

Application Number: 16/05326/R3C
Date Registered: 9/12/16
Parish: Broadway
District: South Somerset
Member Division: Ilminster
Local Member: Linda Vijeh
Case Officer: Karen Turvey
Contact Details: kturvey@somerset.gov.uk
(01823) 355196

Description of Application: **ERECTION OF SINGLE STOREY MODULAR BUILDING TO PROVIDE NURSERY PLACES AT NEROCHE PRIMARY SCHOOL, BROADWAY ROAD, BROADWAY, ILMINSTER, SOMERSET, TA19 9RG**

Grid Reference: 332555 - 115536

Applicant: Somerset County Council

Location: The application site of approximately 400 sq m lies in the north-east corner of the Neroche Primary School site. The Primary School is located in the village of Broadway, approximately 3.5km to the north-west of the centre of Ilminster.

1. Summary of Key Issues and Recommendation(s)

1.1 The key issues for Members to consider are:-

- Whether the proposal is in accordance with the Development Plan;
- Sustainable Development;
- Settlement Strategy
- Educational Need;
- General Development;
- Highway Impacts.

It is recommended that planning permission be GRANTED subject to the imposition of the conditions in section 8 of this report and that authority to undertake any minor non-material editing which may be necessary to the wording of those conditions be delegated to the Service Manager - Planning Control, Enforcement & Compliance.

2. Description of the Site

- 2.1 Neroche Primary School is on the southern side of Broadway Road from which it gains access. Broadway Road runs roughly east-west through Broadway and is the main route through the village. Adjacent to the northern side of Broadway Road opposite the school is a row of residential properties and part of an agricultural field. The north-eastern boundary of the school abuts Lamparts Way which is a residential cul-de-sac running south off Broadway Road. A public footpath (CH2/7) is adjacent to the south-western boundary of the school beyond which lies residential properties (adjacent to the northern end) and a public play area (adjacent to the southern end). To the south-east of the school site are agricultural fields with the River Ding beyond. Although the school playing fields lie partially within flood zone 3 the application site is within flood zone 1. Broadway village is identified in the South Somerset Local Plan as a rural settlement with no identified development limits.
- 2.2 The school building is located in the northern half of the school site with a surfaced play court to its west and grassed playing fields occupying the southern half of the site. The existing building has a rectangular footprint and is single storey, although with a higher element for the school hall, and has a flat roof. The external elevations comprise of horizontal bands of coursed random stonework to the lower part and horizontal, painted cement board cladding towards the top of the walls.
- 2.3 The application site abuts the north-eastern and north-western school boundaries in the north-east of the school site. The area has trees along both external boundaries (some within the site and some adjacent), a hedgerow along the north-western boundary and there is also an internal beech hedge towards the southern end of the application site.

3. Site History

- 3.1 There have been few applications for development since the school was originally built in the 1970s although there have been several phases of internal remodelling and external improvements.

10/01024/R3C – permission for installation of timber fencing and gates to the existing school car park.

4. The Proposal

- 4.1 The proposal is for the construction of a single storey building for use as a nursery/pre-school. This proposal has come forward in order to help Somerset County Council fulfil the forthcoming Government requirement to provide 30 hours of free childcare for 3 and 4 year olds of working parents which comes into force from September 2017. Research by SCC Early Years team has shown that there is a high eligibility for the '30 hours offer' in

the Ward within which Neroche Primary School is located. However, this research has also shown that not enough of the existing providers in that area have the ability to offer the extended entitlement to 30 hours of free childcare to meet the anticipate demand. Hence this proposal.

