

<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>PLANNING COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>19 SEPTEMBER 2012</b>
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<p><b>N121446/CD - PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF EXISTING INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOLS AND CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL AT LEOMINSTER INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOLS, HEREFORD ROAD, LEOMINSTER, HEREFORDSHIRE</b></p> <p><b>For: Herefordshire Council per Amey Property Services, Explorer 2, Fleming Way, Crawley, West Sussex, RH10 9GT</b></p>
<b>WEBSITE LINK:</b>	<a href="http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/housing/planning/58286.aspx?ID=121446&amp;NoSearch=True">http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/housing/planning/58286.aspx?ID=121446&amp;NoSearch=True</a>

**Date Received: 16 May 2012      Ward: Leominster South      Grid Ref: 349448,258162**

**Expiry Date: 13 September 2012**

Local Members: Councillors RC Hunt and PJ McCaull

## **1. Site Description and Proposal**

- 1.1 The application site is located approximately one kilometre to the south of Leominster town centre and comprises Leominster's Infant and Primary schools, and a parcel of agricultural land lying immediately to the south of the former. It lies close to the fringe of the town and the area is predominantly residential in character, the two schools effectively located behind dwellings fronting onto the B4361 Hereford Road. Residential properties lie to the north and east, with agricultural land to the south and west. Dense vegetation forms the eastern and western boundaries and a wide native hedgerow currently forms the southern boundary of the school site.
- 1.2 The site has an approximate area of 3.7 hectares and slopes significantly from east to west. Presently there is a 6m difference on the north end of the school site and a 12m difference in level at the southern end. There is also a maximum 5m longitudinal slope north-south. Level terraces have been created to accommodate the school buildings and their associated playing fields.
- 1.3 The existing schools consist of two main single storey buildings (Infant and Junior), with higher hall areas, and the Nursery Block. In addition there are two mobile classroom blocks located on site. Due to site configuration buildings are located on a number of different levels and they are connected by sloping paths. The playing fields are located to the south of the Infant School and consist of two level terraces.
- 1.4 The main access to the Infant School is from Hereford Road, where the staff car park is located. The Junior School is accessible from George Street to the north and its car park is located within the school site in the north-western corner. Neither school currently has a drop-off point within the school site, and parents park on the adjacent roads. A public footpath runs along the entire length of the eastern boundary of the site and this provides pedestrian access

to the school. This also connects to another footpath running along the southern boundary that continues in a westerly direction from Hereford Road towards Cock Croft Hill.

- 1.5 Planning permission is sought for the construction of a single primary school facility and the demolition of the existing Infants and Junior schools. Sports and recreation facilities will also be accommodated within the site confines. It will accommodate the same number of children as the existing Infants and Junior Schools, currently totalling 630 children, and includes the provision a Nursery facility of two classes for 52 children.
- 1.6 It is proposed that the new school will be built partly on the adjacent agricultural land to the south, and partly on the existing playing fields, before the existing school is demolished, this taking place once the new school is complete. The plans require a significant amount of landscape modelling and the building will be set into the land to take account of the changing levels across the site. The hedgerow that currently forms the southern boundary of the school site is to be removed, but vegetation to the east and west is to be retained and, where appropriate, reinforced.
- 1.7 The building has a cruciform layout. The central hub is three storeys and provides a reception area, offices, meeting rooms, library and ICT suite. Four wings radiate from this, roughly aligned north, south, east and west. Those to the south and west provide classroom accommodation across two levels, whilst the eastern wing is single storey and principally provides the two nursery classrooms. The wing projecting to the north provides a shared school hall.
- 1.8 The building is of a modern design and all of its elements are flat roofed. The lower levels are all faced in brick, including the single storey eastern wing, whilst upper levels are all to be rendered. The main entrance is clearly identified as a glazed atrium with coloured panelling at first floor level. Sports pitches are primarily provided on land to the north of the new building on areas currently occupied by the existing school buildings. This area will also provide on-site parking for staff and more informal play areas, as well as the location for a surface water attenuation pond. The only vehicular access to the site will be that existing from Hereford Road and the parking spaces in this location are to be retained without alteration.
- 1.9 The application is accompanied by the following documents:
- Planning Statement
  - Design and Access Statement
  - Site Waste Management Plan
  - Flood Risk Assessment
  - Tree survey and Proposals
  - Drainage Philosophy
  - Travel Plan
  - Ecological Appraisal (including a separate Reptile Survey)
  - Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

