

**KEY INFORMATION**

**Ward** Balgowan

**Proposal**

Erection of new primary school and associated facilities

**Address**

Land North of St Leonard Place, Dundee

**Applicant**

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**Agent**

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**Registered** 11 Nov 2005

**Case Officer** Iain Ross



## Proposed New Primary School In St Leonard Place

The erection of a new primary school and associated facilities is **RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL subject to conditions**. Report by Director of Planning and Transportation

**RECOMMENDATION**

The proposed development is considered to be in compliance with the provisions of the development plan and there are no material considerations which indicate that an exceptional refusal of planning permission is warranted. The application is recommended for **APPROVAL** subject to conditions.

**SUMMARY OF REPORT**

- Planning permission is sought for the construction of a new primary school with community use elements, pedestrian and vehicular access arrangements, external play areas recreation pitch, environmental garden and associated incidental open spaces and landscaping on land north of St Leonard Place.
- Planning permission in outline was granted in 2002 for a similar proposal in this location.
- In terms of the development plan there are no Structure Plan policies of relevance. However the application falls to be judged against Policies 1, 68, 72 and 56 of the Dundee Local Plan 2005. This plan was adopted by the Council in August 2005. For the reasons specified in the report it is considered that the proposals comply with the provisions of the development plan.
- Turning to other material considerations issues of appropriateness of land use; the provisions of the approved site planning brief; layout, design and the use of materials; drainage; tree protection and landscaping; noise and air quality; access and parking and the views of consultees have been considered as outlined in the report. No objections from the general public were received.
- It is considered that a primary school and the facilities proposed is an appropriate land use for this site and having taken all the material considerations together none of them indicates that an exceptional refusal is merited in the face of the proposals compliance with the development plan.

## DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

Planning permission is sought for the construction of a primary school comprising : nursery, infant, and primary departments; games hall and ancillary internal facilities; a grassed pitch ; environmental garden; external surfaced play areas; incidental open spaces; car parking on land to the west of St Leonard's Road, Dundee. The northern portion of the application site is presently occupied by operational Macalpine Primary School. The existing school building are intended for demolition when the new facilities have been provided. These facilities are to accommodate the amalgamation of St.Columbas Primary School and St. Margaret's Primary School. These schools will continue to operate on their existing sites until construction work on the proposed new school is complete.

The proposed school has accommodation to provide facilities for a school role of 30 nursery age children and 444 primary age children. Community facilities are provided and planned in such a way as to allow their use by the community in accordance with the Council's policy on letting of school property. The applicants have confirmed that the grassed pitch to be located at the north of the site will not be available for community use and that no floodlighting of this facility is involved.

The proposals consist of 4635m<sup>2</sup> of internal accommodation. The application site occupies the eastern half of a site which received the benefit of outline planning permission for a similar but larger facility in 2002 (see Planning History below).

Vehicle access to drop of areas (infant and Special Needs pupils only), and staff/visitor car parking is to be from St. Leonard Place. Separate service access is to be provided from St.Leonard Road. Pedestrian access/egresses are proposed on St Leonard's Place (X2) and St.Leonard Road (X2). 34 staff, visitor, drop off, and disabled parking spaces are to be provided with an additional 25 overflow parking spaces being made available within the primary playground area should these be exceptionally required for events outwith normal school hours. These spaces will be accessed via the pedestrian entrance on St Leonard

Place. Cycle racks are to be provided at two locations within the site.

