

Matters Specified in Conditions application made under Condition 1 of planning permission in principle 1012/P/05 to vary Adopted Masterplan Blocks CC, EE, FF and HH to identify land for new primary school, relocate (in part) proposed neighbourhood centre and rationalise Block boundaries.



APRIL 2022

Introduction

A Matters Specified in Conditions (MSC) application has been lodged, under terms of Condition 1 of planning permission in principle 1012/P/05 by Winchburgh Developments Limited to amend the masterplan for the strategic expansion of Winchburgh consented as part of that planning permission.

The effect of the application is to modify the masterplan such that –

- A new site for a new non-denominational primary school is identified in the northwest corner of masterplan Development Block HH (currently identified for mixed use development (reference HH6)) southwest of the B9080.
- The built element of the Hawkhill Neighbourhood Centre, currently shown within Block FF of the adopted masterplan north of the B9080, is relocated to the northern part of Block HH and is co-located with the new primary school campus adjacent to and sharing access from, the B9080 to the north.
- Blocks EE and FF are amended and slightly extended such that the current location of the built element of the Neighbourhood Centre becomes a mixed-use development area in line with the rest of those Blocks and to balance the provision of Neighbourhood Centre open space now provided within Block HH.
- Block CC is extended slightly to rationalise its boundary with existing features on the ground.

The justification for the proposed changes above arises, primarily from the need to identify a suitable site large enough to accommodate the next non-denominational primary school required to support the ongoing expansion of Winchburgh and is set out in detail below.

Education

The strategic expansion of Winchburgh requires new primary school provision to accommodate the pupil product arising from the growth of the settlement. The planning permission in principle requires that this must be provided in phase with development.

The original Adopted Masterplan showed locations for new primary school provision at Blocks E and BB with additional provision to be located within the Hawkhill area if required as well as expansion to the existing school estate.

The delivery of additional schools in Winchburgh has diverged from the original plans with the delivery of a new denominational primary school (due to open August 2022) as part of an expanded schools' campus at Block L to the west of the village. This has the effect of "freeing up" space within the expanded Winchburgh Primary School in the centre of the village for non-denominational pupils.

Due to the rate of housing growth within Winchburgh, West Lothian Council, as education

authority, has confirmed that the next non-denominational primary school will require to be opened in 2024 / 2025.

It has been agreed that the Block BB site, originally proposed as a new primary school site, is too small for updated school estate requirements. The use of this Block was then varied by permission from the Council within the context of the planning permission in principle and will now deliver eighty-one affordable housing units.

The responsibility lies with Winchburgh Developments Limited to identify a suitable alternative site of a size capable of accommodating a new non-denominational primary school within the village. Block T (northeast of the town centre) was considered but rejected again on grounds of size and surrounding constraints of the rail line, canal and gas pipeline that passes through Winchburgh.

The northwest corner of Masterplan Block HH (reference HH6) has now been identified by Winchburgh Developments Limited to the east of the village for the location of the new non-denominational primary school required by 2024 / 2025. This is currently a mixed-use development block within the amended Winchburgh masterplan. The proposed site of the school has been the subject of a Design Brief prepared by OPEN on behalf of Winchburgh Developments Limited. This has been discussed and agreed in principle with West Lothian Council education, planning and property officers and is included as part of this submission.

The proposed Block HH primary school site has a number of benefits for the wider expansion of the village as set out below.

There is sufficient land available at Block HH to accommodate a two-stream primary school.

Block E to the west of the village, currently identified for education use but with a site area of only 1.6 hectares, is considered too small to accommodate a two-stream primary school. A separate application is to be submitted to change the land use designation of Block E to residential.

From a land use planning perspective, the delivery of a new non-denominational primary school at Block HH would spatially balance education delivery across the expanded village with the new denominational primary school at the west, Winchburgh primary school in the centre and the new non-denominational primary school to the east of the expanded village.

The new non-denominational primary school will interact directly with the neighbourhood park to be delivered at Hawkhill by Winchburgh Developments Limited as shown on the Adopted Masterplan to the south. It will be safely accessed by active travel means via the proposed park from the B9080 as well as from safe crossing points on the B9080 to the north.

The purpose of this application is, solely, to establish the change of use of the land itself. The general arrangement plan shows how a new primary school footprint could fit on the site to prove that it is large enough to do so. Detailed delivery mechanisms and layouts for the new primary school would be set out in a separate application for the development of the site subject to approval for the change of use proposed by this application.

Hawkhill Neighbourhood Centre

In addition to the identification of Block HH6 for a new non-denominational primary school, the MSC application also seeks to relocate the built element of the Hawkhill Neighbourhood Centre currently proposed north of the B9080 within Block FF (Adopted Masterplan (as amended) page 151 Figure 8.73 and supporting text). This would co-locate the built element of the neighbourhood centre (plus open space) with the proposed non-denominational primary school site on the south side of the B9080. The existing Block EE and FF boundaries would be extended to compensate for open space provision in Block HH and to identify them for mixed use development in line with the rest of those Blocks. The net effect is that the overall area of open space proposed for the Hawkhill Neighbourhood Centre would remain unchanged from the existing Adopted Masterplan.

Again, the purpose of this application is, solely, to establish the change of use of the land itself. The submitted general arrangement plan shows how the neighbourhood centre could be co-located with the non-denominational primary school on the south side of the B9080 and safely accessed via that. Block layout details are shown for indicative purposes only to provide a context for the primary school and neighbourhood centre land. These will be the subject of separate detailed applications in the future.

The main vehicular access for both the new primary school and neighbourhood centre would be via a shared traffic calmed road access directly from the B9080.

From a land use planning, accessibility and safety perspective it is a logical step to co-locate these uses on the same side of the B9080 and prevent the need to cross that road from one to access the other.

The net effect of the above would be to create a sustainable and accessible mixed-use education, open space and commercial neighbourhood hub to the south of the B9080 to serve the eastern portion of the expanded village.

Blocks CC, EE and FF

The areas within Block EE/FF, currently identified for the neighbourhood centre, will now deliver mixed-use development in line with the rest of the Block and the boundaries of these Blocks extended accordingly. The Block CC boundary is extended slightly to rationalise it with existing features on the ground.

Proposed Masterplan Wording Changes

It is proposed to change the supporting text for paragraph 8.73 of the Adopted Masterplan to read as follows –

This neighbourhood centre will be the main gateway and arrival into Winchburgh from Kirkliston. The core road must go “through” the space and the non-residential uses within the local hub should only be permitted in the northern area of Block HH facing open space. Uses could include a local shop, pub / restaurant and a community / civic building. The village green itself should be a mix of mown and wild green open spaces and “hook” into the existing woodland on its eastern edge and the proposed path along that boundary.

The stone walls (with square coping stones) are a strong characteristic of this part of the site and must be retained. Where the new core roads and village green break the walls, they must be reused and extended to define the edges of the village green to create a strong local identity. In Block FF the walls must define the outer edge of the village green. In Blocks EE and HH the walls must define the inner edge of the space. The primary frontages in Block HH must be part of the town’s overall character and buildings, potentially terraced along these edges, must be linked by walls and should be positioned hard up to the back edge of the pavement with a few having a small set-back for variety. A small parking area should be integrated with the space in front of the non-residential buildings.

Buildings along the primary frontage in Block HH must include gable and side elevations linked by the stone wall defining the village green with vehicular access taken from within the development block. In Block EE, the housing along the secondary frontage facing the green must also be linked by walls. Private drives could serve the front side of houses in this location (but remain concealed behind the main wall surrounding the green) with access taken from residential streets to the rear.