HIGHAM ON THE HILL C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

PROPOSED GAZEBO

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

JULY 2009

Overview

Higham-on-the-Hill Church of England Primary School is situated in Main Street, Higham-on-the-Hill. The school buildings are centrally located within the grounds with a playground and staff car park to the front and playing fields to both sides of the school complex. To the rear of the school buildings is a Community Centre building which is used by the school and the local community and is also the home for a thriving Pre-School unit. The school has 50 pupils currently on roll in 3 classes.

Proposal

The proposal is to construct a gazebo within the grounds on one of the playing fields to provide a sheltered area for pupils to use all year round to both extend the learning environment beyond the classroom and also facilitate non-weather-dependant outdoor play. The gazebo will be used throughout the day by pupils to enable them to make full use of the space around them.

Why is the gazebo required?

At present, there is no other area within the school grounds where all pupils are able to learn and play on days of inclement weather. On wet days the pupils simply have to stay inside and on very sunny days there is little or no other shade offered around the grounds and the gazebo would reduce the likely exposure of the pupils to the harmful effects of strong sunlight. The gazebo will enable pupils to benefit from being able to maximise the outdoor areas of the grounds in all weathers and enrich their outdoor experience. To fulfil the Early Years Foundation Stage, the gazebo will allow children to have constant access to an outdoor area, ensuring they have opportunities to be outside on a daily basis all year round.

Effects of the Development?

The gazebo will not affect any of the surrounding vegetation or trees. A small area of one of the large playing fields will be taken up by the gazebo but this is in the least used field to the west of the school buildings (with athletics, football and the like taking place on the main playing field to the east of the school buildings) and the provision of this gazebo will encourage further use of this area of the grounds rather than diminish it.

Gazebo Construction

The gazebo will be an octagonal shaped timber structure measuring 5m in diameter and approximately 3.13m high. All timber used shall be pre-treated but not stained. Suitable concrete footings shall be provided to support the structure on 8 posts with 900mm high balustrading creating 7 side "walls". The balustrading shall be capped with timber capping to provide a safe top edge. The remaining "side" of the gazebo shall remain open to provide access. The roof shall be constructed of ship-lap style timber on 125x50mm rafters. Flooring shall comprise of 125x50mm decking on suitable grounds and joists. Timber steps will lead from the gazebo to the level of the playing field.

Planning Policy

The proposed scheme has been produced with reference to and in accordance with Planning Policies, Local Plans and the Local Development Framework and in particular the following :-

1. Policy BE1 – Design and Siting of Development

   The proposed gazebo has been designed to both enhance and compliment the character of its surroundings.

2. Policy BE7 – Development in Conservation Areas

   The school is located within the conservation area of Higham-on-the-Hill and the proposed gazebo has been designed and positioned having given due consideration to this status. The proposed development will not have any detrimental impact on the character of the school or its immediate surroundings nor will it have any negative affect on the character of the conservation area generally.

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Tree Survey

A tree survey has been undertaken by the Forestry team of Leicestershire County Council specifically for this proposal and the location of the gazebo fully takes into account the findings of the survey. The gazebo does not interfere with or impact on any of the trees or root protection areas detailed within the report.

This proposal also reflects recent consultative discussions and a pre-application meeting held with a LCC Planning Officer.

Summary

This proposal will provide a really useful external area which will be used for both educational and recreational purposes. It will help the school towards implementing the National Curriculum whilst at the same time providing a safer environment for the pupils to shelter from the vagaries of the British weather. The gazebo is to be located within the school grounds on the least used playing fields adjacent to outdoor play equipment. It is not considered that there will be any detrimental effect to any of the residents occupying adjacent areas.

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