The Design Statement submitted by the applicants comprehensively provides a detailed description of the proposals, the design philosophy adopted in response to the Council's brief which related educational and community requirements to the most efficient and effective design of internal and external spaces, landscaping, access and parking. The proposed buildings are located on the vacant site to the south of the existing school buildings. The siting and form of the proposed building responds to the configuration of the site by retaining vistas to and from the adjoining landscaped areas. The main access of the building takes advantage of levels providing a strong visually prominent entrance, an aspect central to the design approach. The design overall has been educationally led to ensure that internal and external spaces satisfactorily interact in an innovative way. The proposed grass pitch and environmental garden are to be located to the north and west of the school building respectively. Enhanced landscaping is to be provided around the periphery of the site. The proposed building plan is to have three elements: a games hall wing, to include games hall, changing facilities, dining and assembly and rooms for shared community use; a nursery wing; and an infant/primary wing on two levels. The nursery wing is to be single storey with the other teaching accommodation on two levels although the games hall wing will also give the appearance of two storeys.

The materials proposed to be used are:

**Walls :** Mostly white smooth render with various coloured render elements (white, orange, yellow, blue and grey)introduced to distinguish the various functional elements of the building; high level cladding in PPC or equivalent finish (final colours to be agreed).

**Windows:** Glazing in PPC aluminium has a vertical emphasis on both storeys punctuated by grey render.

**Roofs :** Standing seam, stucco embossed mill finish aluminium sheeting.

**External Surfaced areas :** PCC slabs with coloured aggregate and coloured asphalt.

**Boundary fences :** The perimeter fencing will be 2m in height open mesh supported by steel posts. Inner security fencing will be of similar construction but 1.5m in height.

**Foul and surface water drainage :** Foul and attenuated surface water connections are to be made into the adjacent Scottish Water maintained sewer.

**Trees and Landscaping :** The applicant's tree survey indicates 40 mature and semi mature trees on the site with three being proposed for removal due to their condition. Although most of the trees are on the periphery of the site it is likely that other trees may require to be removed to accommodate construction works. The applicants have submitted indicative replanting and new landscaping proposals.

The applicants have supported their application with the following information :

- a Design Statement which outlines factual information about the proposal, the philosophy which guided the approach to the design of the building and external spaces.
- b A School Access Strategy and School Travel Plan Framework which together address issues of traffic generation, access for pedestrians and vehicles, parking/dropping off and proposals for the encouragement of pupils and staff to walk, cycle, car share or use public transport.
- c A Tree Survey and proposed Landscaping Plan which together indicate the location and condition of trees to be retained and where trees are to be removed proposals for replacement planting and other landscaping works.
- d A Public Art Strategy which outlines proposals for meeting the Council's commitment to encouraging public art.
- e A general lighting and CCTV location plan.

## SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is located to the north of St.Leonard Place; to the west of St Leonard Road; to the south of St Mary's Road. The application site is

bounded on the west by the playing field and landscaped areas associated with the existing school and club rooms of St Leonard Place. The proposed school buildings will be located to the south of the existing school block and will also occupy the site of a former primary school now demolished. The existing school buildings will be demolished when the new development is completed. The application site extends to approximately 2.00 hectares. The topography of the site rises from the south east corner plateauing on the site of the existing school building rising again and forming a level area at the top of the site parallel to St. Mary's Road. Trees line the periphery of the site along St. Leonard Place and St. Leonard Road. The existing vehicular access to the school (servicing and staff parking) is taken off St. Leonard Road immediately south of its junction with St. Mary's Road. Pedestrian access for pupils is from St. Mary's Road. The proposal is located in a predominately residential area comprised mainly of terraced family housing and four in a block flats. St Leonards and St Fergus Church and open space lie beyond St Leonard Place. St Leonard's House to the south east of the site beyond St. Leonard Road is vacant and secured. The site is bounded by local distributor roads and footways. The surrounding streets are lit and have no parking restrictions except adjacent the existing school access points.

## POLICY BACKGROUND

The development plan comprises the Dundee and Angus Structure Plan 2001-2016 (approved by Scottish Ministers with amendments in October 2002) and the Dundee Local Plan Review (adopted in August 2005).

### Dundee and Angus Structure Plan 2001-2016

There are no policies relevant to the determination of this application.

