

Langley Park School for Boys, Beckenham

London Borough of Bromley

Planning application no. 09/02264/FULL1

Strategic planning application stage II referral (new powers)

Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended); Greater London Authority Acts 1999 and 2007; Town & Country Planning (Mayor of London) Order 2008

The proposal

Demolition of secondary school building (with retention and refurbishment of two storey Phythian and single storey Raeburn Buildings) and construction of new secondary school of up to two storeys in height.

The applicant

The applicant is **Langley Park School for Boys**, and the architect is the **Frankham Consultancy Group Limited**.

Strategic issues

The redevelopment of the school is welcomed as part of the **Building Schools for the Future programme**. A 'very special circumstances' argument based on education need was previously provided to justify the inappropriate development on **Metropolitan Open Land**.

Community facilities will be secured through a planning condition and **Sport England** has withdrawn its objection.

Transport and **climate change** matters have been satisfactorily addressed.

Recommendation

That Bromley Council be advised that the Mayor is content for it to determine the case itself, subject to any action that the Secretary of State may take, and does not therefore wish to direct refusal.

Context

1 On 7 September 2009 the Mayor of London received documents from Bromley Council notifying him of a planning application of potential strategic importance to develop the above site for the above uses. This was referred to the Mayor under Categories 1B, 3C and 3D of the Schedule to the Order 2008:

- *“Development which is likely to prejudice the use as a playing field of more than 2 hectares of land which— (a) is used as a playing field at the time the relevant application for planning permission is made.”*
- *“Development—(a) on land allocated as Green Belt or Metropolitan Open Land in the development plan, in proposals for such a plan, or in proposals for the alteration or replacement of such a plan; and (b) which would involve the construction of a building with a floorspace of more than 1,000 square metres or a material change in the use of such a building.”*
- *“Development (other than development which only comprises the provision of houses, flats, or houses and flats) which comprises or includes the erection of a building or buildings— (c) outside Central London and with a total floorspace of more than 15,000 square metres”.*

2 On 14 October 2009 the Mayor considered planning report PDU/2171a/01, and subsequently advised Bromley Council that the application did not comply with the London Plan, for the reasons set out in paragraph 58 of the above-mentioned report; but that the possible remedies set out in paragraph 59 of that report could possibly address these deficiencies.

3 A copy of the above-mentioned report is attached. The essentials of the case with regard to the proposal, the site, case history, strategic planning issues and relevant policies and guidance are as set out therein, unless otherwise stated in this report. Since then, some minor amendments have been made to the application in response to the Mayor’s concerns (see below). On 3 November 2009 Bromley Council decided that it was minded to grant planning permission for the revised application, and on 9 November 2009 it advised the Mayor of this decision. Under the provisions of Article 5 of the Town & Country Planning (Mayor of London) Order 2008 the Mayor may allow the draft decision to proceed unchanged or direct Council under Article 6 to refuse the application. The Mayor has until 24 November 2009 to notify the Council of his decision and to issue any direction.

4 On the 12 October 2009, the draft replacement London Plan was released for public consultation. The proposed development was considered by Bromley Council’s planning committee after the draft plan was published but the Mayor’s initial consultation response did not refer to the draft replacement London Plan. The draft replacement London Plan is, though, a material consideration when determining planning applications.

5 The decision on this case, and the reasons will be made available on the GLA’s website www.london.gov.uk.

Update

6 At the consultation stage Bromley Council was advised that the application did not comply with the London Plan; but that the following possible remedies could address these deficiencies:

- **Playing fields:** the applicant should enter in detailed discussion to ensure Sport England is able to support the proposals.
- **Education and community facilities:** the applicant should confirm that the use of the school facilities for local communities will be secured through the section 106 agreement.
- **Transport:** TfL is satisfied that the development proposals are unlikely to impact on either the public transport or highway network, further consideration should however be given to increasing onsite cycle parking, improving the pedestrian environment where needed and providing a delivery and servicing plan and a construction and logistics plan for the site, in accordance with the London Plan policies 3C.21, 3C.22 and 3C.25.

- **Climate change:** some further information is required to ensure compliance with London Plan policies 4A.1, 4A.5 and 4A.6 relating to energy demand assessment, heat supply strategy, decentralised energy and renewable energy.

7 The issues raised previously have been satisfactorily addressed through the submission of additional information and the use of planning conditions. Paragraphs 8 to 14 below set out how the matters have been addressed.

Playing fields

8 Sport England previously raised an objection to the loss of multi-use games areas on the site (which were replaced by a single rugby pitch). The applicant and Bromley Council have since entered into discussions with Sport England regarding the potential purchase of additional land within the vicinity of the Langley Park School for Boys to ensure that adequate provision for sports facilities is made to allow the school to meet the national curriculum requirements for school.

