

Reference: 21/01700/TBC	Site: Inspire 24 - 28 Orsett Road Grays Essex RM17 5EB
Ward: Grays Riverside	Proposal: Single storey rear extension to form new teaching/conference room space for Council Youth Services and altered emergency exit staircase.

Plan Number(s):		
Reference	Name	Received
N/A	Location Plan	04/10/2021
2021/INSPIRE/0314/01 A	Proposed Ground Floor Plan	29/05/2022
2021/INSPIRE/0314/02	Existing Ground Floor Plan	04/10/2021
2021/INSPIRE/0314/03 B	Existing and Proposed Elevations	29/05/2022
2022/INSPIRE/0314/04	Car Parking Layout	29/05/2022

The application is also accompanied by:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flood Risk Assessment, Ref. FRA 2021017 Ver 1.0 dated 28.12.21 (Received 04/01/2022) - 	
Applicant: Thurrock Council	Validated: 4 January 2022 Date of expiry: 18 th July 2022 (Extension of Time Agreed)
Recommendation: Approval, subject to conditions.	

This application is scheduled as a Committee item because the Council is the applicant and landowner (in accordance with Part 3 (b) Section 2 2.1 (b) of the Council's constitution).

1.0 BACKGROUND AND DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

1.1 The application seeks planning permission for a single storey rear extension to provide a new teaching/conference room in association with the existing use of the site. The use of the building at the site as a youth work centre was

approved in 1995. The use would have previously fallen within Use Class D1 but, due to a rearrangement of the Use Classes, now falls within Use Class F1. No changes are proposed to the use of the building or the hours of use.

- 1.2 The extension would measure 6.6 metres deep and 11.3 metres wide with a flat roof built to a height of 3.1 metres. Although the existing building is built primarily from brick, the extension would be finished with render to the elevations. To enable the continued provision of an emergency staircase at the rear of the building, the staircase would be modified.
- 1.3 The proposal would result in there being 13 parking spaces at the site rather than the existing 16.

1.1 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.2 The existing building is a three storey detached building with brick to the elevations and a tiled roof. A three storey projection exists at the rear of the main part of the building and a car parking area is located at the rear of the site, accessed from Cart Lane, which provides parking for 16 cars.
- 1.3 The site is located within Grays Town Centre and the Grays Shopping Area as identified within the Thurrock Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development 2015 Policies Map. The site is also located within Flood Zones 2 and 3.

1.4 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 1.5 The following table provides the planning history:

Reference	Description	Decision
62/00232/FUL	Renewal of Shopfront.	Approved
62/00232A/FUL	Shop front (amended plan)	Approved
95/00048/FUL	Change of use of offices to use as a youth work centre	Approved
97/00572/FUL	Construction of disabled ramp and handrail	Approved

1.6 CONSULTATION AND REPRESENTATIONS

- 1.7 Detailed below is a summary of the consultation responses received. The full version of each consultation response can be viewed on the Council's website via public access at the following link: www.thurrock.gov.uk/planning

1.8 PUBLICITY:

This application has been advertised by way of individual neighbour notification letters and a site notice. No comments have been received.

1.9 THURROCK COUNCIL EMERGENCY PLANNING OFFICER:

No objection subject to a condition relating to a Flood Warning and Evacuation Plan.

1.10 THURROCK COUNCIL HIGHWAYS:

No objection

1.11 CADENT GAS

No objection, but request that the applicant is made aware of relevant information.

1.12 POLICY CONTEXT

1.13 National Planning policy Framework

The revised NPPF was published on 20th July 2021. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies. Paragraph 11 of the Framework expresses a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 2 of the NPPF confirms the tests in s.38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and s.70 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and that the Framework is a material consideration in planning decisions. The following chapter headings and content of the NPPF are particularly relevant to the consideration of the current proposals:

7. Ensuring the vitality of town centres;
8. Promoting healthy and safe communities;
9. Promoting sustainable communities;
11. Making effective use of land;
12. Achieving well-designed places;
14. Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change;

1.14 National Planning Practice Guidance

In March 2014 the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) launched its planning practice guidance web-based resource. This

was accompanied by a Written Ministerial Statement which includes a list of the previous planning policy guidance documents cancelled when the NPPF was launched. PPG contains a range of subject areas, with each area containing several subtopics. Those of particular relevance to the determination of this planning application comprise:

- Design
- Determining a planning application
- Effective use of land
- Making an application
- Use of planning conditions
- Flood risk and coastal change
- Healthy and safe communities
- Town centres and retail

1.15 Local Planning Policy Thurrock Local Development Framework (2015)

The Council adopted the “Core Strategy and Policies for the Management of Development Plan Document” (as amended) in 2015. The following Core Strategy policies in particular apply to the proposals:

Overarching Sustainable Development Policy:

- OSDP1: (Promotion of Sustainable Growth and Regeneration in Thurrock).

