

**D'AUVERGNE PLAYING FIELD (FORMER J.C.G. PLAYING FIELD), LA POUQUELAYE, ST. HELIER -
DEVELOPMENT IN THE GREEN ZONE**

**Lodged au Greffe on 17th July 2001
by the Planning and Environment Committee**



STATES OF JERSEY

STATES GREFFE

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PROPOSITION

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion -

to support the intention of the Planning and Environment Committee to grant permission for the development of a two-storey building to create a 30-place nursery and a two-form entry primary school, together with ancillary areas, on the d'Auvergne Playing Fields, La Pouquelaye, St. Helier, the land being situated within an area designated as Green Zone on the Island Map, as amended 1-87.

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

REPORT

Introduction

This report proposes that an exception be made to the Green Zone policy of the Island Plan which will allow the development of a two-storey building for a 30-place nursery and a two-form entry primary school with a total of 14 classrooms and ancillary areas. Also included are hard and soft play areas and car parking for 43 cars for the school and 35 cars for the Badminton Hall.

The site

The proposal relates to the D'Auvergne Playing Field (the former Jersey College for Girls Playing Field) which is located on the eastern side of La Pouquelaye. The site is broadly flat and is currently laid out as a grassed playing field with four hard-surfaced tennis courts and an access road along the southern boundary, which leads to the Badminton Hall.

The total site area of the D'Auvergne Playing Field is $9\frac{3}{4}$ vergées, and the proposed building will be constructed at the eastern end of the site and occupy an approximate area of $4\frac{3}{4}$ vergées as shown on drawing No. 658/01.

Background

The existing single-form entry primary school has a number of problems, which cannot be resolved on the existing site. These problems are -

- lack of internal and external space;
- school buildings need refurbishment;
- traffic congestion in surrounding residential streets;
- disruption to existing primary school during construction.

Alternatives considered

In responding to the Education Committee's request to relocate the school to the D'Auvergne site, the Planning and Environment Committee explored other possible sites in the surrounding area of La Pouquelaye. Those sites were rejected because of inappropriate access or they were considered too remote from the main residential area of La Pouquelaye.

Accordingly the Committee decided that the relocation to the D'Auvergne site offered the best solution for a number of reasons.

Benefits of relocating to D'Auvergne Playing Field

The following benefits can be achieved by relocating the school to the former D'Auvergne Playing Field site -

- sufficient space to develop a two-form entry primary school;
- no disruption to existing primary school during construction;
- resolves traffic congestion in surrounding residential streets;
- good vehicle access;
- adequate on-site parking for the new school and the Badminton Hall;
- potential of shared use of parking area with Badminton Hall;
- retains at least half of the site for playing field open space;
- introduces new landscaping;

- opportunity to redevelop existing primary school site for housing and public open space;
- opportunity to create public footpath link to Vallée des Vaux;
- the site is in public ownership;
- the Education Committee are of the view that there are sufficient courts elsewhere in the Island to service the needs of these users.

Objections

The Planning and Environment Committee has received three letters of objection in relation to the application, and the general points in those letters may be summarised as follows -

- (1) The land lies within the Green Zone.
- (2) The D'Auvergne Playing Field provides a safe place for children to play and it would be a shame to lose this green space within such a heavily built-up area.
- (3) The parking for the Badminton Hall was originally designed on the south side of the site. This application shows the car parking to be much closer to the properties to the north. This will increase levels of noise and fumes, particularly in the evenings.
- (4) The grounds of the school could become a haven for young people gathering and potential vandalism.

The concerns of the nearby residents were noted and the proposals reflect the Committee's efforts to respond to those concerns. It is considered that the size of the buildings and the disturbance to residents will be mitigated by sensitive and thoughtful design. In terms of the play area, the Education Committee has undertaken to provide even better facilities for local children. The parking areas will be carefully designed to minimise disturbance to residents.

Planning issues

The existing primary school was designed to accommodate 200 pupils; it currently has a roll of 220 pupils.

The existing school site is within the built up area and would lend itself to category 'A' housing development, providing the equivalent of approximately ten three-bedroom dwellings and an area of public open space of about one vergée (½ acre). The site might also be able to be linked to the adjacent land-locked site, and achieve additional units and more open space.

In addition, the problem of traffic congestion, which occurs within the surrounding residential streets at school pick-up time, would be eliminated.

The proposed school site can accommodate a two-storey building consisting of a 30-place nursery and a two-form entry primary school with a total of 14 classrooms. This will provide for 350 pupils. In addition it would retain a junior size playing field and sufficient playground space.

It is proposed that the school buildings will be set well back from La Pouquelaye road, near to the existing badminton hall, ensuring that the visual amenity across the D'Auvergne Playing Field is largely maintained.

Particular care will be given to the design of the building, with particular attention being given to materials and colour. In addition, new landscaping will help to minimise the impact on neighbouring properties

The Education Committee acknowledges that the removal of the tennis courts will be a loss of a facility. It is recognised that these courts are of low quality, and the view of the Education Committee is that there are sufficient courts elsewhere in the Island to service the needs of any existing users.

Traffic impact

The impact of traffic has been considered by the Public Services Highway Engineers, particularly as the catchment area has been enlarged to include approximately 150 new homes being constructed on the waterfront. It is likely that many pupils will travel to and from the school by car.

It is intended that the section of La Pouquelaye road adjacent to the proposed school will be widened to accommodate two-way traffic.

In addition, safe pedestrian access will be provided, away from vehicle access, with the footpath and drop-off areas leading directly to the school entrance. A crossing patrol will be provided, together with the necessary warning lights at the main road entrance to the proposed school. Footways exist along all roads approaching the school.

Conclusion

The development of the new La Pouquelaye school offers an effective use of a publicly-owned site to establish additional capacity in a town primary school. The developments will not only provide a school, but also enhanced informal recreational facilities for the children who live in the area, and will retain much of the important open space for the community. The traffic problems associated with the existing school will be removed, and the new site offers much improved accessibility for both pedestrians and vehicles. The existing school site is capable of providing a small number of residential units and public open space.

Financial and manpower implications

Subject to the capital costs of the development being within budget, this proposition has no financial implications for the States.

This proposition has no manpower implications for the States.

