

REPORT TO THE WESTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	06.10.2010		
Application Number	W/10/02168/FUL		
Site Address	Keevil Church Of England Primary School Main Street Keevil Wiltshire BA14 6LU		
Proposal	Proposed bus pull in		
Applicant	School Governors		
Town/Parish Council	Keevil		
Electoral Division	Summerham And Seend	Unitary Member:	Jonathon Seed
Grid Ref	391809 158079		
Type of application	Full Plan		
Case Officer	Mr David Cox	01225 770344 Ext 5244	

Reason for the application being considered by Committee

Councillor Seed has requested that this item be determined by Committee due to:

* parking

1. Purpose of Report

To consider the above application and to recommend that planning permission be refused.

Neighbourhood Responses

1 letter of support received

Parish/Town/City Council response

Support the application.

2. Main Issues

The main issues to consider in this application are the planning history of the site and the impact on highway safety.

3. Site Description

Keevil primary school is located within the Conservation Area of Keevil and is on the south side of the road within the setting of a Grade I Listed Building (Talboys). The buildings which make up the school site are predominately single storey with some two storey buildings. The buildings form a L-shape around the playground which is set behind a stone boundary wall which forms the front boundary. Between the boundary wall and the road is the grass verge which varies in height to the road.

4. Relevant Planning History

07/01364/FUL -Proposed parking area adjacent highway – Refused.

W/10/00597/FUL - Proposed grasscrete block parking area on the verge of the North East School boundary -Refused

5. Proposal

The proposal involves digging out the grass verge and laying grasscrete blocks to form the hard standing for the bus pull in. The parking area would be approximately 24 metres long by 4.5 metres deep at its widest points. There would be four 1 metre high timber bollards, with two at each end of the pull in.

There is a telegraph pole and its strainers on the grass verge (but immediately adjacent to the boundary wall) which are proposed to remain.

The proposal differs from the previous W/10/00597/FUL application in that it is intended for only the school bus to use the pull in.

Additional plans have been received to illustrate the swept path of a bus pulling in and out of the pull in.

6. Planning Policy

The following policies are considered relevant to this proposal including PPGs.

West Wiltshire District Plan First Alteration 2004
CF1 - General Community Facilities
C31a - Design
C38 - Nuisance

7. Consultations

Keevil Parish Council – Support

Highways Officer – Objection

In relation to the additional plans submitted and the site meeting on the 27 August, I confirm that the strongly held position of this Highways Authority is as follows:

- The bollards at either end of the parking area, do not alleviate the concern over child and vehicle conflict and to some extent make the situation worse, as children will not be stopped by the bollards and the bollards also make manoeuvring more difficult for vehicles.
- The creation of a parking area immediately outside of the school, encourages parking near to a school entrance, at the detriment to the safety of the children attending the school.
- The said area of land to be constructed as a parking area for the school bus is public highway. This means that restrictions to stop other vehicles other than the school bus from parking would be ineffective and this could therefore lead to additional vehicles parking closer to the school entrance, creating further safety concerns.
- As the swept path analysis suggests, the bus will pull off the carriageway onto the proposed parking area. This will allow enough space for vehicles to park on the opposite side of the road, alighting any passengers (e.g. school children) into the carriageway, due to the presence of a bank.
- The proposed grasscrete surface would quickly deteriorate due to heavy buses pulling in and manoeuvring at slow speeds. Any future damage and the general maintenance of this area would be at the cost of the Highways Authority.

- Visibility at the Church Street junction with Main Street would be obstructed in the Northerly direction by any vehicle or vehicles, parking in this uncontrolled bay at any time of the day and night. Pedestrians, including children, would also suffer from lack of visibility.
- The proper method of implementing new/ amended travel arrangements to and from a school, should be dealt with via the School Travel Plan process, where a full highway assessment can be made.

Due to the above reasons, the Highways Authority has very strong reservations about the safety of school children and other road users, should this proposal be implemented.

Conservation Officer (in W/10/00597/FUL) application – No objection

8. Publicity

The application was advertised by site notice and neighbour consultation.

1 letter of support received

Summary of key relevant points raised:

- Church Lane and Main street become heavily congested at school opening and closing time with buses and parents cars. This sometimes makes it difficult to get out of our road (Church Lane).
- The grass verge is wide enough and should be utilised as a bus parking area to leave more cars to pass each other.

9. Planning Considerations

Planning history of the site:

The proposed parking area has twice been refused under delegated powers. The first application 07/01364/FUL was refused on highway safety and harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The 10/00597/FUL application was only refused on highways grounds. This means that as this application is very similar to that previously proposed only highways issues can be considered as reasons for refusal.

Impact on highway safety:

Policy CF1 of the District Plan states that proposals for the development of land for schools will be permitted provided the proposals are acceptable having regard to highway considerations. The Councils Highways Officer has raised strong objection to the proposal and also attended an on-site meeting to discuss the concerns with key stakeholders.

One of the main issues is that the proposed bus pull is part of the highway which means that buses will not have exclusive use. In order to make this pull in 'car free' would require a Traffic Order which can be an expensive and time consuming exercise for the applicants. This would encourage cars to use the pull in and encourage parking close to the pull in and the school entrance to the detriment of highway and pedestrian safety. The bollards will do little to improve pedestrian safety.