- 4.2 The proposed building would be located in the north-east corner of the school with the external walls running parallel to the site boundaries. The new building would measure 10m by 12.5m with the grey corrugated metal flat roof at approximately 3m above ground level. The external walls of the building would be covered with horizontal timber cladding. A new walkway would provide access to the building from a new pedestrian gateway to be created in the existing timber fence beside the car park entrance. The entrance to the building would be on the south-west elevation (facing the car park) with a second doorway on the south-east elevation leading out from the main room to a play area beneath a canopy attached to the building.
- 4.3 The land on which the building and new walkway would be located is mainly an unused grass area in the corner of the school site but also overlaps with part of the tarmac car parking area. This part of the car park was originally marked out with 3 vehicle spaces across its width. Due to the depth of this area of tarmac it was observed on site that cars double park nose to tail. The proposed development would reduce the depth of this part of the car park but increase its width thereby creating a fourth marked space in this part of the car park.
- 4.4 The building would be situated in close proximity to the trees along the boundaries. Following concern raised about the impact of the proposed development on those trees and the possible loss of them to the street scene some revisions were made to the details of the proposal. In order to protect the trees the use of pile foundations has been proposed. This would result in minimum disturbance to the root protection zones of those trees. Some pruning to the tree canopies would also be required to create working room for the construction of the building and an ongoing separation between the building lines and the tree canopies. To avoid further works within the root protection zones of the trees, paths originally proposed around the north-eastern and north-western sides of the building have been removed from the plan and a buggy store has been relocated away from the trees. Rainwater drainage from the eastern half of the roof would be discharged to the ground, away from the building and towards the tree roots. The beech hedge towards the south-east of the application site would need to be removed.
- 4.5 **Documents submitted with the application**
- Design and Access Statement issue 2 dated 22 November 2016;
 - Staff numbers email dated 29 November 2016 plus further staffing detail received 3 February 2017;
 - Neroche School Travel Plan 2016-2018 dated September 2016;
 - Location and Site Plan DR-A-9001 Revision P04 dated 27 January 2017;
 - Existing Site Plan DR-A-9000 Revision P01 dated 15 November 2012
 - Proposed Ground Floor Plan Revision DR-A-9002 Revision P04 dated 7 January 2017;

- Proposed Roof Plan DR-A-9003 Revision P04 dated 27 January 2017;
- Proposed Elevations DR-A-9004 Revision P04 dated 27 January 2017;
- Tree Survey and Arboricultural Assessment 1 February 2017;
- Supporting Statement from SCC Early Years and Childcare Sufficiency Team 3 February 2017.

4.6 **Environmental Impact Assessment**

The proposal does not require an Environmental Impact Assessment under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2011 as the proposed development is not development of a description mentioned in Schedule 1. It is of a description mentioned in Schedule 2 of the Regulations that being paragraph 10 (b): Urban Development Projects. However with a site area of 0.039 hectares it falls below the relevant Thresholds and Criteria in that Schedule (more than 1 hectare which is not dwelling house development) and the site does not lie within a sensitive area and so does not require screening and is not therefore EIA development.

5. **Consultation Responses Received**

5.1 SOUTH SOMERSET DISTRICT COUNCIL

Initially objected due to proximity to and potential loss of boundary trees. Following receipt of plans showing pile foundations and removal of some paths the District Council was re-consulted and the objection has been withdrawn subject to conditions to protect the trees and their roots.

5.2 BROADWAY PARISH COUNCIL

i) Expressed disappointment at the lack of dialogue with the community following initial contact and the expression of concerns over traffic and parking;

ii) Concern over any impact on the current pre-school provision (Neroche Playgroup) located at the Village Hall and whether there is sufficient demand for both. Any significant adverse effect on the current provision could have a follow on financial impact on the sustainability of Broadway Village Hall and therefore other village activities. Concern was also expressed about the sustainability of other local play groups;

iii) There are already long standing concerns regarding congestion and safety for all road users in the area of the school especially when children are being dropped off and collected. It is not clear there is a local need for the pre-school so children would need to be transported in from other areas and the likelihood of parents walking their children to the school negligible. There are therefore concerns regarding increased vehicle movements for dropping off and picking up the 30 nursery children with cars parked for up to 10 minutes so that the small children can be accompanied in and out of the school. The layby outside the school is not sufficient to accommodate the current demand which means there is a consistent high level of parking along Broadway Road and in the nearby Lamparts Way. It is also questionable whether the provision of staff parking within the school curtilage is adequate. Much further consideration should be given to overcoming

these issues before any planning approval is given;

iv) Broadway Parish Council supports the principal of providing educational opportunities for 3-4 year olds. However this support is only given as long as all measures are taken to mitigate the impact of the sustainability of current local facilities, the additional traffic and parking problems which it is expect would be created.

5.3 HIGHWAY AUTHORITY

Following receipt of additional information the Highway Authority would raise no objection to the application subject to the following condition:-

Before the new development is first brought into use, a School Traffic Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such approved plan shall be fully implemented in perpetuity unless otherwise agreed in writing with the LPA. The plan shall include:

- Designated entry points;
- Drop off points;
- Staff parking;
- Parent parking;
- Visitor parking;
- Servicing / Deliveries /Contractors parking;
- Disabled access;
- Management practices.

