

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE
05 September 2013

Item No: 13

<u>UPRN</u>	<u>APPLICATION NO.</u>	<u>DATE VALID</u>
	13/P1130	24/05/2013
Address:	Poplar Primary School Poplar Road South, Wimbledon SW19 3JZ	
Ward:	Merton Park	
Proposal:	Demolition of single storey classrooms and erection of two storey extension for provision of new school hall, ten new classrooms and group rooms, stores, w.c.'s and office	
Drawing No's:	752 001 P001, P002, P003 Rev E, P004, P006 Rev C, P020, P021, P022, P023, P030 Rev A, P031 Rev B, P032 Rev A, P033 Rev A, P034 Rev B, P040, 2013004?TCP002 & 2013004/TPP002; planning policy statement, tree constraints plan received 08/08/2013, transport statement, construction access statement, sustainability statement, noise assessment, geotechnical and contamination assessment, sustainability statement & BREEAM report.	
Contact Officer:	Joyce Ffrench [020 8545 3045]	

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT PLANNING subject to conditions.

CHECKLIST INFORMATION.

- S106: N/A
 - Is an Environmental Statement required: No
 - Has an Environmental Impact Assessment been submitted: No
 - Press notice: Yes [Major application]
 - Site notice: Yes
 - Design Review Panel consulted: No
 - Number of neighbours consulted: 99
External consultations: Sport England
 - Public Transport Accessibility Level: 4
 - Density: N/A
 - Number of jobs created: 17
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1. INTRODUCTION

This application is brought before the Planning Application's Committee as it involves development on a major site that is owned by the Council with the current application submitted by the Children, Schools and Families Section.

2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

2.1 The application site of Poplar Primary School is located on the west side of Poplar Road South close to Morden Town Centre. The application site is a primary school occupying a 1.275ha plot of land in Merton Park with pedestrian and vehicular entrance to the site from Poplar Road South. The main school building, which is visible from the road, is of a two storey red brick traditional style with high steep tiled roofs. The site is bordered by residential properties opposite the entrance on and either side of the entrance in Poplar Road South and by houses in Martin Way, whilst most of the west of the site boundary is bordered by park land.

2.2 A temporary classroom block has been erected to the front of the school buildings

2.3 Poplar Road South is a predominantly residential road in the Merton Park area of Merton. It is not located within a Controlled Car Parking Zone (CPZ) although it has significant levels of on-street car parking along its entirety. The junction with Martin Way is one way and at this end single yellow lines limit parking although the majority of the road is not subject to controls and is consequently heavily used by commuters and people working in the local area. There are "keep clear" school markings which prevent parking adjacent to the frontage of the school. However, there are no further parking restrictions to prevent on-street car parking apart from the clear signs near the school entrances. It is subject to a 30mph speed limit and is approximately 8m wide and has good access to public transport services

2.4 The school site is not in a conservation area, a flood risk area, or on Metropolitan Open Land; part of the school site is designated as education open space and as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation. Mostyn Gardens is part of a green corridor.

3 CURRENT PROPOSAL

3.1 The current proposal will allow the expansion of the existing primary school from 2 form entry to 3 form entry.

3.2 Planning permission was approved in 2012 for the installation of a demountable classroom block for 60 additional students, comprising 2 x classrooms and 3 x toilets.

3.3 The approved scheme is part of a Borough wide programme of schools expansions in order to provide 21 additional classes in reception year

for September 2012 compared to 2007/08. The new classrooms were intended to provide 30 places for September 2012 and another 30 for September 2013 ahead of more permanent solutions to the shortage of school places

- 3.4 The second phase of the development involves the demolition of the single storey nursery/classrooms and construction of new permanent school accommodation consisting of two storey extension for provision of new school hall, 10 new classrooms incorporating a canopy to the reception building, group rooms, stores, w.c. s and office; alterations to windows/doors to the front façade.
- 3.5 Also proposed is the provision of an all weather play surface
- 3.6 Construction access to the site is proposed via Mostyn Gardens which entails a temporary access via Mostyn Road.