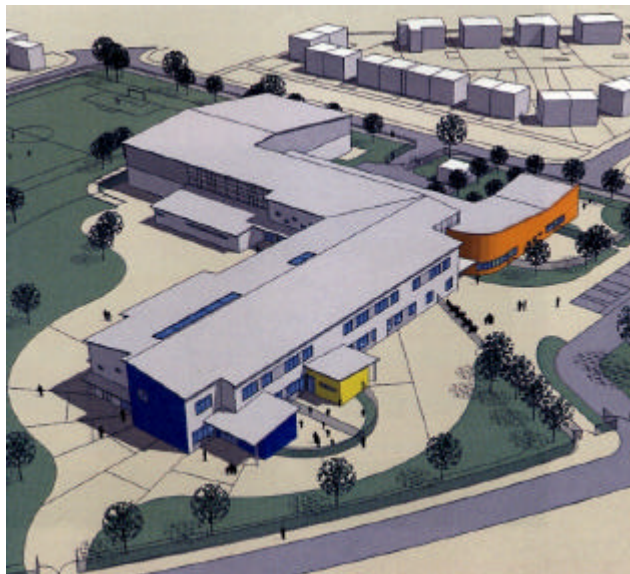
### Dundee Local Plan Review 2005

The following policies are of relevance:

Policy 1 : Vibrant and Sustainable Communities

This policy indicates that the City Council will promote vibrant communities, encouraging the development of an appropriate range of services and facilities close to and within housing areas. New development should be in accordance with other policies of the plan and seek to minimise any effect on the environmental quality enjoyed by local residents by virtue of design, layout, parking and traffic movement issues, noise or smell.

Policy 68 : Dual Use of Open Space within School Grounds



This policy recognises that school grounds can provide opportunities for both formal sports and informal community recreational activities outwith school time.

Policy 72 : Trees and Urban Woodland

This policy indicates that new developments must have regard to existing healthy trees and where appropriate development proposals must be accompanied by a tree planting and landscaping scheme.

Policy 56 : Public Art

This policy indicates that the Council will support and promote public art in new construction projects.

### Scottish Planning Policies, Planning Advice Notes and Circulars

The following statements of Government policy are relevant to the determination of this application:

a Designing Places: A Policy Statement for Scotland which

promotes excellence and best practice in the design of buildings and the spaces around buildings and includes reference to the preparation of Design Statements by applicants for planning permission.

- b NPPG 11: Sport, Physical Recreation and Open Space (1996) : This policy document advises against the redevelopment of playing fields and sports pitches unless it can be demonstrated that alternative provision is to be made or that in the terms of a long term strategy there is excess provision which justifies the loss.
- c NPPG 17: Transport and Planning (1999). This policy document promotes an integrated approach to land use, economic development, transport and the environment.
- d SPP 17 Addendum "Transport and Planning: Maximum Parking Standards" (2003). This document encourages Councils to adopt maximum car parking standards for certain categories of development to facilitate the use of alternative modes of transport to the car in the interests of sustainable development.

## Non Statutory Statements of Council Policy

Reference is made to the decisions of the Council in May and December 2003 in respect of a consultation exercise which was undertaken into draft site planning briefs for each of the proposed PPP school sites. This exercise subsequently informed the design process which followed. Reports 320-2003 and 655-2003 are relevant.

## LOCAL AGENDA 21

Key Theme 4 is of relevance and seeks to ensure that local needs are met locally. The theme seeks to encourage the use of school buildings for community uses.

Key Theme 7 is also relevant and seeks to ensure that access to facilities, services, goods and people is not

achieved at the expense of the environment and are accessible to all.

The replacement primary school, nursery school and the provision of community facilities will maintain and improve existing facilities for residents in the surrounding area.

Key Theme 12 is also relevant and seeks to ensure that opportunities for culture, leisure and recreation are readily available to all. The incorporation of community provision in the proposals will meet the aims of this key theme.