## **2. Policies**

### **2.1 Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan:**

S1	-	Sustainable Development
S2	-	Development Requirements
S11	-	Community Facilities and Services
DR1	-	Design
DR2	-	Land Use and Activity
DR3	-	Movement

DR4	-	Environment
DR7	-	Flood Risk
T6	-	Walking
T14	-	School Travel
LA2	-	Landscape Character and Areas Least Resilient to Change
LA3	-	Setting of Settlements
NC1	-	Biodiversity and Development
NC7	-	Compensation for Loss of Biodiversity
CF5	-	New Community Facilities

## 2.2 National Planning Policy Framework:

Paragraph 72 of the NPPF is the only specific reference to proposals relating to schools, and reads as follows:

The Government attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. They should:

- give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools;
- work with schools promoters to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.

More generally, the NPPF seeks to encourage a sustainable approach to planning, requires a good standard of design and seeks to promote healthy, inclusive communities.

## 2.3 The Unitary Development Plan policies together with any relevant supplementary planning documentation can be viewed on the Councils website by using the following link:-

<http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/housing/planning/29815.aspp>

## 3. Planning History

- |     |               |   |
|-----|---------------|---|
| 3.1 | NC2003/2474/F | Improvements to parking area to the rear of primary school – Withdrawn.           |
| 3.2 | 93/0688/N     | Re-positioning and replacement of mobile classroom units – Approved January 1994. |

## 4. Consultation Summary

### Statutory Consultations

- 4.1 Natural England: The local planning authority has undertaken a Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening and has concluded that the proposal has no likely significant effects on the River Wye Special Area of Conservation (SAC). This is because the development will include measures to decrease water use and therefore foul flow volumes to the sewage treatment works.

Natural England advises your authority that the proposal, if undertaken in strict accordance with the details submitted, is not likely to have a significant effect on the interest features for which the River Wye SAC has been classified. Natural England therefore advises that your Authority is not required to undertake an Appropriate Assessment to assess the implications of this proposal on the sites conservation objectives.

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from Mr A Banks on 01432 383085

We advise that the phosphate and flow reduction techniques which are critical to the conclusion of no likely significant effects are the subject of a suitably worded planning condition.

- 4.2 Environment Agency: Raise no objection to the proposal but advise that a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) must be submitted with any planning application for development proposed in flood zone 1 with an area over 1 hectare in size.

They go on to advise that surface water runoff should not increase flood risk to the development or third parties. This should be done by using Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to attenuate to at least Greenfield runoff or where possible achieving betterment in the surface water runoff regime. Such an approach involves using a range of techniques including soakaways, infiltration trenches, permeable pavements, grassed swales, ponds and wetlands to reduce flood risk by attenuating the rate and quantity of surface water run-off from a site. This approach can also offer other benefits in terms of promoting groundwater recharge, water quality and biodiversity benefits i.e. wider sustainability benefits.

- 4.3 Welsh Water: Raises no objection subject to the imposition of conditions.
- 4.4 Sport England: We have considered the impact of the development proposals on existing opportunities for sport, with a focus on the impact on the playing fields and consider that, subject to appropriate planning conditions, the application can be considered to be consistent with exception E4 of our policy in that the areas of playing field lost to development would be replaced on site, equivalent or better with regard to quantity, quality and accessibility. This being the case, Sport England does not wish to raise an objection to this application.

#### Internal Council Consultations

- 4.5 Transportation Manager: The public footpath along the eastern boundary of the site is not suitable as the main access route for pedestrian and cycle traffic from the north. The surface is in poor condition, making it unsuitable for cycles, prams/pushchairs, and wheelchairs. It is unlit, and the southern section is narrow and overgrown. Even if these faults are rectified, the footpath would remain legally unavailable for cycles, unless it was converted to a bridleway. Conversion is difficult to achieve, because of likely objections from interested parties. There is also the lack of Public Footpath over the 45m from Churchill Avenue to the start of Gateway Lane/Marlborough Close and possible legal uncertainty about right of access.

A solution is to revert to a 3m wide ped/cycle route from the end of George Street through the site to the western edge of the new "MUGA". This was originally proposed in the discussions some two years ago. There will have to be temporary diversions in its route to permit demolition works, and arrangements to secure gates outside school travel times. The route must be available before first occupation of the new school building and remain available during demolition works. Conditions should also be imposed to require a construction management plan and to require the update and revision of the school travel plan.

- 4.6 Conservation Manager (Ecology): Much of the site is regularly-mown, amenity grassland (playing fields). The biodiversity features (trees and hedge lines) along the western and eastern boundaries of the site are to be retained during and post development. These will need to be adequately protected during the development works.

