

## **St Hilda's CE Primary School, Whittaker Lane, Prestwich Manchester M25 1HA**

**Replacement of existing external canopy with a new larger canopy and replacement of existing detached teaching room with a new larger detached teaching room.**

### **Planning Statement**

#### **1. Introduction**

This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of an application for proposed works at St Hilda's CE Primary School, Whittaker Lane, Prestwich Manchester M25 1HA

. The proposals comprise:

- The removal and replacement of an existing external garden room
- The removal and replacement of an existing external canopy
- Associated repairs to soft play surfacing.

The proposed development is intended to improve the quality, functionality, and year-round usability of existing external teaching and play spaces, supporting the educational and welfare needs of the school's pupils, particularly those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

#### **2. Site and Context**

St Hilda's is a one form entry primary school serving the local community. The site accommodates the main school building with associated play areas and external teaching facilities. The school site is well-established within a predominantly residential setting and is bounded by railings and masonry walls.

The existing external teaching room is a lightweight timber structure with a single-skin construction and large polycarbonate single-glazed windows. The building is unheated and suffers from poor thermal performance, rendering it unsuitable for use during colder months. In addition, the existing early years canopy is a timber-framed structure with corrugated PVC roof sheets, which is now in a deteriorated condition and offers limited weather protection.

#### **3. Description of Proposed Development**

The proposed works include:

- **Replacement of External Teaching Room:**  
The existing external teaching room will be removed and replaced with a new, modern 'garden room' structure designed to meet current Building Regulations, including required U-values for thermal performance. The new building will be heated and fully insulated, providing a comfortable, year-round teaching and intervention space.

The internal footprint will increase modestly from approximately 13.5m<sup>2</sup> to 18m<sup>2</sup>, providing a more flexible and functional environment suitable for small group work and specialist interventions.

- **Replacement of Existing Canopy:**

The existing early years canopy will be replaced with a new powder-coated steel frame structure with durable polycarbonate roofing. The new canopy will be slightly larger than the existing structure and reconfigured to provide effective weather protection, including coverage of the stepped entrance to the reception classroom.

This improvement will enhance the safety and accessibility of the early years' outdoor area and provide a sheltered space that can be used throughout the year.

- **Associated Works:**

Repair works to the soft play surfacing will be undertaken as part of the development to ensure safe and even play conditions following the completion of building works and to provide level access into the new teaching room.

#### **4. Justification and Need**

The school has identified a clear and pressing need for the proposed improvements. The percentage of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) is above the national average, and there has been a marked increase in pupils requiring specialist support, particularly within Early Years and Key Stage 1.

The current external teaching room is used primarily for small group work, role play and intervention sessions for pupils with additional needs. However, the structure is unheated, damp, and poorly insulated, resulting in an uncomfortable learning environment and damage to educational resources. In warmer months, the space becomes excessively hot, further limiting its usability.

The proposed replacement teaching room will provide a warm, dry, and compliant environment where targeted support can be delivered effectively. The modest increase in floor area is essential to allow flexible small group teaching and the accommodation of specialist resources.

Alternative options, including constructing an extension to the main school building, were explored. However, this was deemed impractical due to the changes in levels, the presence of ramps and steps serving the main school and the potential for an extension to restrict daylight to the adjacent Year 1 classroom. A standalone replacement unit is therefore the most appropriate and least disruptive solution.

#### **5. Design and Appearance**

The proposed replacement structures have been designed to be sympathetic to the existing school setting in terms of scale, form, and materials.

- The new garden room will be of a modest single-storey design, constructed with high-quality, durable materials that ensure longevity and energy efficiency.
- The replacement canopy will have a contemporary but complementary appearance, using powder-coated steel and polycarbonate roofing to ensure durability and low maintenance, while enhancing visual cohesion within the early years area.

The proposals will have no adverse visual impact on the surrounding area, being located within the enclosed school grounds and screened from public view.

## **6. Planning Policy Considerations**

The proposed development aligns with the key objectives of national and local planning policy, including:

- **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021):**
  - Promoting high-quality design (Section 12)
  - Supporting strong, vibrant communities and providing accessible services (Section 8)
  - Ensuring that developments meet the needs of schools and educational facilities (Paragraph 95)
- **Local Plan Policies:**

The proposals are consistent with local planning policies supporting the improvement and expansion of educational facilities and the provision of inclusive learning environments.

The development constitutes a minor improvement to existing school facilities and will have no adverse impact on neighbouring properties, the character of the area, or local infrastructure.

## **7. Conclusion**

The proposed replacement of the external teaching room and canopy at St Hilda's represents a proportionate, well-considered improvement to the existing educational facilities.

The development will:

- Enhance the quality, comfort, and usability of teaching spaces;
- Provide a much-needed resource for SEND and early years pupils;
- Improve accessibility and weather protection for pupils and staff; and
- Deliver durable, energy-efficient structures that contribute positively to the school environment.

The proposals are modest in scale, visually appropriate to their setting, and fully in keeping with relevant planning policy objectives.

It is therefore respectfully requested that planning permission be granted for the proposed works.