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## SITE HISTORY

Planning permission was granted in outline for the erection of a 460 place primary school with community facilities and a 90 place 0-5 years nursery, 7 a side playing field, external play area and parking on 29 April 2002 (Application 02/00158/OUT refers).

This planning permission has now expired. The present planning application relates to a smaller boundary to that previously approved in outline. The application now before the Council is a full planning application requiring the discharge of the principle of the land use proposed but also comprehensive details of the development as a whole.

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## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The applicant has carried out the statutory notification of neighbours. No objections or representations have been received.

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## CONSULTATIONS

The following consultations were undertaken the following comments were received:

- a Scottish Water. No objections received.
- b Scottish Environmental Protection Agency. No objections received.
- c SportsScotland has indicated that it has no objection to the proposal although the organisation has recommended the use of an all weather surface for the grassed pith to encourage more comprehensive usage.
- d The Director of Environmental Health and Trading Standards has indicated that as it has not been

possible for the applicant to specify the precise design of plant and machinery it is appropriate to apply a condition, should planning permission be granted, to control noise output. The applicants have agreed to this approach. The Director is also satisfied that as the proposed pitches are to be confined to school use only noise breakout sufficient to disturb the amenity of neighbours should not be an issue.

- e The Director of Contract Services has no objection. However he supports the imposition of a condition concerning the submission of supplementary landscaping information

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## OBSERVATIONS

In accordance with the provisions of Section 25 of the Act the Committee is required to consider

- a whether the proposals are consistent with the provisions of the development plan; and if not
- b whether an exception to the provisions of the development plan is justified by other material considerations

### The Development Plan

It is considered that the proposals comply with the provisions of the development plan as follows :

Policy 1 : The proposal will result in a new and improved education facility being provided at an appropriate location within the local community. The proposals also incorporate facilities for community use. Planning permission was granted in outline in 2002 for a larger scale of proposal, albeit on a much larger site. Nevertheless it is considered that the principal of the continued use of the site for education and community use purposes has been established and there have been no material change in circumstances since that date which would lead to a different view being adopted. As indicated in greater detail below it is considered that the proposals are satisfactory in terms of their location on the site, their design and relationship with neighbouring land uses. In addition it is considered having taken into account the submitted Schools Access Strategy that the car parking, vehicular and

pedestrian access arrangements are satisfactory and will have a minimal impact on neighbours subject to the implementation of the findings and recommendations of the Strategy. Accordingly it is considered that, should Members be minded to approve the application that a suitably worded condition be applied relating to the implementation of the Strategy. Again, as indicated below, the proposals give no cause for concern in terms of noise generation or issues of air quality. Accordingly it is concluded that the proposals are compliant with the terms of this policy.

Policy 68: The proposals incorporate facilities which are intended for use by the local community subject to the letting policies of the Council as Education Authority. The Council's approved Pitch Strategy 2005-2011 considered the balance between supply and demand across a variety of pitches within and outwith school grounds across a variety of sports. The potential availability for dual use of the proposed pitch was not included in that assessment. Accordingly, whilst Policy 68 continues to have general application, it is not appropriate to enforce its provisions in respect of this application.

Accordingly it is concluded that the proposals are compliant with the terms of this policy.

Policy 72 : The applicants have provided a tree survey and landscaping plan to complement their proposals. As indicated above mature and semi mature trees are present on the site with several requiring to be removed due their condition. It is however proposed that replacement trees be planted and that an environmental garden is developed. Given the scale of the proposals, the necessary orientation of the new school building it is considered that reasonable attempts have been made to safeguard as many existing health trees as possible. New planting will compensate for the loss of existing trees. Accordingly it is concluded that the proposals are compliant with the terms of this policy.