During our site visit in July, a slow worm was seen in the south east corner of the application site and I recommended that a specific reptile survey be undertaken. I have now received the additional reptile survey report and proposed mitigation strategy. A number of slow worms were recorded on the site and will need to be carefully excluded from the development site

and moved to the reptile habitat that is to be retained. Post-construction, new reptile habitat will be created along the southern boundary of the site.

If this application is to be approved, I recommend the inclusion of conditions to secure the protection of the trees and hedgerows along the east and west boundaries and to ensure that the recommendations of the ecology reports are followed.

4.7 Conservation Manager (Landscape): Comments awaited.

4.8 Public Rights of Way Officer: No objection to the proposal but highlights the fact that the proximity of public footpath ZC94 to the site. Recommends that advisory notes are attached to any planning permission to highlight the need for the footpath to remain unobstructed at all times during construction works

4.9 Land Drainage Engineer: Confirms that the approach of the drainage design is acceptable and satisfies current guidance.

## 5. Representations

5.1 Leominster Town Council: The Town Council is not against a new Infants and Junior school per se however it recommends that this application is refused.

- There are concerns that the area marked in blue (\_A\_501 Rev P2\_Location Plan) could be developed in the future, assurance is required that this is not the case; any further development could have a marked impact on the wildlife habitat.
- Certificates (Agricultural Land Declaration) Box B should be highlighted NOT box A.
- There is concern that parental access could be compromised i.e. further for parents and children to walk to school compared with the present.
- Extremely unhappy for the proposed siting at Cockcroft. It would be prudent that the infant and junior school is demolished first, children educated in portable temporary classrooms with the surplus being moved (possibly) and temporarily to Earl Mortimer, this would allow the new build on a brown field site rather than on a green field site.
- Has an outside agency being asked to give a second opinion on Flood Risk?
- The proposed design is NOT sustainable i.e. It is to be constructed of concrete (not carbon neutral). There is no provision for solar panels.
- The traffic problems along Hereford Road will be exacerbated, has any thought be made for a cycle track.
- Drainage, it appears that the small pond may be inadequate.

5.2 Leominster Green Party: Support the principle of replacing the existing buildings but have objections to the present application.

- Certificate (Agricultural Land Declaration) Box B should be highlighted NOT box A.
- Has an outside agency being asked to give a second opinion on Flood Risk?
- The provision of a small pond to take up surface water run-off appears insufficient. Have the condition of foul and surface water separation required by Welsh Water been met?
- What measures are to be included to preserve the public right of way bounding the site?
- The proposal encroaches onto prime agricultural land.
- The scheme will disrupt wildlife in the area and there is not sufficient reassurance that this matter has been dealt with adequately.

- The prominent hill top location exposes the building and its users to inclement weather and will make the building highly visible.
  - Insufficient works have been planned to remove the risk of flooding from run-off.
  - The design fails to incorporate sustainable building methods.
  - The proposal will increase traffic congestion on Hereford Road
- 5.3 Ramblers Association: Public footpath ZC94 runs close to the site. It is important that there should be continued and unhindered access to this footpath during construction.
- 5.4 Leominster Civic Society: Object to the application on the following grounds:
- Express concern about the fact that the use of the Hereford Road access will be intensified through its combined use by both schools.
  - The design of the building seems bland and utilitarian.
  - Clarification of the sustainable credentials of the scheme is required
  - Concerned about the scale of the building, both in terms of its impact on the landscape and in respect of its human scale.
- 5.5 11 letters of objection have been received. It should be not that the majority of the letters received are supportive of the principle of replacing the existing school accommodation, but comment on specific aspects of this proposal. In summary the points raised are as follows:
- The new school is to be built on a Greenfield site.
  - Existing buildings should be demolished and a new school constructed in a similar location with portable accommodation used to provide classrooms on a temporary basis.
  - Poor design with insufficient regard to sustainability.
  - The new school building will overlook properties on Elm Close and Hereford Road.
  - Proposed wind catchers are known to generate noise and this will be detrimental to the amenities of neighbouring properties.
  - The proposal will increase surface water run-off and properties on Hereford Road and Elm Close will suffer increased flood risk. There is evidence of this occurring in the past, particularly in 2007.
  - The proposed pond is not considered to provide sufficient protection against flood risk.
  - The building will have a negative visual impact on the southern approaches to Leominster, the setting of Cockcroft Hill and its use for recreational purposes.
  - The proposal will have a negative impact on wildlife.
  - The plans do not address the problem of parents parking in surrounding streets. This is detrimental to highway safety.
  - What assurances can the council give that the associated sports fields will not be sold to make a more attractive parcel of land for developers?
- 5.6 Two letters offering qualified support to the application have been received and the points raised are as follows:
- Improvements should be made to Gateway Lane in order to encourage greater pedestrian and cycle access to the school.
  - There is a need to ensure that there is no increased risk of surface water run-off to third parties.