9 A Grampian type planning condition has been attached to the permission to ensure the provision of an off-site all weather sports pitch. As such, this matter is satisfactorily resolved.

Education and communities facilities

10 A planning condition has been attached to the permission to ensure that the proposed community use of the school facilities (including the performance space and sports facilities) is managed by requiring a ‘Scheme of Management’ to be submitted to and approved by Bromley Council and to be implemented upon first occupation of the school. As such, this matter is now satisfactorily resolved.

Transport

11 At consultation stage, TfL was satisfied that the development proposals would be unlikely to impact on the transport network. However, a number of matters were raised for further consideration. Those include car parking management, onsite cycle parking, improving the pedestrian and cycling environment, and travel plan. Additionally, a delivery and servicing plan, and a construction and logistics plan for the site were also encouraged.

12 No additional information has been provided by the applicant since. TfL however considers that the conditions contained in Bromley’s committee report dated 3 November 09 satisfactory address the above. Prior to commencement on site, the requirement for a Travel Plan, a Construction Management Plan, a scheme for servicing and waiting restrictions, for parking of staff vehicles and for drop off / pick up of students, are all welcomed.

13 Although it has been agreed by all parties that the level of cycle parking on-site will be increased, a figure has not yet been reached. A condition has been applied within the report to address this issue as part of the detailed design stage. In addition, conditions have been applied to address landscaping, also with the aim of improving the pedestrian and cycle environment..

14 The transport issues are therefore satisfactorily resolved.

Climate change

15 Further information has been provided by the applicant with regard to the proposed energy strategy, which includes the use of a biomass boiler to address the concerns raised previously. In addition, planning conditions have been applied to the permission requiring both an air quality assessment and the submission of an improved energy strategy to ensure that the scheme achieves a 20% reduction in carbon emissions.

16 The climate change issues are therefore satisfactorily resolved.

Response to consultation

17 Following consultation on the application by Bromley Council there were 55 letters of support, three letters of comment and three letters of objection. The majority of concerns raised related to local issues of residential amenity, highways, parking and road safety which have been satisfactorily addressed, where appropriate, through the use of planning conditions. The key strategic concerns related to inappropriate development on Metropolitan Open Land and the current legal procedures involving the Langley Park School for Girls which were dealt with in the previous stage 1 report (PDU2171a/01). The letters of support made the following points:

- Design is an improvement on previous proposal.
- Proposal will significantly improve education facilities, in great need of modernisation.
- Performance space will broaden educational opportunities to school community.
- It will improve external appearance compared to existing buildings.
- Highways arrangements will improve safety.
- Cycle parking will promote sustainability.
- Improved sports facilities will encourage participation in sport.

18 The Langley Park School for Girls has maintained a detailed objection to the application on the grounds of the siting of the proposal and the harm to the openness of MOL caused by this. The objection is accompanied by an alternative scheme proposal which uses the proposed floorspace and buildings requirement contained in the application proposal but re-orientates the proposed new buildings in a different form and layout. The procedural and legal matters in relation to the objections raised by the Langley Park School for Girls are being dealt with separately by Bromley Council and are not a matter for comment in this report, given that the principle of the ongoing education use on MOL and siting of the proposals have previously been agreed by GLA officers and the Mayor.

19 Other statutory consultees responded to the consultation as follows:

- **Environment Agency:** has raised objections relating to flood risk and surface water run-off. Bromley Council has attached conditions to address these concerns.
- **Sport England:** has agreed to the use of a planning condition to address the previous objection.

Legal considerations

20 Under the arrangements set out in Article 5 of the Town and Country Planning (Mayor of London) Order 2008 the Mayor has the power under Article 6 to direct the local planning authority to refuse permission for a planning application referred to him under Article 4 of the Order. The Mayor may also leave the decision to the local authority. In directing refusal the Mayor must have regard to the matters set out in Article 6(2) of the Order, including the principal purposes of the Greater London Authority, the effect on health and sustainable development, national policies and international obligations, regional planning guidance, and the use of the River Thames. The Mayor may direct refusal if he considers that to grant permission would be contrary to good strategic planning in Greater London. If he decides to direct refusal, the Mayor must set out his reasons, and the local planning authority must issue these with the refusal notice..

Financial considerations

21 Should the Mayor direct refusal, he would be the principal party at any subsequent appeal hearing or public inquiry. Government guidance in Circular 03/2009 (*Costs Awards in Appeals and Other Planning Proceedings*) emphasises that parties usually pay their own expenses arising from an appeal.