Policy 56 : The applicants have submitted a public art strategy in support of their application. This proposes the dedication of a specified financial contribution for the provision and development of public art within each of the new school projects

including St Margaret's/St.Columbas. In addition, for the PPP project as a whole the applicant has agreed to finance the employment of an artist to work with the school communities to promote the strategy proposed. Given the scale of each individual project it is considered that, although the 1% for art criterion specified in the policy is not met, it is considered that the proposed strategy is imaginative in educational terms and will develop into the future as the school becomes established in the community. Accordingly it is concluded that the proposals are acceptable as a justifiable compromise solution within the broad objectives of the policy.

It is concluded from the foregoing that the proposals comply with the provisions of the development plan.

Accordingly the application falls to be considered in terms of other material considerations to determine whether an exceptional refusal of planning permission is merited.

### Other Material Considerations

The other material considerations to be taken into account are as follows:

- a Is the establishment of an educational use on the application site acceptable in principle?
- b Is the layout of the building(s) and other facilities on the site acceptable taking into account surrounding land uses and their proximity and is the design of the building(s) and the use of materials acceptable?
- c Are the vehicular/pedestrian access arrangements and on site car parking satisfactory in the context of the School Access Strategy and the School Travel Plan Framework for the development?
- d Does the proposal comply with the approved Site Planning Brief?
- e Are the proposals for the retention of any existing trees and landscaping appropriate?
- f Are the proposals for foul and surface water drainage acceptable?
- g Are there any issues relating to noise or air quality?
- h Are there any issues raised by statutory consultees, notifiable

neighbours and the general public which indicate that planning permission ought to be refused?

Each issue is considered in turn below:

- a The principle of educational use. The northern portion of the site is currently in educational use and the southern portion was previously in educational use. As indicated above the principle of establishing a new school on this site was established by the grant of an outline planning permission in 2002. It is therefore considered that this land use issue is discharged.
- b Layout and design of the building and exterior spaces and the use of materials. Pre application discussions took place with the applicants and their agents on a range of matters of detail. The layout of the buildings on the site, their design and the materials to be used are in summary described above and in greater detail in the submitted Design Statement. The distribution of uses on the site is appropriate given the location of adjacent housing and the likely impact of the development when viewed from perimeter roads. The site is not located in a conservation area. Nor are any listed buildings present which might have influenced design matters. In the light of the design justification summarised above and set out in further detail in the submitted Design Statement the design of the school buildings is satisfactory. In this context and the use of colour and the application of a palette of varied materials, to be confirmed through the application of a condition, will add interest to the design and assist in ensuring the satisfactory presentation of the elevations of the building. Although the details supplied concerning materials and perimeter security fencing appear acceptable in principle, it is appropriate to apply a suitable condition to cover all matters of detail.
- c Vehicular/pedestrian access arrangements and on site car parking. The submitted School Access Strategy and School Travel Plan Framework have

been assessed. The School Access Strategy Report submitted by the applicant's transport consultants provides an assessment of existing facilities; discusses the estimated mode share characteristics and relates them to the future catchment area of the school; identifies key issues in relation to travel to school and provides recommendations to improve safe and sustainable access to the school. On site parking facilities comply with the 50% levels required by the Council in relation to staff and visitor parking. The proposed access points, arrangements for on site car parking/dropping off and the off site traffic and pedestrian safety implications are also found to be satisfactory. Nevertheless it is considered that, should Members be minded to approve the application that a suitably worded condition be applied relating to the implementation of the Strategy. The framework for a proposed School Travel Plan has been assessed and found to be satisfactory and its implementation can be governed by a suitably worded condition.

- d Compliance with the approved Site Planning Brief. The function and relevance of the brief is outlined above. The client and architect had reference to the approved brief (following community consultation) in bringing forward detailed proposals. Therefore it is not to be expected that the final proposals match the brief in all detail and in this instance the broad term of reference of the brief are compatible with the application proposals.
- e Existing trees and landscaping. As indicated earlier details have been provided and the Director of Contract Services no objection. This aspect of the proposals is considered to be satisfactory subject to the imposition of a condition requiring the submission of additional information. The applicant is agreeable to this course of action.
- f Foul and surface water drainage. Both foul and surface water are to be drained to the public sewer. No flood related issues arise.