- There is further potential to improve biodiversity and landscape enhancement.

5.7 The consultation responses can be viewed on the Council's website by using the following link:-

[www.herefordshire.gov.uk/housing/planning/searchplanningapplications.aspx](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/housing/planning/searchplanningapplications.aspx)

Internet access is available at the Council's Customer Service Centres:-

[www.herefordshire.gov.uk/community\\_and\\_living/consumer\\_advice/41840.asp](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/community_and_living/consumer_advice/41840.asp)

## **6. Officer's Appraisal**

6.1 The existing school premises have developed on an ad-hoc basis over the last thirty years and it is clear that they are in need of replacement. The principle of replacing the existing accommodation is accepted by the majority of those who have made representations and there is no fundamental conflict with policies contained within the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan.

6.2 The key concerns of those objecting to the application cover a number of issues including the location of the building both in terms of its visual prominence and its encroachment onto agricultural land, the impact on wildlife and biodiversity enhancement, the detailed design and sustainability credentials of the new building, drainage and flooding and accessibility and highway safety issues. This part of the report will consider each of these matters in turn.

### Location of the Proposed Development

6.3 It has been suggested that the existing school buildings should be demolished to make way for new accommodation on the same site, and that pupils should be housed temporarily in portable buildings to be located on the area immediately to the south that is currently used for playing fields. This would then negate the need for the new building to encroach onto agricultural land.

6.4 A similar approach was employed during the recent re-development of the Riverside School in Hereford. The cost implication of providing accommodation and undertaking the necessary ground works was in excess of £1 million for a period of approximately one year whilst that school was re-developed.

6.5 It has been argued that a cost burden of this magnitude would make the scheme in Leominster unviable. The scheme has been significantly delayed in coming forward due to budgetary constraints and a subsequent requirement for re-design. The cost of providing temporary accommodation is therefore considered to be prohibitive.

6.6 It would be preferable for the re-development of the school to be fully contained within its existing site, but a combination of operational and budgetary constraints have dictated otherwise and therefore a balanced judgement has to be made about the desire to provide a new school and the loss of approximately one hectare of agricultural land.

### Visual Impact

6.7 Policy LA2 of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan requires that proposals are influenced in terms of their design and layout by the landscape in which they are located. The application is supported by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. It accepts that the proposal will have an impact due to its location at the edge of the developed area of Leominster and as a consequence of the topography of the land, but contends that the design of the building will help to mitigate its impact.

6.8 There is a significant rise in level across the site from east to west of approximately 11 metres and this requires the land to be significantly re-graded and re-modelled in certain areas. The

consequence of this is that the building sits within the land and its impact in terms of its height is reduced.

- 6.9 The building will be most visually prominent when approaching Leominster from a southerly direction. The site lies at the fringe of the town's developed area with open countryside in its foreground. The cruciform design of the building sees four wings projecting roughly along the compass points. It is considered that this serves to reduce its overall mass and thus limits its overall visual impact.
- 6.10 It is inevitable that the building will assume some visual prominence. It will be seen in the context of the wider developed area of the town and against a backdrop of mature trees that form the western boundary. The topography does present a challenging constraint but it is considered that the design has taken this into account and therefore the proposal complies with Policy LA2 of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan.