The document shall be made available to employees, pupils, parents and carers.

The document is to be reviewed annually and awareness raised regularly through parental events, pupil sub groups, assemblies and school meetings.

5.4 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

One response was received to public consultation objecting to the proposal:-
“My concern is the impact more vehicles will have on road safety for vehicles and pedestrians in the area surrounding the school. The volume of traffic and cars parking is already at an extremely high level, to the point of being dangerous. Every day cars park opposite or within 10 metres of the junction of Lamparts Way. The police were on site recently moving people. Cars already park on the grass verge of the bend opposite the school. This means that visibility around the corner and on the junction is greatly reduced.

On several occasions in the last few weeks' people have had to park right across my driveway blocking access as there was no other space left. I have had to complain to the school in the past about someone regularly turning on my driveway, which they did deal with.

The parking on the map is already being used so where will the extra staff park and also the parents when dropping off and picking up. The parking situation needs addressing as it is so how will the area cope with even more vehicles.”

6. Comments of the Service Manager

6.1 The key issues for Members to consider are:-

- Whether the proposal is in accordance with the Development Plan;
- Sustainable Development;
- Settlement Strategy
- Educational Need;
- General Development;
- Highway Impacts.

6.2 The Development Plan

Planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case the development plan consists of:

- The South Somerset Local Plan 2006 – 2028: adopted March 2015 (SSLP);
- Saved Policy 6 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review 1991-2011, adopted 2000 (SP).

6.3 Material Considerations

- National Planning Policy Framework published March 2012 (NPPF);
- Somerset County Council Parking Strategy adopted September 2013 (SCCPS);
- Chief Planning Officer's Letter: Policy Statement on Planning for Schools Development dated 15 August 2011.

6.4 Sustainable Development

The NPPF has a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 14). Policy SD1 of the SSLP on Sustainable Development requires a proactive approach to be taken to reflect the presumption in the NPPF and by seeking to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions within the District.

6.5 The proposed pre-school would bring economic benefit to the area as a result of the creation of 3 new full-time staff posts at the school site and due to education being recognised as bringing long term economic benefit in respect of future employment. Broadway Parish Council has questioned the impact of the new pre-school on the sustainability of the existing pre-school at the village hall and others locally. The Early Years and Childcare Sufficiency Team at SCC have since provided an explanation as to how the two pre-schools would work together, with the parish hall site providing provision for 2-3 year olds and the new building at the school catering for children aged 3 + years. The joint working would enable the required early years provision of extended hours to meet the needs of working families as set out in the Governments' 30 hours offer. A high demand for the 30 hours childcare is anticipated and the service in itself would bring economic benefit by enabling more parents to work.

6.6 The pre-school would bring new parents into contact with each other with the potential to enhance community social networks both for those parents and their children. The revisions to the building foundations and new pathways will protect the trees on and adjacent to the site resulting in no detriment to the local natural environment. I therefore consider the proposal to accord with SDLP policy SD1 and the sustainable principles of the NPPF.

6.7 **Settlement Strategy**

Broadway and Horton are considered to be Rural Settlements. SDLP policy SS2: Development in Rural Settlements states that development will be permitted where it is commensurate with the scale and character of the settlement and provides for one or more of i) employment opportunities; ii) community facilities to serve the settlement; iii) meeting the housing need. The proposal would be for a building subservient to the existing school and in keeping with its character and that of the rural village. It would provide additional employment both directly and indirectly and enhance the community facilities available to the local population. I therefore conclude that proposal is in accordance with SDLP policy SS2.

6.8 **Educational Need**

From September 2017, 3 and 4 year olds of working parents in England will be eligible for 30 hours per week of government funded childcare for 38 weeks of the year. In order to meet this need, SCC propose to construct a purpose built building for pre-school provision at Neroche Primary School to supplement that already available at the village hall. Both the NPPF (paragraph 72) and the 2011 Policy Statement on Planning for Schools Development state that there should be a presumption in favour of the development of state-funded schools. Paragraph 72 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools. Siting pre-schools on primary school sites provides a continuity of educational environment for young children, smoothing the transition from pre-school to school. I consider that after September 2017 the need for pre-school places will increase and that this proposal is an appropriate means of fulfilling that need.