4. PLANNING HISTORY.

- 4.1 Whilst there are a number of entries in the planning history associated with the site, the most relevant application in relation to consideration of the current scheme was submitted in 2012, with details provided below.
- 4.2 .Planning permission was approved in 2010 [LBM reference 12/P1370] for the erection of a temporary single storey building

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The planning application was publicised by means of major and departure site notices displayed in the vicinity of the application site and press notices together with individual letters to 99 neighbouring properties.
- 5.2 In response to this consultation letters have been received from 4 neighbouring properties raising objections on the following grounds:
 - Parking – concerns have been raised as to how the extended school will affect parking in local roads.
 - Traffic
 - Loss of privacy
 - Too close to neighbouring properties. Request for facing windows to be obscure glazed.

LB Merton Transport Planning

- 5.3 There are no objections to the proposal subject to the imposition of planning conditions relating to parking management, travel plan and conditions relating to the proposed construction access

LB Merton Tree Officer

- 5.4 There is no objection to the proposal subject to planning conditions relating to tree protection and fencing on the construction access site.

LB Merton Climate Change Officer

- 5.5 After assessment of the submitted BREEAM assessment it is confirmed that the development can achieve a BREEAM rating of 'Very Good' in line with Core Strategy policy CS.15.

LB Merton Environmental Health

- 5.6 There is no objection to the development subject to planning conditions relating to the soundproofing of plant and machinery, construction times, lighting and kitchen ventilation extract systems as the nursery kitchen has been moved.

- 5.7 Conditions have also been recommended relating to the submitted geotechnical and contamination report for the submission of a remediation scheme, implementation of approved remediation scheme and the reporting of unexpected contamination

5.8 Sport England

Sport England has been consulted and has responded with no comments/objections

5.9 Policy Comments

The principle of expanding the capacity of Poplar School is supported subject to further submissions relating to:

- evidence demonstrating there is a substantial local need to expand Poplar School
- the submitted layout and siting represents the optimal design solution with the least impact in the designated open space
- the school will not have reduced potential for sports pitch provision as a result of the proposed all weather play area

Design Officer Comments

- 5.10 The Design Officer has been consulted and has no specific comment to make

- 5.11 The Greenspaces Team has raised objections to the use of Mostyn Gardens as construction access on the basis that this will do unacceptable damage to the public realm for a period of two years.

6. POLICY CONTEXT

National Planning Framework [March 2012]

- 6.1 The National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF] was published on the 27 March 2012 and replaces previous guidance contained in Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Planning Policy Statements. The NPPF document is a key part of central government reforms '...to make the planning system less complex and more accessible, and to promote

sustainable growth'. The framework also states that the primary objective of development management should be to foster the delivery of sustainable development, and not to hinder or prevent development.

- 6.2 The National Planning Policy Framework states that the Government attaches great importance to ensuring that there is a sufficient choice of school places to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local Planning Authorities should take a proactive approach to meeting this requirement and should give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools.
- 6.3 In August 2011 a letter to Chief Planning Officers from Central Government provided a Policy Statement on Planning for Schools Development.
- 6.4 The policy statement advised that "We expect all parties to work together proactively from an early stage to help plan for state-school development and to shape strong planning applications. This collaborative working would help to ensure that the answer to proposals for the development of state-funded schools should be, wherever possible, "yes".'
- 6.5 The policy statement advises "A refusal of any application for a state-funded school, or the imposition of conditions, will have to be clearly justified by the local planning authority. Given the strong policy support for improving state education, the Secretary of State will be minded to consider such a refusal or imposition of conditions to be unreasonable conduct, unless it is supported by clear and cogent evidence."

Policies within the Adopted Core Strategy [July 2011]

- 6.6 The relevant policies within the Council's Adopted Core Strategy [July 2011] are CS11 [Infrastructure]; CS.13 [Open space; nature conservation; leisure and culture]; CS.14 [Design]; CS.15 [Climate change]; CS.18 [Active transport]; CS.19 [Public transport]; and CS.20 [Parking; servicing and delivery].

The London Plan [July 2011].

