

Northfield and Willowbrae Community Council



Head of Planning and Building Standards,
Services for Communities,
The City of Edinburgh Council
Waverley Court, Level C5,
4 East Market Street,
Edinburgh
EH8 8BG

2 Hamilton Terrace
Edinburgh
EH15 1NB

22 February 2015

Dear Sir

PLANNING PERMISSION: PREFABRICATED BUILDING TO REAR OF EXISTING BUILDING,
59 NORTHFIELD BROADWAY, EDINBURGH, EH8 7RX REF 15/00316/FUL

1. I refer to this application, which is a revised application following the refusal of application: 14/03661/FUL. Having considered both applications, the Community Council wishes to comment on the application.

General Considerations

2. In examining developments proposed in the Northfield and Willowbrae area, the Community Council seeks to promote the interests of the local economy, environment and the overall contribution to the strength of the community. There are relatively few developments which may bring jobs and growth so when one such as this appears it gives us pause.

3. Equally, it is an area with relatively few buildings of architectural or historic merit and where these exist they are often under severe threat from neighbouring developments of mediocre quality or worse. We have an ambition that our community should protect and enhance our built environment.

The Present Application

4. We note that an application last year for a portacabin was deemed not to require permission – so that could be installed immediately. We were concerned about the previous application but assumed that as the site was within the curtilage of a conspicuous B-listed building the Council would not approve development which was a threat to the small pocket of high-quality building. We supported the Council's decision to refuse the

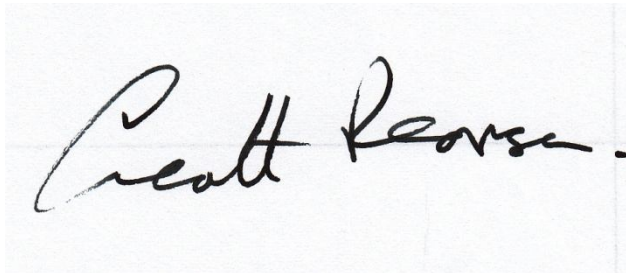
application. In so doing, we were conscious that the Royal High School Primary site was already under an appalling shadow from the Morrisons/Safeway development to which, today, we would have mounted significant objection. In our discussions, we noted the growing “shanty town” look of the overall area and are considering what we can do to halt the decline.

5. The arrival of the present application increased our concerns as the applicant prays in support of the application the current degradation caused by the portacabin in the school playground. However, there is a difference between precedent and two wrongs making a right. Just because unsatisfactory development has been permitted in the past, that does not justify continued erosion of one of the few B-listed buildings in the area. We are very concerned that this development may put at risk its listed building status. If that happened, it would be open to the owners, Morrisons, (who paid a lot of money for the building) to demolish and sell with little likelihood that a future development would be as welcome as the nursery.

6. We have also considered the nursery itself. It is a fairly new and expanding business, has a good report from the Care Inspectorate and is deserving of support. We are doubtful of the merits of the proposed building for the present purpose as it seems to lack daylight and looks awkward from a fire safety point of view. However, the nursery is the perfect use for the building and unlikely to be bettered.

7. On balance we support the application unless the listed building status is threatened in which case we object.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink on a white background. The signature reads "Geoff Pearson" in a cursive, slightly slanted script. The first letter 'G' is large and loops around. The name is followed by a period.

Geoff Pearson
Secretary