Thematic Policies:

- CSTP7: Network of Centres
- CSTP8: Viability and Vitality of Existing Centres
- CSTP10: Community Facilities
- CSTP12: Education and Learning
- CSTP15: Transport in Greater Thurrock
- CSTP22: Thurrock Design
- CSTP23: Thurrock Character and Distinctiveness
- CSTP27: Management and Reduction of Flood Risk

Policies for the Management of Development

- PMD1: Minimising Pollution and Impacts on Amenity
- PMD2: Design and Layout
- PMD8: Parking Standards
- PMD9: Road Network Hierarchy
- PMD15: Flood Risk Assessment

1.16 Thurrock Local Plan

In February 2014 the Council embarked on the preparation of a new Local Plan for the Borough. Between February and April 2016 the Council consulted formally on an Issues and Options (Stage 1) document and simultaneously undertook a 'Call for Sites' exercise. In December 2018 the Council began consultation on an Issues and Options (Stage 2 Spatial Options and Sites) document, this consultation has now closed and the responses have been considered and reported to Council. On 23 October 2019 the Council agreed the publication of the Issues and Options 2 Report of Consultation on the Council's website and agreed the approach to preparing a new Local Plan.

1.17 Thurrock Design Strategy

In March 2017 the Council launched the Thurrock Design Strategy. The Design Strategy sets out the main design principles to be used by applicants for all new development in Thurrock. The Design Strategy is a supplementary planning document (SPD) which supports policies in the adopted Core Strategy.

1.18 **ASSESSMENT**

1.19 The material considerations for this application are as follows:

- I. Principle of the development.
- II. Design and Layout and Impact upon the Area
- III. Traffic Impact, Access and Car Parking
- IV. Effect on Neighbouring Properties
- V. Other Matters

I. PRINCIPLE OF THE DEVELOPMENT

1.20 The site is located within Grays Town Centre and Grays Shopping Area and, as the proposal relates to the extension of the building and not the introduction of a new use, it is considered that the principle of development is acceptable. In addition, benefits arising from the proposal in terms of it providing education and a community facility should also weigh in favour of the proposal and accord with the abovementioned policies of the Thurrock Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development 2015.

II. DESIGN AND LAYOUT AND IMPACT UPON THE AREA

- 1.21 The proposed extension would be a small addition in comparison to the scale of the existing building. The development would be subservient and of a simplistic design that does not compete with the architecture or form of the existing building. The proposal would not appear excessive in terms of size in relation to the existing building, the plot or the locality.
- 1.22 The external materials of the extension would be render rather than brickwork to match the existing building. It is considered that it would not be unusual for subservient, later additions to feature alternative materials to emphasise their subservience and in this case it is considered that the use of render would be of sufficiently high quality to add visual interest as a result of it contrasting with the existing building. The use of this material would also avoid the difficulty of trying to match bricks that are of considerable age and, as such, there would inevitably be a visual contrast.
- 1.23 The extension of the emergency staircase would be a noticeable feature of the development, particularly when viewed from Cart Lane. The details of the means of enclosure of the staircase have not been fully detailed and it is known that they will be developed further at the point of construction. It is considered appropriate in this case to require details of the amended staircase to be submitted and agreed prior to its installation in the interests of visual amenity. However, given the functional role of the rear elevation and the rear of the surrounding buildings that are visible from the application site and Cart Lane, it is considered that the extension of the staircase can be found visually acceptable in this location.
- 1.24 For these reasons set out above, it is considered that the proposal would have an acceptable effect on the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would, therefore, accord with Policies CSTP22, CSTP23 and PMD2 of the Thurrock Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development 2015, the abovementioned Design Strategy SPD and the NPPF.

III. TRAFFIC IMPACT, ACCESS AND CAR PARKING

- 1.25 The proposal would result in the loss of a small section of the land at the rear of the site that is currently used for parking. As a result, the applicant has provided a plan which clarifies that 3 parking spaces would be lost, with 13 spaces being retained.