#### Design and Sustainability

- 6.11 As described above, it is considered that the detailed design of the building has been appropriately influenced by the topography of the land on which it is located and that its layout serves to minimise its mass. The external appearance of the building combines brick at a lower level with a rendered finish to upper floors. Both materials are common in the area and their combined use will serve to provide a visual break and further relieve the sense of massing.
- 6.12 The layout provides an obvious point of entrance at the juncture of the north and east wings and the use of glazing and coloured panelling in this area will serve to provide a clear indication to visitors entering the site. The wings allow the school to be divided into nursery, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, with each afforded their own external play spaces. Other facilities, including playing fields and the school hall, will be shared.
- 6.13 With specific regard to the sustainability of the design, the scheme has been registered with a BREEAM assessor and the aim is to achieve a 'very good' rating, similar to that achieved in the re-development of the Earl Mortimer College.
- 6.14 The concrete mass used in the construction of floors and stairs allows night time cooling and thus reduces ambient temperatures during the day and the need for mechanical ventilation. Natural ventilation will be achieved via proposed wind cowls and window actuators. The wind cowls are fitted with low velocity fans.
- 6.15 The design also incorporates a building management system, which controls the energy use of the whole building. Mesh screens in front of the windows will control glare and heat gain in the individual rooms. The roof of the school hall is capable of accommodating solar panels.
- 6.16 The scale, design and layout of the proposal are all well-considered and it is concluded that the requirements of Policy DR1 are met in this respect. It is also considered that the design does aim to provide a sustainable solution to the provision of new accommodation within the constraints that exist. Given the expressed intention to construct the building to BREEAM 'Very Good' standard it is recommended that a condition be imposed to make this a requirement should planning permission be forthcoming. On this basis the proposal also accords with Policy S1.

#### Drainage and Flooding

- 6.17 Local residents from Elm Close and Hereford Road have expressed concerns about a potential for their properties to experience more frequent flood events as a consequence of



surface water run-off and there is clearly a need to ensure that this situation is not exacerbated by this proposal.

- 6.18 Drainage problems relating to local capacity issues and localised flooding resulting from surface water run-off were both identified as significant issues early on during pre-application discussions. The applicant's agent engaged with both Welsh Water and the Environment Agency in order to establish appropriate methods for the treatment of foul and surface water and the application is accompanied by both a Flood Risk Assessment and a Drainage Design Philosophy.
- 6.19 The Drainage Design Philosophy considers a range of options for dealing specifically with run-off from hard surfaces and land drainage. With regard to the former, it concludes that the use of oversized pipes within the network (or 'tank sewers'), combined with the installation of a hydrobrake to store and control flows to the public sewer, particularly during periods of heavy rainfall, are most appropriate.
- 6.20 Welsh Water ordinarily requires that surface water should not be allowed to connect to the public sewerage system. However, their advice is caveated that this should not be allowed, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority. In this particular case the existing school already discharges to the public sewerage system. Information provided by the applicant's drainage consultant concludes that the flows from the proposal will be less than the existing school and, combined with the installation of mechanisms to control flows during heavy rainfall events, it can be concluded that the cumulative effect of the proposal will be to reduce flows into the public sewerage system. This position has also been accepted by Natural England with respect to phosphate discharges to the River Lugg and is reflected in the fact that they have raised no objection to the proposal.
- 6.21 Land drainage is to be dealt with by a network of filter drains that discharge to a storage pond. In a similar manner to the above, flows are controlled by a hydrobrake to allow a measured discharge to the ground. Whilst some land drains may currently exist within the site, the installation of a new system and the provision of a pond to provide a method to store and discharge water over a much longer period is considered to represent an improvement that will reduce the likelihood of flooding from surface water run-off.
- 6.22 Some concerns have been raised that the storage pond will have insufficient capacity, but this is not substantiated with any evidence. The proposals have been assessed by the Council's Land Drainage Engineer who has confirmed that the drainage approach is acceptable. Based on the information provide and subject to the submission of a detailed scheme for foul, surface and land drainage it is considered, that the proposal will minimise the risk of flooding from surface water run –off and therefore complies with Policy DR7 of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan.

#### Ecological Issues

- 6.23 The surveys accompanying the application identify that the site has some value as a biodiversity asset, particularly the hedgerow forming the southern boundary of the site which provides a habitat for reptiles, birds and mammals. This hedgerow will be removed if planning permission is granted and a number of objectors living locally object to this. The eastern boundary also provides an important wildlife corridor and the vegetation in this part of the site is to be retained.
- 6.24 The plans indicate that a new hedgerow will be established at the southern boundary of the site in mitigation for that which is to be removed. Given the importance of this boundary to the setting of the school as a whole, and in order to ensure that the loss of the existing hedgerow is mitigated as soon as is practically possible, it is recommended that the re-planting of the southern boundary is timetabled to take place early within the development of the site, rather

than towards the completion of works as is more commonly the case. This will allow time for it to become established, mitigating for the loss of the existing hedgerow and also serving to provide a visual buffer when approaching from the south.