22 Following an inquiry caused by a direction to refuse, costs may be awarded against the Mayor if he has either directed refusal unreasonably; handled a referral from a planning authority unreasonably; or behaved unreasonably during the appeal. A major factor in deciding whether the Mayor has acted unreasonably will be the extent to which he has taken account of established planning policy.

Conclusion

23 The redevelopment of the school is welcomed as part of the Building Schools for the Future programme. A 'very special circumstances' argument based on education need has been provided to justify the inappropriate development on Metropolitan Open Land. Community facilities have been secured through the use of a planning condition. The applicant has also entered into discussions with Sport England to address the objection previously raised.

24 The transport and climate change matters have also been satisfactorily addressed through the use of planning conditions.

for further information, contact Planning Decisions Unit:

Colin Wilson, Senior Manager – Planning Decisions

020 7983 4783 email colin.wilson@london.gov.uk

Justin Carr, Strategic Planning Manager (Development Decisions)

020 7983 4895 email justin.carr@london.gov.uk

Shelley Gould, Case Officer

020 7983 4803 shelley.gould@london.gov.uk

planning report 2171a/01

14 October 2009

Langley Park School for Boys, Beckenham

London Borough of Bromley

Planning application no. 09/02264/FULL1

Strategic planning application stage 1 referral (new powers)

Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended); Greater London Authority Acts 1999 and 2007; Town & Country Planning (Mayor of London) Order 2008

The proposal

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The applicant

The applicant is **Langley Park School for Boys**, and the architect is the **Frankham Consultancy Group Limited**.

Strategic issues

The redevelopment of the school is welcomed as part of the **Building Schools for the Future programme**. A 'very special circumstances' argument based on education need has been provided to justify the inappropriate development on **Metropolitan Open Land**.

The provision of a **performance space** is welcomed as a **community facility** but the terms of use should be secured through the **section 106 agreement**. **Sport England** objects to the configuration of the re-provided **sports facilities**.

The proposals comply with London Plan policies relating to **biodiversity**. The **urban design** is generally of good quality. There are a number of **transport** and **climate change** matters to address.

Recommendation

That Bromley Council be advised that while the application is broadly acceptable in strategic planning terms, it does not fully comply with the London Plan, for the reasons set out in paragraph 58 of this report but that the possible remedies set out in paragraph 59 of this report may address these deficiencies.

Context

25 On 7 September 2009 the Mayor of London received documents from Bromley Council notifying him of a planning application of potential strategic importance to develop the above site

26 The application is referable under Categories 1B, 3C and 3D of the Schedule to the Order 2008:

- *“Development which is likely to prejudice the use as a playing field of more than 2 hectares of land which— (a) is used as a playing field at the time the relevant application for planning permission is made.”*
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- *“Development (other than development which only comprises the provision of houses, flats, or houses and flats) which comprises or includes the erection of a building or buildings— (c) outside Central London and with a total floorspace of more than 15,000 square metres.”*

27 Once Bromley Council has resolved to determine the application, it is required to refer it back to the Mayor for his decision as to whether to direct refusal; take it over for his own determination; or allow the Council to determine it itself.

28 The Mayor of London’s statement on this case will be made available on the GLA website www.london.gov.uk.

Site description

29 The application site covers an area of 69,046 sq.m. (6.9ha) and is located approximately 2.3 kilometres south of Beckenham Town Centre and approximately 0.8 kilometres east of Upper Elmers End. The local stream known as ‘The Beck’ bounds the site to the west. The site lies within an area of designated Metropolitan Open Land and the surrounding area is characterised by a mix of low density residential development to the west and north of the site and green open space associated with local sports and education provision to the east and south. The site forms part of a larger site shared with Langley Park School for Girls (LPSG) which lies to the east.

30 The development site is located on the northern side of Hawksbrook Lane which intersects the B230 South Eden Park Road to the east. To the north of the site South Eden Park Road leads towards Beckenham Town Centre and to the south joins with the A224 towards West Wickham. The site is not in close proximity to the Transport for London Road Network (TLRN). The nearest section is the A232 Wickham Road located 1.5km to the south, whilst the nearest Strategic Road Network (SRN) is the A222 Croydon Road to the north-west. Eden Park National Rail station lies within 500m of the school entrance. The site is served by two bus routes (routes 356 and 194) with bus stops located on South Eden Park Road. Although the site links directly to the London Cycle Network (LCN) via Hawksbrook Lane, the school is in a relatively inaccessible location and subsequently records a low public transport accessibility level (PTAL) of 2 (in a range of 1 to 6 where 6 is excellent).