Neither Scottish Water nor SEPA have objected.

g Noise or air quality issues. The proposals are considered to have no air quality implications and provided a standard condition is attached concerning any noise breakout there may be from plant and machinery the Head of Environmental Health and Consumer Protection has no objections to the proposals.

h Issues raised by statutory consultees, notifiable neighbours and the general public. No objections have been raised by either statutory consultees or the general public.

It is concluded from the foregoing that insufficient weight can be accorded to any of the material considerations such as to justify the refusal of planning permission contrary to the provisions of the development plan.

It is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted with conditions relating to submission of construction material, fencing and landscaping details; the protection of existing trees to be retained; compliance with the School Travel Plan Framework; the recommendations of the School Access Strategy; Public Art Strategy; landscaping details; drainage; and noise limitations for plant and machinery.

## Design

The content of the Design Statement and the other information submitted by the applicant has been considered as outlined above and it is considered that the design of the buildings and external spaces and the use of materials are appropriate for their function and setting in the local community.

## CONCLUSION

It is concluded that the proposal complies with the provisions of the development plan. The principal of locating a primary school and all the related facilities proposed on this site is acceptable in land use and design terms subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions.

## RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that planning permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be commenced within five years from the date of this permission.
- 2 Samples of the finishing materials proposed to be used shall be submitted to the Council for approval and if approved the development shall be carried out only in accordance with such approved details.
- 3 Details and samples of all boundary treatments shall be submitted to the Council for approval and if approved the development shall be carried out only in accordance with such approved details.
- 4 Development shall not begin until a scheme of landscaping has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Council. Details of the scheme shall include :
  - a an indication of existing trees, shrubs and hedges to be retained and removed;
  - b arrangements for the protection, during construction works, of trees, shrubs and hedges to be retained in accordance with revised BS 5837,2005;
  - c the location of proposed new trees, shrubs and hedges keyed to a schedule of species, plant sizes and density/numbers;
  - d a programme for the undertaking of the landscaping works and arrangements for subsequent maintenance.

For the avoidance of doubt all landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the scheme to be approved in writing by the Council.
- 5 The design and installation of any plant, machinery or equipment shall be such that any associated noise complies with NR35 as measured 1 metre from the facade of any residential property.
- 6 A School Travel Plan shall be prepared and submitted in writing to the Council for approval in accordance with the details contained in the submitted School Travel Plan Framework

submitted to the Council by the applicant under cover of their letter of 16 November 2005.

- 7 The Public Art Strategy for the proposed school shall be implemented in accordance with the provisions of the strategy received by the Council on 22 December 2005.
- 8 Details of the proposed surface and foul drainage arrangements shall be submitted for the written approval of the Council in consultation with Scottish Water and the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved. If approved the proposed arrangements shall be carried out only in full accordance with such approved details.
- 9 The grass pitch indicated on the approved plans shall be for school use only and shall at no time be made available for shared community use.
- 10 The Access Strategy for the proposed school shall be implemented in accordance with the findings and recommendations of the strategy document received by the Council on 6 January 2006.

## Reasons

- 1 To comply with Section 58 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.
- 2 To ensure that the proposed development has a satisfactory external appearance in the interests of the visual amenities of the area
- 3 To ensure that the proposed development has a satisfactory external appearance in the interests of the visual amenities of the area.
- 4 To ensure the retention of existing landscaping worthy of protection and to ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development in the interests of the amenity of the area.
- 5 In the interests of residential amenity.
- 6 To encourage alternative travel options to reduce the number of vehicle trips to the school and to

raise awareness about travel issues such as air pollution and road safety.

- 7 In support of Policy 56 of the Dundee Local Plan Review 2005
- 8 In order to ensure the proper drainage of the site.
- 9 In the interests of the amenity of nearby residents.
- 10 In the interests of pedestrian and traffic safety and residential amenity.