- 6.7 The relevant policies in the London Plan [July 2011] are 3.16 [Protection and enhancement of social infrastructure]; 3.18 (Education Facilities); 3.19 (Sports Facilities) 4.6 [Support for and enhancement of arts, culture, sport and entertainment provision]; 5.1 [Climate change mitigation]; 5.2 [Minimising carbon dioxide emissions]; 5.3 [Sustainable design and construction]; 5.7 [Renewable energy]; 5.10 [Urban greening]; 5.13 [Sustainable drainage]; 6.3 [Assessing effects of development on transport capacity]; 6.9 [Cycling]; 6.10 [Walking]; 6.11 [Smoothing traffic flow and tackling congestion]; 6.12 [Road network capacity]; 6.13 [Parking]; 7.2 [An inclusive environment]; 7.4 [Local character]; 7.5 [Public realm]; 7.6 [Architecture]; 7.14 [Improving air quality]; 7.15 [Reducing noise and enhancing soundscapes]; 7.18

(Protecting local open space and addressing local deficiency; 7.19 Biodiversity and access to nature & 7.21 [Trees and woodlands]

Policies retained in Adopted Unitary Development Plan [2003]

- 6.8 The relevant planning policies retained in the Adopted Unitary Development Plan [October 2003] are BE15 (New buildings and extensions), BE16 (Urban design), BE22 (Design of new development), BE25 (Sustainable development); C1 [Location and access of facilities]; C12 [Community use of education facilities], [E2 [Access for disabled people]; L2 [Walking Routes]; L14 [Community and religious meeting places], NE6 [Local Nature Reserves and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation]; NE.8 (Green Corridors); NE.11 (Trees), PE2 (Pollution and amenity) PE7 [Capacity of water systems]; PE.9 [Waste minimisation and waste disposal]; PE.11 [Recycling points]; PE.12 [Energy generation and energy saving]; RN3 [Vehicular access]; and Schedule 6: [Parking standards].

7. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The main planning considerations include assessing the increased demand for school places; loss of existing open space; the design of the building; neighbour amenity; car parking and highway safety; trees and landscaping; sustainable construction and the impact of the construction works on Mostyn Park.

Principle of development / need for additional school places

- 7.2 The spatial vision for the borough set out in the adopted Core Strategy and supported by the Community Plan [2009-2019] states that the Council will support community life. This support will be through facilitating development that meets local needs including education opportunities. London Plan policy 3.18 states that development proposals that enhance education provision will be supported. The policy states that those proposals that address the current projected shortage of primary school places will be particularly encouraged.
- 7.3 The London Borough of Merton is experiencing an unprecedented demand for primary school places that is a result of a high birth rate that has risen by over 30% in the last seven years. Where possible, existing schools have been extended to cope with this increased demand. The Council has identified a number of primary schools that will potentially need to expand by one form entry to meet the growing population needs. The supporting planning application documents show that Poplar Primary is a popular and oversubscribed school and the Council has identified the site as having the potential to expand by way of an additional form of entry.
- 7.4 The current application relating to the expansion of the school would provide 10 new classrooms to enable the school to provide a maximum of 30 additional places each year and ultimately accommodating an additional 300 children. The proposed expansion of Poplar Primary School would clearly address an urgent need for primary school places

in the local area and accord with London Plan policy 3.18 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

A planning policy statement demonstrating the need for the additional school places has been received 11/07/2013.

Design

- 7.5 Policy CS8 within the LDF Core Strategy [2011] states that the Council will require redevelopment proposals to be well designed. Policy CS14 within the Council's Adopted Core Strategy [2011] states that development should respect, reinforce and enhance local character and contribute to Merton's sense of place and identity. This will be achieved in various ways including by promoting high quality design and providing functional spaces and buildings.
- 7.6 The proposed new permanent building will be located to the south east corner of the plot where the existing nursery is located.
- 7.7 The proposed building is of a design which blends in with the existing structures. The proposal is to be constructed with Parham light multi stock brickwork; a standing seam roof with passivent windcatchers; the doors/windows are polyester powder coated with louvres incorporated into the design. The horizontal infill panels referred to on plan no. 752 001 P034 Revision B have been included in error as they were deleted from the design at a pre-application stage.
- 7.8 It is considered that the proposed building is of a scale and design that is in keeping with the adjacent school buildings

Neighbour Amenity:

- 7.9 Policy BE15 of the Unitary Development Plan states that new buildings will be expected to maintain sunlight and daylight levels to adjoining buildings and gardens; ensure the privacy of neighbours; protect from visual intrusion and not result in harm to living conditions through noise or disturbance. Retained policy PE.2 of the adopted Unitary Development Plan states that developments that would have a significantly adverse effect on nearby occupiers or the amenity of the locality by reason of noise generation and disturbance will not be permitted.
- 7.10 The closest residential properties to the new permanent school building are 137 – 139 Poplar Road South. These properties have rear gardens measuring 20 metres in depth. With the extension of the school building located a minimum of 4 metres away from the site boundary, a distance of 24 metres will separate the new building from the main rear elevation of the closest residential property. The side elevation of the new building facing these properties is the side wall of the nursery which is a sloping roof rising from a height of 6.3 metres to 10.3 metres.

- 7.11 In order to avoid a loss of privacy and overlooking the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance requires a distance of 21 metres is required between directly opposing residential windows above ground floor level. Whilst it is highlighted that the current proposal does not involve new residential accommodation the minimum separation distance is still considered a relevant standard to assess potential impact. In this case the elevation of the new building is located 24 metres from the closest residential properties; it is also highlighted that this elevation of the new building has no windows above ground floor level. In this respect it is considered that the new building will not give rise to any overlooking or loss of privacy to adjacent residential occupiers.
- 7.12 In terms of avoiding loss of daylight and sunlight to adjacent properties the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance requires a separation distance of 10 metres for two storey residential buildings between the buildings and the site boundary. Whilst it is highlighted that the current proposal does not involve new residential accommodation the minimum separation distance is still considered a relevant standard to assess potential impact. A distance of 4 metres will separate the new building from the boundary with properties in Poplar Road South. It is considered that due to the length of the gardens of the affected homes, i.e. 137 – 143 i.e. minimum of 20 metres, the proposed new building is unlikely to have any impact on sunlight and daylight.
- 7.13 In order to avoid noise nuisance from the use of the proposed hall and from plant and equipment associated with the school building planning conditions are recommended seeking the approval of soundproofing and to avoid potential disturbance from amplified noise. Planning conditions are also recommended in terms of the submission and approval of ventilation equipment for the proposed kitchen and restricting the timing and control of construction works.
- 7.14 The Geotechnical and Contamination Report has been assessed by the Environmental Health officer who has recommended that conditions be imposed requiring the submission of a remediation scheme to be approved by the LPA and implemented prior to development. A condition is also recommended to ensure that any unexpected contamination is reported to the LPA.
- Traffic, car parking, walking and cycling
- 7.15 Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy [July 2011] states that the Council will seek to implement effective traffic management by requiring developers to demonstrate that their development will not adversely affect pedestrian and cycle movements, safety, the convenience of local residents or on-street parking and traffic management.

- 7.16 The Transport for London Planning Information Database shows the application site with a Public Transport Accessibility Level of 4. The main vehicular and pedestrian access to the school site is from Poplar road South with proposed construction access from Mostyn Gardens,

Traffic

- 7.17 The potential for increased traffic movement as a result of a new school building must be considered with any potential impact on local highway safety. In support of the planning application the applicant has submitted a transport statement that uses the results of parking surveys taken on local roads and automatic traffic counts. The Transport Statement advises that the proposed development would lead to an increase of 71 vehicle trips. This will have an impact on traffic flow and parking in the vicinity and as a result the school management should encourage car sharing schemes, walking and cycling for pupils and staff.

Car parking demand.

- 7.18 Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy [July 2011] states that car parking should be provided in accordance with current parking standards, whilst assessing the impact of any additional on street parking on vehicle movements and road safety. Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy [July 2011] states that car parking should be provided in accordance with current parking standards, whilst assessing the impact of any additional on street parking on vehicle movements and road safety.
- 7.19 Policy 6.13 of the London Plan states that the Mayor wishes to see an appropriate balance between promoting new development and preventing excessive car parking that can undermine cycling, walking and public transport use. Whilst the current maximum off-street car parking standards are set out within the London Plan [table 6.2] these standards do not provide any standard for schools.
- 7.20 The submitted planning application advises that the new building will increase the number of school staff from 66 to 83 members of staff. The proposal allows for no additional car parking within the site. Transport Planning has asked that a condition be imposed to require the school to produce a school parking management strategy to demonstrate how the school will manage parking and safe 'drop off' and 'pick up' of children.