- 6.25 The plans and ecological surveys also indicate the provision of further mitigation through the strengthening of existing vegetation boundaries with new native planting, particularly along the eastern boundary. The storage pond is also identified as an additional habitat within the site, potentially replacing and improving upon a small pond contained within the Junior school grounds.
- 6.26 The Council's Ecologist has considered the finding of the ecological surveys and has raised no objection subject to the imposition of conditions to secure appropriate mitigation. It is also considered that a condition relating to tree protection measures during the course of development is both necessary and appropriate and should be attached if planning permission is forthcoming.
- 6.27 The proposal does retain biodiversity features wherever possible and is designed to minimise its impact in this respect. The removal of the hedgerow to the south is necessary and can be mitigated through further planting and landscaping, subject to conditions, and accordingly the proposal is considered to accord with Policies NC1, NC7 and LA6 of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan.

#### Accessibility and Highway Safety

- 6.28 Matters relating to pedestrian and bicycle access to the site are dealt with in detail in the comments from the Council's Transportation Manager. Pedestrian access to the site from residential areas to the north is particularly important as the majority of parents and children will approach from this direction and it is important that they are not deterred from walking to and from school in the future.
- 6.29 Although the future of the northernmost part of the site closest to George Street is not entirely clear, it is within the control of the applicant. A requirement to provide such access is necessary and an appropriately worded condition as recommended by the Transportation Manager will ensure that the proposal is compliant with Policies DR3, TR6 and TR7 of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan.
- 6.30 The only vehicular access to the site will be via the access onto Hereford Road and the proposal would see an intensification in its use. The plans provide dedicated parking for all staff within the site, with the spaces currently used by staff at the Infants school becoming available for visitors and parents to drop off children.
- 6.31 The perceived problems of on-street parking and the related highway safety issues cannot be resolved by this application. Parking restrictions require Traffic Regulation Orders and as these are subject to separate public consultation procedures, cannot reasonably be required through planning conditions. Subject to the provision of a dedicated pedestrian and cycle access via George Street, the proposal will provide alternative access to the site and may influence some parents to change their travel habits. An updated school travel plan may also assist.
- 6.32 It is also important to ensure that conflicts between construction traffic and those using the school are minimised. To ensure this, it is recommended that a construction traffic management plan is submitted and approved prior to the commencement of any development. This should provide details of how vehicular traffic to the construction site and school are to be separated, ensure that construction traffic is routed from the A49 via Southern Avenue and that construction traffic and delivery vehicle movements do not take place during school travel

times. Subject to these conditions it is considered that the proposal will accord with Policies DR2 and DR3 of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan.

### Other Issues

- 6.33 Some residents from Elm Close and Hereford Road have expressed concern that the proposals will be detrimental to their residential amenity as they will be overlooked by the new building. The boundary between the school and the properties in question currently comprises a mature hedge and trees. Beyond this is a public footpath and then the western boundaries of the properties. These are predominantly close boarded fences. The eastern wing projecting towards these properties is the single storey and gable end on. At their closest, the distance between this part of the new building and the closest dwelling, 9 Elm Close, is approximately 40 metres. The average distance between the new building and the dwellings on Hereford Road is in excess of 90 metres.
- 6.34 In light of the fact that the boundaries of the site are established, that the use of majority of the site as a school is established, and given the distances between built elements, it is not considered that the proposal will give rise to any significant detriment to residential amenity. The proposal therefore complies with Policy DR1 in this respect.
- 6.35 The proposals will not have any effect on the public footpaths running to the south and east of the application site. It is however, recommended that a note is attached to any planning permission to ensure that they remain unobstructed during the course of development.

### Conclusion

- 6.36 It is clear that the principle of re-development of the site is accepted. Due to the operational constraints that demolition and re-development on the same or similar footprint, it is considered that the use of additional agricultural land to the south of the school premises is justified.
- 6.37 The site is elevated and the proposal will have some visual impact. This is mitigated to some extent by the detailed design of the building which is to be set into the land. Further mitigation can be achieved through a detailed landscaping scheme elements of which should be timetabled to take place concurrently with the development, particularly the re-planting of a southern boundary hedge. This will also provide more immediate mitigation in respect of biodiversity as the existing hedgerow on the southern boundary will have to be removed to allow the development to take place.
- 6.38 Matters relating to drainage arrangements and potential flooding of neighbouring property arising from surface water run-off have been carefully considered. The applicant's drainage consultant has been able to demonstrate that flow rates from the proposal would be lower than as presently exists, a view that has been endorsed by Natural England. The methods proposed to be employed to control surface water discharges in the event of high levels of rainfall are considered to be appropriate, subject to the submission of a detailed scheme.
- 6.39 The provision of a pedestrian and cycle link from the existing point of access into the Junior School on George Street to the new site will provide parents with a legitimate alternative to car usage. The parking area accessed via Hereford Road will also be available for drop off / pick up and it is considered that these combined elements will go some way to addressing concerns about on street parking.
- 6.40 Subject to the recommendations and conditions referred to above, it is considered that the proposal accords with the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework. The application is therefore recommended for approval.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