Figure 1: the application site (source: Frankhams Consultancy)



31 The site is occupied by the Langley Park School for Boys (LPSB) - a comprehensive secondary school which accommodates approximately 1,064 boys aged 11 to 16 and approximately 560 students in a co-educational sixth form (approximately 1,624 pupils in total) along with a total of 230 members of staff (full and part time). A range of single to three storey buildings currently makes up the existing school facilities. These buildings are generally of a poor quality and are distributed across the site in a 'haphazard' manner, the result of various additions to the school since its opening in the 1960s. Several temporary buildings are also located on the site and the total floorspace of the existing buildings is 13,050 sq.m. on a total built footprint of approximately 9,882 sq.m. The existing sports facilities on the site comprise two grass rugby pitches, a sports hall, cricket nets and a hard games court. The site also has provision for 85 car parking spaces and 42 cycle parking spaces.

Details of the proposal

32 The Langley Park School for Boys school was identified for redevelopment as part of the 'Building for Schools programme' as many of the buildings on the site have come to end of their useful life and require significant investment and maintenance. The Building Schools for the Future (BSF) 'One School Pathfinder' aims to ensure that secondary pupils learn in 21st Century facilities with one of the key objectives being that by 2011, every local authority in England will have received funding to renew at least the school in greatest need. The acute deficiencies in the existing accommodation at the school were also highlighted in the 2006 Ofsted Report, and as part of the BSF programme, the Langley Park School for Boys was awarded a £34.99m grant for new buildings to replace its current facilities at Hawksbrook Lane.

33 The existing secondary school will be demolished and rebuilt in five phases from late 2009 to full completion in summer 2012. The aim of the redevelopment proposals is to improve the educational facilities of the school and there is no intention for the rebuild to increase pupil capacity. The proposals will provide a total floorspace of 18,668 sq.m. with approximately 17,277sq.m. floorspace being provided by new buildings and approximately 1,391 sq.m. being provided in the retained and refurbished buildings of the Phythian Centre (1,086 sq.m.) and the Raeburn Centre (305 sq.m.).

Figure 2: The proposed redevelopment (source: Frankham Consultancy)



34 The proposed new school facility is a two storey 'hub and cluster' building in an arch formation. The proposed scheme includes the provision of:

- A nine-court sports hall.
- An all weather pitch and a rugby pitch along with a hard games court and cricket nets.
- A purpose built detached two-storey block (re-provision on site) for the sole use of the Air Training Corps.
- A 473 seat enhanced performance space.
- A boulevard for students providing secure space and a separate pavement for members of the public on the opposite side of Hawksbrook Lane; improved vehicular and pedestrian access to the site from Hawksbrook Lane.
- A new dedicated drop off and pick up area with 39 car parking spaces.
- A relocated sub-station; new gas, chemical and bin stores.
- 237 staff car parking spaces (153 permanent, 79 temporary car parking and 5 minibus spaces).
- An extensive landscaping scheme.

Case history

35 The subject application is substantially similar to a previous application considered at Bromley Council's planning committee on 17 June 2008. Bromley Council were minded to approve the proposals and on 29 July 2008 a report was taken to the Deputy Mayor, Government Relations (planning reference PDU/2171/02) and acting under delegated authority, he decided that he was content to allow Bromley Council to determine the application itself and that he did not wish to direct refusal.

36 The status of this previous application is currently unclear due a number of legal challenges that have taken place since the previous application was taken to Bromley Council's planning committee. The adjacent Langley Park Girl's School objected to the proposals and sought a Judicial Review of the planning process on procedural grounds, which found in Bromley Council's favour. Following this, there have been appeals at both the High Court and the Court of Appeal with the resulting Court of Appeal judgement quashing the planning permission. It is understood that Bromley Council is seeking to overturn this at the Supreme Court.

37 The current planning application is required to ensure that should the endeavour to reinstate the planning permission be unsuccessful, the funding from the Building Schools for the Future programme (which requires a planning permission to be in place to ensure deliverability) will not be lost.

38 The main changes from the previous application and the current application are as follows:

- Adjustments to footprint and alterations to appearance of main school building including performance space.
- Reduction in seating capacity of performance space.
- Deletion of all weather pitch and playground adjacent to Girls School.
- Deletion of first roundabout on Hawksbrook Lane.
- Addition of balancing ponds and various detached ancillary buildings.

