while not being the preferred solution to address the highway issues, no objection to the provision of a dedicated parent car park are raised providing this is combined with a school bus area and the off site highway measures, as indicated above, and further supported by the proposed park and stride car park located in Roundhay Park.
- 10.30 The Council’s Highway Engineer is of the view that to completely accommodate the predicted parent parking needs of the school, a larger car park would need to be provided. It is accepted however in balancing the site constraints, raised in earlier sections of this report, that this is an acceptable compromise which responds positively to Member concerns and is also combined with wider off site mitigation measures designed to manage highway safety within the vicinity of the site.

- 10.31 The scheme has also been amended with the proposed pedestrian access point on Elmete Lane removed (as this would attract parents to drop off their children on Elmete Lane).
- 10.32 In summary, the Highway Authority do not object to the revised highway arrangements and the mitigation measures proposed, and raise no objection in principle subject to the delivery of these works and other planning conditions including; pedestrian route within the site from this existing access point on Wetherby Road to the school being brought up to DDA standards, secure cycle stores, shower and changing facilities to be provided, parent car parking to be provided and retained for the life of the development.
- 10.33 A Travel Plan has been submitted with this application. The Council's Sustainable Travel Co-ordinator has also been working with the school to develop its existing travel plan. No objections are raised to the principle of the plan subject to the plan being updated. It is considered that this can be conditioned as part of any planning approval.

Sustainability of the building

- 10.34 The proposal has been designed to minimise its use of energy and carbon output. The building will be well insulated and in orientated in a manner which achieves good natural light values with windows positioned on both the northern and southern elevations as well as providing natural ventilation. In conjunction with this, brise soleil will also reduce the problems associated with solar gain.
- 10.35 Air quality is to be managed by automated processes and cross ventilation. This together with a good level of insulation and low energy heating demand will ensure that the amount of carbon output is low. Equally, this will be further offset by renewable energy measures such as solar panels which will exceed Building Regulation requirements. A palette of materials has also been proposed which is of a durable quality and a sample of such is to be made available to Panel Members.

11.0 CONCLUSION:

- 11.1 It is acknowledged that the site lies within the Green Belt and that the development amounts to inappropriate development. In such instances very special circumstances are required to justify inappropriate development and these will not exist unless the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. In this case it is considered that the site in question, which is also in a designated conservation area, contains features which detract from its special character as a consequence has a negative impact. Added to this, the development site is located in a prominent location which amplifies the detrimental features described, in this context, it is considered that substantial weight should be given to this issue and that the opportunity to bring the site back into beneficial use should be welcomed.
- 11.2 The site was last used as a school and the buildings were only demolished against a backdrop of pressure caused by anti social activities and after receiving a letter of comfort from the LPA to indicate that the demolition of any buildings prior to the approval of any redevelopment scheme would not be prejudicial (subject to certain safeguards). The school site was not declared surplus to operational requirements as it was always intended that the school site would be reused for development purposes.

- 11.3 In this instance Children's Services have produced a supporting statement which indicates that there are no other suitable and currently available sites capable of accommodating a new school within the area. Furthermore, the proposal for new primary school provision has been put forward based on a rising birth rate in the Roundhay area. The evidence also suggests that this demographic trend is set to continue and to meet this local demand a new primary school is required. In assessing these details it is considered that there is a planning justification to outweigh the inappropriateness of the development.
- 11.4 In terms of the visual impact upon the openness of the Green Belt, the character of the conservation area and the impact of the proposal upon the setting of surrounding listed buildings, it is considered that the building and its supporting infrastructure are considered to result in sympathetic proposal and will assist in maintaining the integrity and character of the site and its wider area. It is also considered that the reintroduction of a school in this location will cause no significant planning harm to the surrounding residential amenity sufficient to warrant the refusal of this application.
- 11.5 In terms of the impact upon the highway network, following a post application review and Member comments, a package of measures have been proposed which include a dedicated parent car park, highway safety improvements, speed reduction measures and internal changes to the layout of the service road as well as additional staff car parking.
- 11.6 Against this background, and subject to conditions, it is considered that sufficient very special circumstances exist to override established Green Belt planning policy in this instance. Approval in principle of the application is therefore recommended, subject to conditions and referral of the application to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government under the departure procedures as set out in the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2010.

Background Papers:

Application files

Certificate of Ownership:

Signed on behalf of the applicant.