1. **A01 Time limit for commencement (full permission)**
2. **B01 Development in accordance with the approved plans**
3. **C01 Samples of external materials**
4. **G03 Retention of existing trees/hedgerows**
5. **G04 Protection of trees/hedgerows that are to be retained**
6. **G10 Landscaping scheme**
7. **G11 Landscaping scheme - implementation**
8. **Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved details of a pedestrian and cycle path from George Street to the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.**

**Reason: To ensure that there is adequate alternative modes of access to the site and to comply with Policy DR3 of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan.**

9. **Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved a Construction & Delivery Traffic Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The plan should cover the following points:**
  - a. **Details of a routing agreement with construction and delivery vehicle operatives to ensure that all traffic enters and leaves the site via Hereford Road and Southern Avenue.**
  - b. **The method to segregate construction and delivery vehicles from school traffic at the point of access onto Hereford Road.**
  - c. **The arrival and departure of construction and delivery vehicles will not be permitted between 0815 to 0915 and 1445 to 1615 Monday to Friday.**

**Reason: In the interests of highway safety so that potential conflicts between construction and school traffic are avoided and to comply with Policy DR3 of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan.**

10. **H21 Wheel washing**
11. **H27 Parking for site operatives**
12. **H29 Secure covered cycle parking provision**
13. **H30 Travel plans**
14. **I16 Restriction of hours during construction**
15. **I41 Scheme of refuse storage (commercial)**
16. **I43 No burning of material/substances**

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from Mr A Banks on 01432 383085

**17. I55 Site Waste Management**

- 18. The recommendations set out in the ecologist's reports dated August 2012 should be followed in relation to the identified protected species [bats, great crested newts etc]. Prior to commencement of the development, a full working method statement and habitat enhancement scheme should be submitted to and be approved in writing by the local planning authority, and the work shall be implemented as approved. An appropriately qualified and experienced ecological clerk of works should be appointed (or consultant engaged in that capacity) to oversee the ecological mitigation work.**

**Reason: To ensure that all species are protected having regard to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 and Policies NC1, NC6 and NC7 of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan. To comply with Policies NC8 and NC9 of Herefordshire's Unitary Development Plan in relation to Nature Conservation and Biodiversity and to meet the requirements of the NPPF and the NERC Act 2006**

- 19. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved a scheme for the comprehensive and integrated drainage of the site, showing how foul water, surface water and land drainage will be dealt with has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.**

**Reason: To ensure that effective drainage facilities are provided and to comply with Policy DR4 of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan.**

**Reason for Approval:**

- 1. The site is elevated and the proposal will have some visual impact. This is mitigated to some extent by the detailed design of the building which is to be set into the land. Further mitigation can be achieved through a detailed landscaping scheme elements of which should be timetabled to take place concurrently with the development, particularly the re-planting of a southern boundary hedge. This will also provide more immediate mitigation in respect of biodiversity as the existing hedgerow on the southern boundary will have to be removed to allow the development to take place. The proposal complies with Policies S1, DR1, LA2, LA6 and NC7 of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan.**

**Matters relating to drainage arrangements and potential flooding of neighbouring property arising from surface water run-off have been carefully considered. The applicant's drainage consultant has been able to demonstrate that flow rates from the proposal would be lower than as presently exists, a view that has been endorsed by Natural England. The methods proposed to be employed to control surface water discharges in the event of high levels of rainfall are considered to be appropriate, subject to the submission of a detailed scheme. The scheme therefore accords with Policy DR4 of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan.**

**The provision of a pedestrian and cycle link from the existing point of access into the Junior School on George Street to the new site will provide parents with a legitimate alternative to car usage. The parking area accessed via Hereford Road will also be available for drop off / pick up and it is considered that these combined elements will go some way to addressing concerns about on street parking and consequently the proposal accords with Policies S1, DR3 and T14 of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan.**

**Informatives:**

1. **N11C General**
2. **HN25 Travel Plans**
3. **HN27 Annual travel Plan Reviews**
4. **N20 Site Waste Management**
5. **If development works are perceived to be likely to endanger members of the public then a temporary closure order must be applied for from the Public Rights of Way Manager, Herefordshire Council, Unit 3, Thorn Business Park, Rotherwas Industrial Estate, Hereford, HR2 6JT (tel 01432 845900), at least six weeks in advance of works commencing.**
6. **The applicants should ensure that their contractors are aware of the line of the public right of way and that the right of way must remain at its historic width and suffer no encroachment or obstruction during the works or at any time after completion. No vehicles, materials debris, etc shall be stored on the line of the footpath at any time.**