Strategic planning issues and relevant policies and guidance

39 The relevant issues and corresponding policies are as follows:

- Green Belt/MOL *London Plan; PPG2*
- Playing fields *London Plan; PPG17*
- Biodiversity *London Plan; the Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy; Improving Londoner's Access to Nature: Implementation Report; PPS9*
- Access/equal opportunities *London Plan; PPS1; Accessible London: achieving an inclusive environment SPG; Planning and Access for Disabled People: a good practice guide (ODPM)*
- Transport *London Plan; the Mayor's Transport Strategy; PPG13*
- Climate change *London Plan; PPS1, PPS Planning and Climate Change Supplement to PPS1; PPS3; PPG13; PPS22; the Mayor's Energy Strategy; Sustainable Design and Construction SPG*

40 For the purposes of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the development plan in force for the area is the 2006 Unitary Development Plan and the London Plan (Consolidated with Alterations since 2004). Bromley Council is in the very early stages of the preparation of its Core Strategy and other Local Development Framework documents.

Metropolitan Open Land

41 The whole site, including the buildings, lies within designated Metropolitan Open Land (MOL), which is a unique designation within London and has a similar status to the Green Belt. MOL is designated to maintain its open character, to protect access to major open areas, to provide opportunities for recreation, to provide high quality landscapes and to protect and promote biodiversity. The London Plan notes that MOL performs three valuable functions:

- Protecting open space to provide a clear break in the urban fabric and contributing to the green character of London.
- Protecting open space to serve the needs of Londoners outside their local area.
- Protecting open space that contains a feature or landscape of national or regional significance.

42 London Plan policy 3D.10 'Metropolitan Open Land' is aligned with 'Planning Policy Guidance 2: Green Belts' (PPG2) and notes that there is a presumption against inappropriate development on MOL and that it should be afforded the same level of protection as the Green Belt. PPG2 also sets out that some uses for "*essential facilities*" such as for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation may be appropriate, but that these uses should "*preserve the openness of the Green Belt and which do not conflict with the purposes of including land in it*" and that they should not "*have an adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt*".

43 However, the redevelopment of the site for educational uses is not appropriate for MOL and PPG2 sets out that inappropriate development will only be allowed where it is justified by "*very special circumstances*". It was previously accepted that there was an 'educational need' argument which contributed towards a 'very special circumstance' on this site to allow the inappropriate development to take place.

44 The site also already has an existing education use and the redevelopment proposals are for a replacement school that will not result in an intensification of educational facilities on the site. The proposals for the 490 seat enhanced performance space (legacy project) which are noted as ancillary to the existing D1 uses, have also been previously justified and accepted as part of the school redevelopment, as it will provide a much needed performance space for both Langley Park School for Boys and other local schools and community groups, specifically Bromley Youth Music Trust. In addition, it is noted that the proposed sports pitches could be made available for wider community use.

45 As such the proposals comply with London Plan policy 3D.10 'Metropolitan Open Land'.

Playing fields

46 London Plan Policy 3D.8 'Realising the value of open space and green infrastructure' seeks to protect, promote and improve access to London's network of open spaces, to realise the current and potential value of open space to communities, and to protect the many benefits of open space, including those associated with health, sport and recreation, children's play, regeneration, the economy, culture, biodiversity and the environment. Part of the site will involve development on the existing school playing fields and as such, Sport England has been consulted on the proposals.

47 Sport England fully supported the previous application on this site as the reprovision of sports pitches on the site was in line with their requirements, but has noted that it is now unable to support the current application. This is because the three all weather Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs) located at the northeastern end of the site, directly behind the Langley Park School for

48 Sport England has noted that as yet, it has not had discussions with the applicant regarding the revised application. It is keen, however, to discuss the proposed changes and suggest alternative layouts which may address the concerns they have raised. The applicant is advised to discuss the proposals with Sport England in detail to ensure that they are happy with the final proposals before the application is referred back to the Mayor.

Education and community facilities

49 The London Plan seeks to support and maintain high quality educational opportunities and life choices for London's children. London Plan policy 3A.24 specifically relates to the provision of education facilities. Borough Councils need to provide a criteria based approach to the provision of new facilities and the expansion of existing facilities, taking into account:

- The need for new facilities.
- The potential for expansion of existing provision.
- Other policies within the London Plan.

50 The policy also notes that *"In order to maximise usage and to reduce the need for more alternative land to be sought, education authorities should work with local partners to achieve full use of schools in the evenings and at weekends"*. This proposal is part of the Government-led Building Schools for the Future programme which provides funding to rebuild and refurbish all secondary schools in England over a 10 – 15 year period to ensure that school children are educated in modern, efficient facilities to a 21st century standard. The construction of new modern facilities would also, in principle, enhance education facilities and contribute towards the wider investment objectives of the Mayor's Economic Development Strategy.