6.9 **General Development**

SSLP policy EQ2: General Development requires development proposals to be considered against:-

- Sustainable construction principles;
- Creation of quality places;
- Conserving and enhancing the landscape character of the area;
- Reinforcing local distinctiveness and respect local context;
- Creating safe environments addressing crime prevention and community safety;
- Having regard to South Somerset District Council's published Development Management advice and guidance; and
- Making efficient use of land whilst having regard to:
 - Housing demand and need;
 - Infrastructure and service availability;

- Accessibility;
- Local area character;
- Site specific considerations.

6.10 The proposed building would be purpose built for use as a pre-school providing a dedicated quality space for the development of the children attending it. The unit would be clad in sustainable timber cladding and consideration has been given to providing foundations that would not negatively impact upon the surrounding trees. In addition some of the rain water from the roof of the building would be directed towards the roots of the trees further reducing the impact of the development upon them. The building respects the local context as the design is similar to that of the existing school and it sits within the existing building line along that part of Broadway Road. The pre-school would have its own pedestrian access off Broadway Road and the grounds would be secured by the relocation of the existing fence closer to the school boundary. The building location makes efficient use of land as much of the application site is an area of unused grass outside the existing play grounds of the school. Whilst the development would encroach onto the tarmac area of the car park and would reduce the opportunities for double parking it would enable an increase to the marked parking spaces by one additional space. I consider the proposal is in accordance with SDLP policy EQ2.

6.11 **Highway Impacts**

SSLP policy TA5: Transport Impacts of New Development states that all new development shall be required to address its own transport implications and shall be designed to maximise the potential for sustainable transport. Policy TA5 has a number of elements relevant to this proposal:-

- a) securing inclusive, safe and convenient access on foot, cycle, and by public and private transport that addresses the needs of all;
- b) ensuring the nature and volume of traffic and parked vehicles would not have a detrimental impact upon the character or amenity of the area and would not compromise the safety and/or function of the local or strategic network;
- c) requiring car parking in accordance with approved/adopted standards identified in policy TA6 (which points to the County Council Parking Standards).

6.12 The existing primary school has separate pedestrian and vehicular accesses to provide safe access for all that is on level ground and therefore inclusive of all users. A new pedestrian access would be created for the pre-school beside the vehicular access into the car park and this would also be on level ground. Due to the lack of footways along Broadway Road other than in the immediate vicinity of the school the options for a walking bus are limited although during my site visit parents were observed walking their children along the road from the village hall, approximately 210m to the east along Broadway Road. The Headteacher has also reported that some parents make use of the car park at the Bell Inn, approximately 160m to the west along Broadway Road. The drop-off and collection of school pupils is staggered due to the provision of a morning breakfast club and a variety of

after school clubs plus availability of an after school extended childcare service. There is a layby outside the full width of the school frontage between the car park entrance and the western boundary of the school. In the mornings two car spaces are coned-off adjacent to the pedestrian entrance to the school and managed as 'drop and go' spaces so that the turn-over of vehicles is maximised. The layby can also accommodate a further 7 cars and is well utilised by parents. Traffic monitoring during the second week of the autumn term shows that between 24 and 32 vehicles used the 'drop and go' facility each day. Pick-up time at the end of the school day is often more congested than drop-off due to parents arriving early and waiting for their children. The traffic report indicates that since the monitoring undertaken at the start of the autumn term, after school clubs have been increased such that there are now 5 clubs each school day rather than just 3 operating Monday to Wednesday thereby further staggering times of collection of the children. The Early Years and Childcare team have indicated that children attending the early years provision tend to have more staggered arrival and departure times.