- INDICATIVE HARDSCAPE**
- Macadam
 - Buff coloured macadam
 - In-situ concrete with exposed aggregate finish
 - Pre-cast concrete steps
 - Reinforced grass surface
- TREES**
- Existing trees
 - Proposed trees
 - Trees to be removed
 - Existing tree canopy line
- SOFTSCAPE**
- Amenity Grass
 - Wildflower Meadow
 - Shrub Planting
 - Understorey Planting
- BOUNDARY TREATMENTS**
- 2.4m Welded mesh perimeter fencing in dark green
 - 1.8m Welded mesh fencing in dark green
 - 1.5m Welded mesh fencing in dark green
 - 1.2m Welded mesh fencing in dark green
 - 3.0m Welded mesh Formal Games Area Fencing
 - Existing palisade fence
- STRUCTURES / FURNITURE**
- Shelter
 - Existing retaining wall to be retained
 - Existing retaining wall to be removed
 - Proposed retaining wall
 - Timber fronted seating/retaining wall
 - Timber post min 2m high (indicative position)
 - Lighting pole
 - Lighting bollard
- LEVELS**
- 79.5** Existing levels
 - 79.5** Proposed levels
- NOTES**
- All play equipment and furniture illustrated are included as optional extras
- To be read in conjunction with architects' drawing refs 4804_P(0)011 and 4804_P(0)012
- Final hardscape materials to be confirmed with the Local Authority prior to start on site
- Refer to Electrical Services drawing for location of lighting and CCTV mounted on building
- Rev A - 4/8/11 - incorporated feedback
 Rev B - 4/8/11 - incorporated feedback
 Rev C - 8/8/11 - incorporated feedback
 Rev D - 10/8/11 - incorporated feedback (service yard / retaining wall)
 Indicative tree cover to Wetherby Road
 Hazard paving to front steps
 Rev E - 10/8/11 - added water tank / additional timber poles / lighting / CCTV

PLANNING

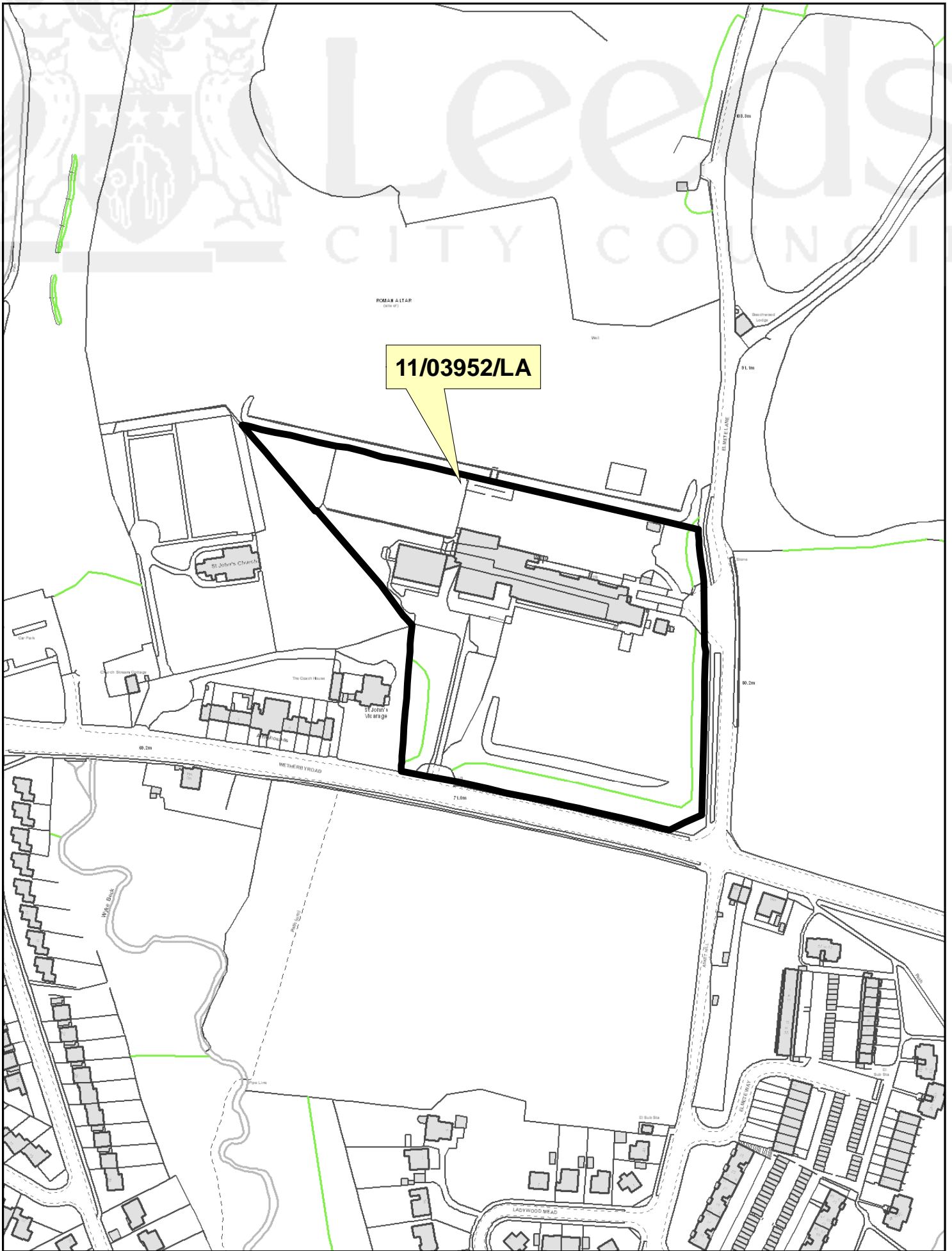
ROUNDHAY SCHOOL - PRIMARY
PROJECT

LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN
DRAWING

1:500 @ A1 SCALE
9/8/11 DATE

624_001 DWG. NO.
E REVISION





EAST PLANS PANEL