51 In line with London Plan policy 3A.24 'Education facilities', the use of education facility should be maximised in the evenings and at weekends. This use of the school facilities by the local community also supports London Plan Policy 3A.18 'Protection and enhancement of social infrastructure and community facilities' and London Plan Policy 3D.6 'The Olympic and Paralympic Games and sports facilities'.

52 The proposals for replacement education and sports facilities are compliant with London Plan policies, but the applicant should confirm that the terms of wider community use of the performance facility will, as with the previous application, be secured through a relevant planning condition or S106 agreement.

Biodiversity

53 The London Plan contains a suite of policies that aim to protect and enhance London's open spaces. London Plan policy 3D.8 'Realising the value of open space and green infrastructure' notes the importance of protecting, promoting and improving access to London's network of open spaces, to realise the current and potential value of open space to communities, and to protect the many benefits of open space, including those associated with health, sport and recreation, children's play, regeneration, the economy, culture, biodiversity and the environment.

54 The redevelopment site is adjacent to a Site of Borough Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), as identified through the adopted procedures for London. The application site actually overlaps slightly with the SINC along the northern boundary, affecting an area of mature trees and parkland within the grounds of the school. The applicant has submitted a general ecological impact assessment and a targeted protected species survey for bats in support of their application. These are both consistent with current best practice in their scope and methodology and conclude that the habitats within the application site are of negligible nature conservation value, with the exception of the mature trees within the SINC along the northern boundary and did not identify any bat roosts within the application site. Some bat feeding activity was detected along the site periphery, mainly associated with the mature trees and woodland on and adjacent to the northern boundary.

55 The survey concludes with a recommendation for all trees within and adjacent to the school grounds to be retained and protected. This recommendation is supported to ensure that the features of nature conservation value within the site are not affected by the redevelopment proposals. The ecological report also recommends that the redevelopment realises an opportunity to enhance the biodiversity value of the school estate. This recommendation is supported in line with ensuring compliance with London Plan Policy 3D.14 which aims to achieve positive gains for conservation through the form and design of development.

Urban design

56 Good design is central to all objectives of the London Plan and is specifically promoted by the policies contained within Chapter 4B which address both general design principles and specific design issues. Policy 4B.1 sets out overarching design principles for London and states that the Mayor will seek to ensure that new developments maximise site potential, enhance the public realm, provide a mix of uses, are accessible, inclusive, legible, sustainable, safe, inspiring, exciting and respect London's natural and built heritage. Policy 4B.1 also notes that development should contribute to adaptation to and mitigation of the effects of climate change, promote a sustainable, durable and adaptable approach in terms of design, construction and use as well as enhancing green networks and the blue ribbon network. Other policies include general design principles relating to the promotion of world-class design, maximising the potential of sites, ensuring appropriate development densities, improving the public realm and creating accessible environments.

57 The Design and Access Statement notes that a detailed design process for the redevelopment of the school was undertaken and considered four options. The chosen option provides the new school building in the centre of the site at approximately a 90° angle to the existing Langley Park School Girls. The main benefits of this option are considered to be greater flexibility in the possible building form; an appropriate arrangement of built form on site in respect of the wider visual impact and views within designated Metropolitan Open Land and no requirement for extensive temporary teaching accommodation during construction.

Figure 3: the proposed new school (source: Frankham Consultancy)



58

59 The design has adopted a 'hub and spoke' approach, which is claimed to allow for the most efficient internal layout in terms of circulation space and educational adjacencies, and also provides for the consolidated use of space on the site. The concept of the design to provide good visibility results in good views to the surrounding woods and green fields beyond although the classrooms on the 'inside' of the curved corridor largely block the views to the central open space. The use of high quality materials will be key to ensuring the longevity of the design for future generations of pupils at the school and Bromley Council will need to ensure that this is the case through planning conditions.

60 In terms of the views towards the building from MOL, the design has been well considered and will fit well within its context. The siting of the proposal will have some impact on the MOL but should not limit the openness of the site to any greater degree than the existing building. The chosen siting may in fact improve the setting by providing a consolidated building envelope with expanses of open space to either side of the school, adjacent to the wider areas of open green space.

61 Overall, the policies comply with London Plan policies 4B.1 and 4B.2 relating to design.

Transport

62 While a similar quantum of existing car parking provision is proposed as part of the redevelopment of the site, an overflow facility is to be provided for users and visitors of the performance space. Transport for London (TfL) would therefore recommend that any specific theatre-related parking should be prevented from being used during school hours, potentially through the implementation of a car parking management plan.