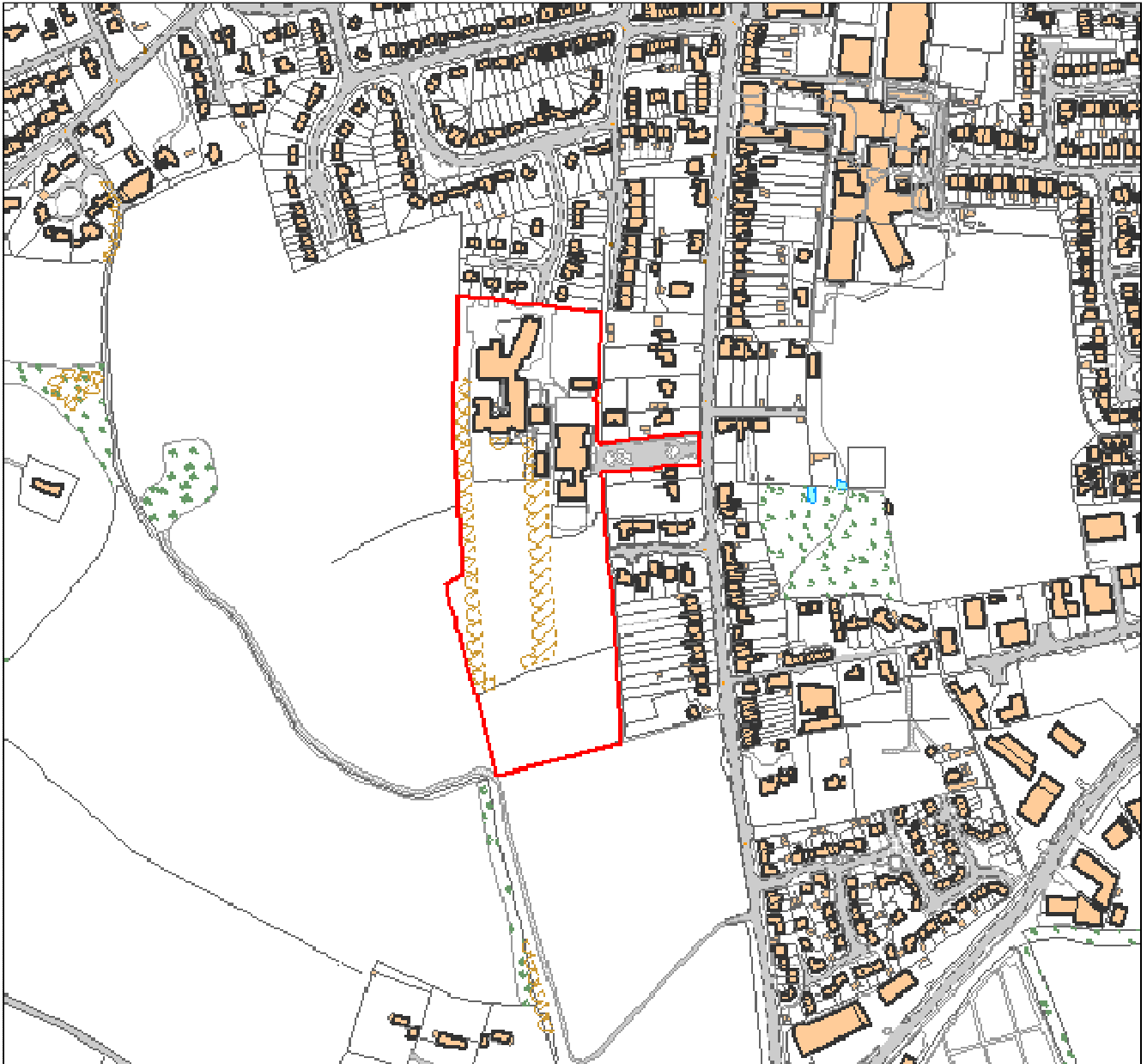
Decision: .....

Notes: .....

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**Background Papers**

Internal departmental consultation replies.



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**APPLICATION NO:** N/121446/CD

**SITE ADDRESS :** LEOMINSTER INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOLS, HEREFORD ROAD, LEOMINSTER, HEREFORDSHIRE

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from Mr A Banks on 01432 383085