- 6.13 The Highway Authority has not objected to the proposal for the introduction of the pre-school at this site. However, whilst it is clear the school are taking steps to manage the traffic around drop-off and pick-up time in order to minimise any impacts, the Highway Authority has requested that a condition be attached for the submission, approval and implementation of a School Traffic Management Plan to include all parents, staff and visitors for both school and pre-school and that this plan be made known to all employees, pupils, parents and carers. Although figures provided by the Headteacher indicate that around 50 vehicles are taken out of the dropping off and collection peaks by those walking/cycling to school, the use of out of school hours activities, managed drop off and use of the layby this still leaves another 50 or more vehicles making use of the local roads. In a rural village such as Broadway this would have an impact upon other road users although this would be for a limited period at the start and end of the school day. As the situation stands I consider that whilst the accesses are safe and inclusive as required by point a) above, the number of vehicles could have a detrimental impact upon the amenity and function of the local road network as required by point b) above. However, it is the impact of the addition of the pre-school that is under consideration here. Figures provided by the school indicate that the number of additional vehicles likely to attend the school as a result of the introduction of the pre-school is a further 10 due to siblings sharing trips and parents living in the vicinity walking to the pre-school. The pre-school opens 5 minutes after school start time and core hours finish 30 minutes before the school day ends. I do not consider that the pre-school would add significantly to any congestion outside the school at peak times but given the existing situation I consider that the proposal as submitted is not wholly in accordance with SDLP policy TA5 and the school and parents need to be encouraged to do more to reduce these impacts. The imposition of a condition as proposed by the Highway Authority would ensure that the school would have to introduce further measures to tackle the congestion

and with that condition I consider the proposal would comply with SDLP policy TA5.

- 6.14 SDLP policy TA6 requires car parking to be in accordance with the Somerset Parking Standards. For primary schools, and this would also extend to pre-schools, the standard is for 1 space per 2 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff. At present the school has 18.77 FTE staff which would indicate a need for 9.5 parking spaces. At present the marking for parking is very faded to the point of being non-existent in places but aerial photos from 2001 show that there used to be 11 marked spaces. There is therefore one extra space beyond that needed for the existing number of staff under the parking standards. Once the pre-school is open there would be a further 3 to 4 FTE staff. The section of car park adjacent to the pre-school is currently 3 spaces wide but part of the proposal is to enlarge this area to four spaces wide thus creating one additional space. That extra space in addition to the original marking would result in 12 spaces for, at most, 22.77 FTE. In conclusion there is considered to be latent excess capacity of 1 space at the school at present and the inclusion of the pre-school along with the creation of an additional space would result in the parking provision at the site being in accordance with the Somerset Parking Standards. I therefore consider the proposal accords with SDLP policy TA6.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 The construction of a new building for a pre-school facility at Neroche Primary School would bring economic and social benefits without detriment to the local natural environment. The design of the building is appropriate for its location and that location sits well within the local built environment. Given the forthcoming introduction of provision of extended free childcare for working parents there is a strong need for pre-school places and the NPPF and the 2011 Policy Statement on Planning for Schools Development are both material considerations giving strong support for expanding and altering schools. I consider that with conditions requiring the School Traffic Management Plan, as requested by the Highway Authority, and an updated School Travel Plan then the highways issues can be managed such that impacts are acceptable. Given the compliance with other policies and the strong support from material considerations I recommend approval of this proposal.

8. Recommendation

- 8.1 **It is recommended that planning permission be GRANTED subject to the imposition of the following conditions and that authority to undertake any minor non-material editing which may be necessary to the wording of those conditions be delegated to the Service Manager - Planning Control, Enforcement & Compliance.**

1 Time Limit (3 years implementation)

The development hereby permitted shall be commenced within three years of the date of this permission.

Reason: Pursuant to Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2 Completion in accordance with the approved details

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved plans:-

- Location and Site Plan DR-A-9001 Revision P04 dated 27 January 2017;
- Existing Site Plan DR-A-9000 Revision P01 dated 15 November 2012
- Proposed Ground Floor Plan Revision DR-A-9002 Revision P04 dated 27 January 2017;
- Proposed Roof Plan DR-A-9003 Revision P04 dated 27 January 2017;
- Proposed Elevations DR-A-9004 Revision P04 dated 27 January 2017;

and specifications:-

- Tree protection barriers in the Tree Survey and Arboricultural Assessment 1 February 2017;

and with any scheme, working programme or other details submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority in pursuance of any condition attached to this permission.

Reason: To enable the County Planning Authority to deal promptly with any development not in accordance with the approved plans.

3 Commencement

Written notification of the date of commencement shall be given to the County Planning Authority within seven days of the commencement of the development hereby permitted.

Reason: To enable the County Planning Authority to monitor compliance with conditions.

4 Walkway construction methodology

Before commencement of the development hereby permitted construction details of the pedestrian walkway in the vicinity of the Norway Maple identified as T3 on the Arboricultural Survey to minimise impacts upon the roots of that tree shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The walkway shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interest of local landscape.