63 120 cycle parking spaces are being proposed as part of this revised application. This however still falls short of the 178 spaces required to accord with TfL's cycle parking standards and should therefore be increased. These facilities be provided from the outset, in accordance with the London Plan policy 3C.22, 'Improving conditions for cyclists', particularly given that the site is directly linked to the London Cycle Network, and that a range of improvements to the local environment are being proposed. Furthermore, the cycle parking should be situated in a secure, sheltered and easily accessible location.

64 As per TfL's previous comments on the 2008 scheme, it is also recommended that one of the proposed coach parking set down/pick up bay should be located as close to the school entrance as possible, in order to satisfy Disability Discrimination Act (2005) accessibility guidelines and that ample facilities be provided elsewhere on site to accommodate school coaches and buses.

65 As with the previous application, TfL would encourage the applicant to consider the key walking routes to and from the school in more detail, by undertaking a pedestrian audit such as PERS (pedestrian environment review system). This should identify potential existing issues that need to be addressed such as insufficient footway width, quality and suitability/directness of routes. Where improvements are needed, TfL would expect the applicant to provide mitigation measures through s106 and or conditions, in accordance with the London Plan policy 3C.21 'Improving conditions for walking'. While proposals for a shared footway/cycleway are supported, it should be ensured that appropriate colour and tactile segregation is provided, in order to minimise potential conflicts between pedestrians and cyclists.

66 Under TfL's guidance, all school developments require a travel plan to be submitted. While it is acknowledged that the site will operate as existing during the school peak periods, additional trips associated with the enhanced performance space will however be generated. As such, while an outline travel plan has been submitted for the site, this should be replaced by a full School Travel Plan (STP), prior to determination of the proposals. This should update the existing STP prepared in 2004, and set out a strategy for encouraging more sustainable travel patterns from pupils and staff, and be linked into the improvements to the school.

67 In accordance with the London Plan policy 3C.25 'Freight Strategy', TfL would recommend that a Construction Logistics Plan (CLP) and Delivery and Servicing Plan (DSP) should be produced for the site. These should include details of site access arrangements, booking systems, construction phasing, vehicular routes and scope for load consolidation in order to reduce the number of road trips generated and be secured by condition.

68 In conclusion, while TfL is satisfied that the development proposals are unlikely to impact on either the public transport or highway network, further consideration should however be given to increasing onsite cycle parking, improving the pedestrian environment where needed and providing a DSP and CLP for the site, in accordance with the London Plan policies 3C.21, 3C.22 and 3C.25.

Climate change adaptation and mitigation

69 The London Plan climate change policies as set out in chapter 4A collectively require developments to make the fullest contribution to tackling climate change by minimising carbon dioxide emissions, adopting sustainable design and construction measures, prioritising decentralised energy supply, and incorporating renewable energy technologies with a target of 20% carbon reductions from on-site renewable energy. The policies set out ways in which developers must address mitigation of and adaptation to the effects of climate change.

70 Policies 4A.2 to 4A.8 of the London Plan focus on how to mitigate climate change, and the carbon dioxide reduction targets that are necessary across London to achieve this.

Energy demand assessment (Policy 4A.4)

71 The applicant has used the DFES carbon calculator and dynamic thermal modelling to estimate energy demand for the school and has estimated that the total carbon emissions (including IT equipment) are 350 Tonnes of CO₂ per year. However, with the information provided it is not possible to understand the measures proposed to reduce the demand for energy in the first

72 If CHP is to be proposed, further clarification is required and an analysis is required to investigate the suitability of using CHP for schools. This should include heat profiles, estimated running hours, etc. Clarification should also be provided as to whether active cooling would be required anywhere in the school and how this would be supplied. A natural ventilation strategy would be welcomed and for this purpose the applicant should clarify what design measures have been considered for such approach.

73 Further information is also required in relation to the proposed biomass option. Clarification is sought on the amount of biomass that would be required, for the options proposed, locally available suppliers should be identified. Also, the size of the biomass boiler proposed should be related to the monthly heat profiles of the school.

74 The applicant also needs to provide further information regarding the storage volume that would be required and to demonstrate that there would be enough space with the proposed scheme. In relation to the biomass proposals, the applicant should clarify whether the proposed school would be within an Air Quality Management Area and to take into account the implications this would have in the biomass proposals.