The bus swept path plan illustrates that the bus will require approximately 9 metres of road at either end of the verge to be able to pull out. What the swept path does not account for is cars that will be parked on this side of the road on the approach to the pull in. Additionally once a bus is in the pull in, this will create space for cars to park on the opposite side of the road. Pedestrians would then have to alight on the road side of the car as there is a bank on the other side. This would potentially cause further obstructions to vehicular traffic and reduce pedestrian safety.

Visibility at the Church Street junction with Main Street would be obstructed in the Northerly direction by any vehicle or vehicles, parking in this uncontrolled bay at any time of the day and night.

It is acknowledged that during drop off and pick up times, the road can become very congested with school traffic but also passing through journeys. However, road safety is paramount and the Councils Highways Officer has commented that the proposed bus pull in will not improve road safety and could make it worse. It has been noted that in order to full address the highway issues the school faces is to produce a school travel plan.

10. Conclusion

The proposed bus pull in would encourage vehicle parking close to the school entrance and will increase the danger for pedestrians entering and leaving the school. The parking area cannot be restricted to the use of the school bus only and would also encourage unsustainable methods of travelling to the school and this issue should be addressed in a school travel plan.

11. Recommendation

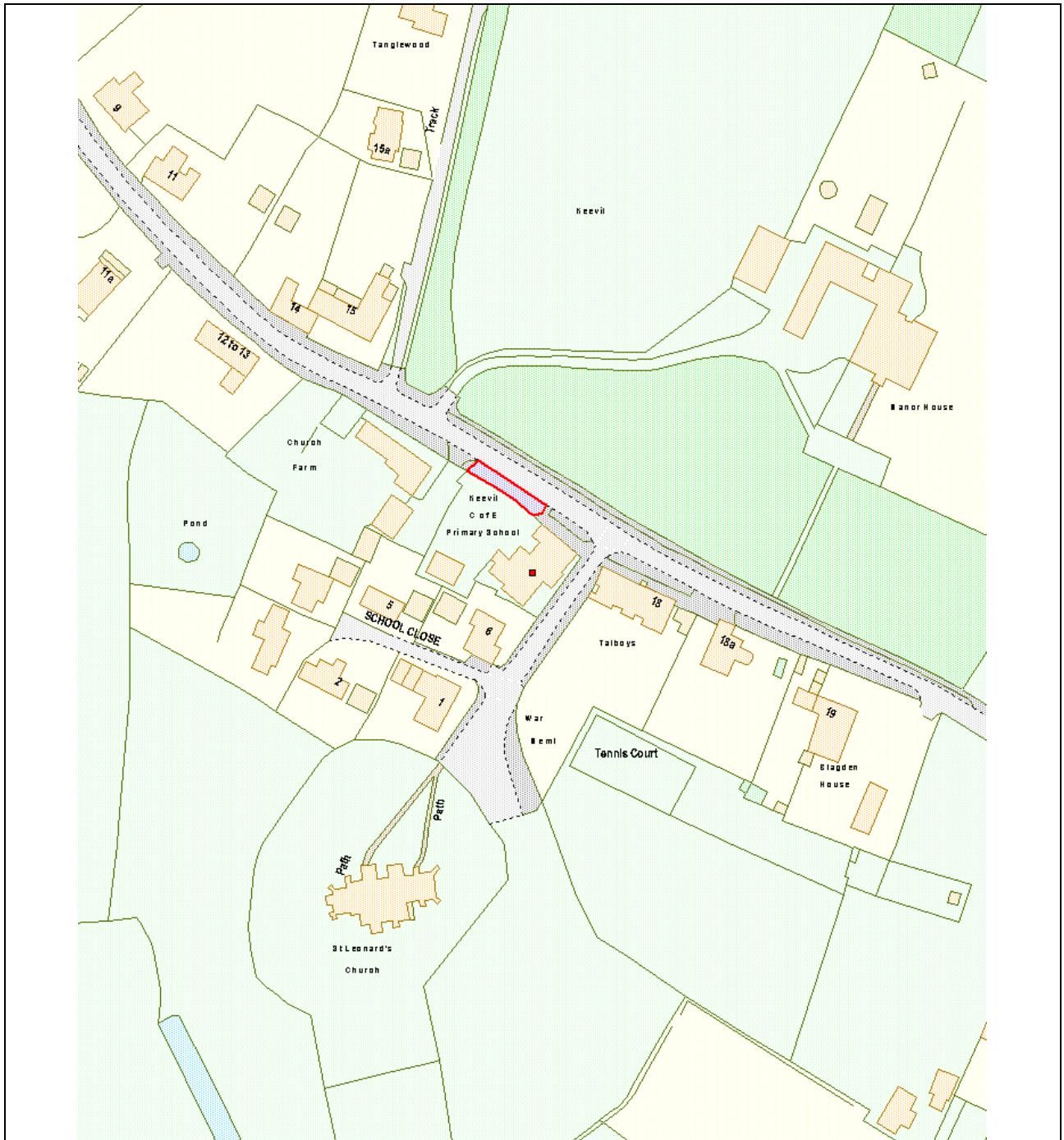
Planning Permission be REFUSED for the following reason:

Recommendation: Refusal

For the following reason(s):

- 1 The proposal would result in the encouragement of vehicle parking close to a school entrance which will increase the danger for pedestrians entering and leaving the school. The parking area cannot be restricted to the use of the school bus only and would also encourage unsustainable methods of travelling to the school and would also affect highway visibility at the junction of Church Street and Main Street. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Policy CF1 of the West Wiltshire District Plan 1st Alteration 2004.

Appendices:	
Background Documents Used in the Preparation of this Report:	



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