5 Tree protection

Before the commencement of the development hereby permitted including

site vegetation clearance, demolition of existing structures, ground-works, heavy machinery entering site or the on-site storage of materials, tree protection measures in accordance with 'British Standard 5837: 2012 - Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction' and including tree protection barriers and ground protection for tree roots as identified on drawing 4397 accompanying the Tree Survey dated 1/2/17 shall have been implemented in accordance with a scheme full details of which shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The approved tree protection requirements shall remain implemented in their entirety for the duration of the construction and fitting out phases of the development hereby permitted.

Reason: To preserve the health, structure and amenity value of existing landscape features (trees).

6 Foundations

There shall be no underground structures laid between the pile foundations referred to on drawing DR-A-9002.

Reason: To preserve the health, structure and amenity value of existing landscape features (trees).

7 School Traffic Management Plan

Before the first occupation of the development hereby permitted a School Traffic Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. Such approved plan shall be fully implemented for the duration of the development hereby permitted. The plan shall include:

- Designated entry points;
- Pupil drop off and collection points;
- Staff parking;
- Parent parking;
- Visitor parking;
- Servicing / Deliveries /Contractors parking;
- Disabled access;
- Management practices.

The School Traffic Management Plan shall be reviewed annually and made available in both paper and electronic format to employees, pupils, parents and carers with awareness of it being raised through parental events, pupil sub groups, assemblies and school meetings.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

8 School Travel Plan

Within six months of the first occupation of the development hereby permitted an updated School Travel Plan to cover travel by all pupils and staff at the pre-school and school shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The School Travel Plan shall be reviewed on an annual basis.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

9. Relevant Development Plan Policies

- 1 The following is a summary of the reasons for the County Council's decision to grant planning permission.
- 2 In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 the decision on this application should be taken in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The decision has been taken having regard to the policies and proposals in the :-
 - The South Somerset Local Plan 2006 – 2028: adopted March 2015

The policies in that Plan particularly relevant to the proposed development are:-

SD1 – Sustainable Development – The proposal delivers economic and social benefits and protects the natural environment so meeting the criteria for sustainable development in accordance with this policy.

SS2 – Rural Settlements – The proposal is in accordance with this policy as the proposed development is commensurate with the scale and character of the settlement and provides both employment opportunities and community services.

TA4 – Travel Plans – The application is supported by the school's existing travel plan and data on modes of travel. This will be required to be updated within 6 months of occupation to more accurately reflect the modes of travel used by staff and pupils at that time. The proposal therefore is in accordance with this policy.

TA5 – Transport Impact of New Development – All new development shall be required to address its own transport implications. In accordance with this policy the proposed pre-school building has safe and inclusive means of access. Conditions are proposed to further address the existing traffic congestion beyond those measures already put in place by the school. With the condition for a School traffic Management Plan, the proposal is in accordance with this policy.

TA6 – Parking Standards – In accordance with this policy the parking provision for the expanded school site is in accordance with the Somerset Parking Strategy. The vehicle access to the site is separate from the pedestrian access which enhances site safety.

EQ2 – General Development – the proposed pre-school would provide a quality place for early years education, would not impact upon the mature

trees nearby thereby conserving the landscape character of the area and would make efficient use of land so is in accordance with this policy.

- 3 The County Council has also had regard to all other material considerations in particular the National Planning Policy Framework March 2012 and the Policy Statement on Planning for Schools Development.

- 4 **Statement of Compliance with Article 35 of the Town and Country Development Management Procedure Order 2015**

In dealing with this planning application the County Planning Authority has adopted a positive and proactive manner. The Council offers a pre-application advice service for minor and major applications, and applicants are encouraged to take up this service. This proposal has been assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework, the saved Policy 6 of the Structure Plan, Core Strategy and Local Plan policies, which have been subject to proactive publicity and consultation prior to their adoption and are referred to in the reasons for approval. The County Planning Authority has sought solutions to problems arising by liaising with consultees, considering other representations received and liaising with the applicant/agent as necessary. Where appropriate, changes to the proposal were sought when the statutory determination timescale allowed.

10 **Background Papers**

- The application file 16/05326/R3C;
- National Planning Policy Framework published March 2012;
- Chief Planning Officer's Letter: Policy Statement on Planning for Schools Development dated 15 August 2011.