75 Also, where the use of biomass is proposed, the biomass boiler must be certified as an exempt appliance in accordance with the Clean Air Act 1993. A list of exempt appliances can be found at: <http://www.uksmokecontrolareas.co.uk/appliances.php> Efforts should be made to ensure the biomass boiler be one of the lowest emitting models available on the Government's Exempt Appliance list at the time of installation. The following information should also be provided:

- The make, model and thermal capacity of the biomass boiler and details of the additional abatement technology that has been investigated for fitment to reduce air pollution emissions. What reductions in emissions will this produce?
- The type, height and location of the chimney
- A breakdown of emissions factors for NOX, particulates and any other harmful from the biomass boiler.
- An assessment of the impact of the emissions to ground level concentrations and any additional impact to surrounding buildings/structures. It would be most helpful if the results of dispersion modelling were presented on a map

76 In general, the applicant needs to provide a summary of the commitments of the energy strategy including energy efficient design measures, heat supply strategy and renewable energy supply to ensure compliance with strategic planning policies 4A1 to 4A.6.

Sustainable design and construction

77 Developments are required to be adaptable to the climate they will face over their lifetime and address the five principles set out in policy 4A.9 of the London Plan. Policies 4A.10 – 4A.18 cover strategic issues of the urban heat island effect and water use in particular and include development specific requirements to deal with these, including a water use target for residential development.

78 The proposal has not been assessed against the essential and preferred standards as set out in the Mayor's sustainable design and construction SPG and this should be supplied to support the application. The provision of green roofs in particular is encouraged given the MOL nature of the site.

Local planning authority's position

79 Bromley Council supports the application.

Legal considerations

80 Under the arrangements set out in Article 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Mayor of London) Order 2008 the Mayor is required to provide the local planning authority with a statement setting out whether he considers that the application complies with the London Plan, and his reasons for taking that view. Unless notified otherwise by the Mayor, the Council must consult the Mayor again under Article 5 of the Order if it subsequently resolves to make a draft decision on the application, in order that the Mayor may decide whether to allow the draft decision to proceed unchanged, or direct the Council under Article 6 of the Order to refuse the application, or issue a direction under Article 7 of the Order that he is to act as the local planning authority for the purpose of determining the application and any connected application. There is no obligation at this present stage for the Mayor to indicate his intentions regarding a possible direction, and no such decision should be inferred from the Mayor's statement and comments.

Financial considerations

81 There are no financial considerations at this stage.

Conclusion

82 London Plan policies relating to MOL, green and open spaces, education and community facilities, biodiversity, urban design, transport and climate change are relevant to this application. Whilst the application is broadly acceptable in strategic planning terms, the application does not fully comply with the London Plan.

- **MOL:** a 'very special circumstances' argument based on education need has been provided to justify the inappropriate development on MOL. As such the proposals comply with London Plan policy 3D.10.
- **Playing fields:** the proposals comply with London Plan policy 3D.8 relating to green and open spaces but do not meet Sport England's requirements.
- **Education and community facilities:** the proposals comply with London Plan policy 3A.24 relating to education facilities.
- **Biodiversity:** the proposals comply with London Plan policies 3D.8 and 3D.14 relating to biodiversity and improving access to nature.

- **Urban design:** the proposals comply with London Plan policies 4B.1 and 4B.2 relating to design.
- **Transport:** TfL is satisfied that the development proposals are unlikely to impact on either the public transport or highway network, further consideration should however be given to increasing onsite cycle parking, improving the pedestrian environment where needed and providing a DSP and CLP for the site, in accordance with the London Plan policies 3C.21, 3C.22 and 3C.25:
- **Climate change:** insufficient information has been provided to determine compliance with London Plan policies 4A.1, 4A.5 and 4A.6 relating to energy demand assessment, heat supply strategy, decentralised energy and renewable energy.

83 The following changes might, however, remedy the above-mentioned deficiencies, and could possibly lead to the application becoming compliant with the London Plan:

- **Playing fields:** the applicant should enter in detailed discussion to ensure Sport England is able to support the proposals.
- **Education and community facilities:** the applicant should confirm that the use of the school facilities for local communities will be secured through the section 106 agreement.
- **Transport:** TfL is satisfied that the development proposals are unlikely to impact on either the public transport or highway network, further consideration should however be given to increasing onsite cycle parking, improving the pedestrian environment where needed and providing a DSP and CLP for the site, in accordance with the London Plan policies 3C.21, 3C.22 and 3C.25:
- **Climate change:** some further information is required to ensure compliance with London Plan policies 4A.1, 4A.5 and 4A.6 relating to energy demand assessment, heat supply strategy, decentralised energy and renewable energy.

for further information, contact Planning Decisions Unit:

Colin Wilson, Senior Manager - Planning Decisions

020 7983 4783 email colin.wilson@london.gov.uk

Justin Carr, Strategic Planning Manager (Development Decisions)

020 7983 4895 email justin.carr@london.gov.uk

Shelley Gould, Case Officer

020 7983 4803 email shelley.gould@london.gov.uk