- 1.26 Given the town centre location and the proximity to public car parks and sustainable public transport options, it is considered that this minor parking reduction can be found acceptable and should not be a reason to refuse the application. The proposal would not increase parking demand at the site to an extent that would lead to the parking provisions being unacceptable and the means of access into the site and the manoeuvrability within the site would not be affected by the proposal.
- 1.27 For these reasons, it is considered that the highways, access and parking arrangements in respect of the proposed development are acceptable and, therefore, the proposal accords with Policies CSTP15, PMD8 and PMD9 of Thurrock Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development 2015 and the NPPF.

IV. EFFECT ON NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES

- 1.28 Surrounding properties are distant from the single storey proposal and, as such, the proposals would not affect the living conditions of any nearby residents in a manner that would justify the refusal of the application. The proposal would, therefore, accord with Policy PMD1 of the Thurrock Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development 2015 and the NPPF.

V. OTHER MATTERS

- 1.29 The site is located within a high risk Flood Zone but falls beneath the size of development that requires the development to pass the sequential or exceptions tests. In any case, due to the association with the primary use of the application site, it is considered that there is no other location that the development could occur and the social and economic sustainability benefits of the proposal would outweigh any potential flood risk concerns. A Flood Risk Assessment has been provided which demonstrates that measures would be incorporated to mitigate or minimise any flood risks. As the building would be positioned on an area of existing hardstanding, it is not considered that flood risk would increase elsewhere. However, as requested by the Council's Emergency Planner, it is considered reasonable to impose a condition relating to the preparation of a Flood Warning and Evacuation Plan.

1.30 CONCLUSIONS AND REASONS FOR APPROVAL

- 1.31 There are no in-principle land use objections to the proposals. The proposal would provide a benefit to those seeking further training provision in the Borough. The development would not result in any unacceptable impacts with

respect to design, appearance, character, retail vitality and viability, flood risk or highway matters. The application is recommended favourably to Members.

1.32 RECOMMENDATION

1.33 Approve, subject to the following conditions:

Standard Time Limit

- 1 The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91(1) of The Town & Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Approved Plans

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

Plan Number(s):		
Reference	Name	Received
N/A	Location Plan	04/10/2021
2021/INSPIRE/0314/01 A	Proposed Ground Floor Plan	29/05/2022
2021/INSPIRE/0314/02	Existing Ground Floor Plan	04/10/2021
2021/INSPIRE/0314/03 B	Existing and Proposed Elevations	29/05/2022
2022/INSPIRE/0314/04	Car Parking Layout	29/05/2022

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure the development accords with the approved plans with regard to policies PMD1 and PMD2 of the adopted Thurrock LDF Core Strategy and Policies for the Management of Development [2015].

Flood Warning and Evacuation Plan.

- 3 Prior to the first use of the extension hereby approved a Flood Warning and Evacuation Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the building shall subsequently be managed in accordance with the approved Flood Warning and Evacuation Plan.

Reason: To ensure that any potential flood risk at the site is mitigated in accordance with Policies CSTP27 and PMD15 of the Thurrock Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development 2015.

Emergency Staircase

- 4 Prior to its installation at the site, full details of the design and means of enclosure of the external emergency staircase hereby approved shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall subsequently only be undertaken in full accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and in accordance with Policies CSTP22 and PMD2 of the Thurrock Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development 2015 and the NPPF.

Materials

- 5 The development shall be undertaken using the materials specified within the details that have accompanied the application hereby approved.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and in accordance with Policies CSTP22 and PMD2 of the Thurrock Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development 2015 and the NPPF.

Informatives:

Positive and Proactive Statement

1. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application and as a result, the Local Planning Authority has been able to grant planning permission for an acceptable proposal, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Cadent Gas Ltd

2. The Applicant's attention is drawn to the response received from Cadent Gas Ltd dated 26th January 2022 which advised the following: *Cadent Gas Ltd own and operate the gas infrastructure within the area of your development. There may be a legal interest (easements and other rights) in the land that restrict activity in proximity to Cadent assets in private land. The applicant must ensure that the proposed works do not infringe on legal rights of access and or restrictive covenants that exist. If buildings or*

structures are proposed directly above the apparatus the development may only take place following diversion of the apparatus. The applicant should apply online to have apparatus diverted in advance of any works, by visiting cadentgas.com/diversions. Prior to carrying out works, including the construction of access points, please register on www.linesearchbeforeudig.co.uk to submit details of the planned works for review, ensuring requirements are adhered to.

Documents:

All background documents including application forms, drawings and other supporting documentation relating to this application can be viewed online: <http://regs.thurrock.gov.uk/online-applications>