Cycling

- 7.21 Policy CS 18 of the adopted Core Strategy [July 2011] states that the Council will promote active transport by prioritising the safety of pedestrian, cycle and other active transport modes; by supporting schemes and encouraging design that provides, attractive, safe, covered cycle storage.
- 7.22 The site currently provides no cycle parking spaces and it is intended to provide 5 cycle spaces as part of the current proposal. A planning

condition is sought by Transport Planning to seek further details of these spaces shown on the submitted plans and to ensure that the spaces are maintained.

Impact on Mostyn Park, the 'green corridor' and trees

- 7.23 Retained policy NE8 of the Unitary Development Plan seeks to maintain and enhance the network of green corridors to assist the movements of some plants and animals to different habitats, and preserving the current range and diversity of flora and fauna. Policy NE8 seeks to preserve trees, which are of significant amenity value unless the reason for development outweighs the amenity value of the trees. Policy CS.13 of the Core Strategy [July 2011] states that the Council will expect development to incorporate and maintain appropriate elements of open space, play areas and landscape features such as trees which make a positive contribution to the wider network of open spaces.
- 7.24 There are no trees on the application site that will sustain damage or be removed as a result of the proposals
- 7.25 Mostyn Gardens is designated as a Green Corridor and an area to the north-western part of the school site is designated as a site of importance for nature conservation. GIGL records show there are no positive sightings of protected species within the last 10 years on site or in Mostyn Gardens. The proposals are considered unlikely to have a detrimental impact on the S.I.N.C. or the Green Corridor.
- 7.26 The use of Mostyn Gardens as construction access has raised objections from the Greenspaces Team with regard to loss of trees and disruption to the park for a period of 2 years. In mitigation of the resultant damage there will be scheme to re-instate lost and damaged trees and the area made good with improvements made to the park entrance. This scheme is currently being assessed. Planning conditions are recommended in relation to tree protection, arboricultural supervision and submission, approval and implementation of a landscape scheme and on this basis the Council's Tree & Landscape Officer has raised no objection to the proposal.
- 7.27 Sports Facilities – M.U.G.A.
The Design & Access statement incorrectly states that a grassed area U7/U8 youth soccer pitch will be formed. The applicant confirms (email that there is potential for pitch to be formed adjacent to the MUGA. It is noted that the Sport England size guidance differs from the sizes referred to in the Design and Access Statement. The correct capacity should be clearly demonstrated and a condition will be imposed to require the applicant to provide such evidence.
- 7.28 To ensure the best use of the resultant improved facilities a condition will be imposed to ensure that community has adequate use of the school facilities.

Sustainable design and construction.

- 7.29 The Council's Core Strategy reinforces the wider sustainability objectives of the London Plan with policy CS15 requiring all development to demonstrate how the development makes effective use of resources and materials and minimises water use and CO2 emissions. All non-domestic development over 500 square metres will be expected to achieve a BREEAM 'very good' standard and to meet CO2 reduction targets.
- 7.30 As part of the current planning application the applicant has submitted a BREEAM Design Stage Pre Assessment Report. The pre-assessment report concludes that based on the current design development the proposed development would achieve BREEAM 'very good' standard. Planning conditions are recommended to seek confirmation that development is registered with an assessor prior to commencement and that confirmation is provided that this standard has been met.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 The proposals are on a site of more than 0.5 hectares and therefore require assessment as an 'urban development project' under Schedule 2 development under the Town and Country Planning [Environmental Impact Assessment] Regulations 2011.
- 8.2 The proposals have been assessed against the Town and Country Planning [Environmental Impact Assessment] Regulations 2011 and it is concluded that there is no requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment in this instance.

9. LOCAL FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS
Mayor of London Community Infrastructure Levy

- 9.1 The Mayoral Community Infrastructure Levy [CIL] seeks funds to be used by the Mayor of London towards the 'CrossRail' project. The proposed development providing education floorspace is not liable to pay the CIL charge.

Planning Obligations;

- 9.2 There is no requirement for planning obligations in relation to this proposal.

10. CONCLUSION

- 10.1 In conclusion the proposal will provide a good standard of accommodation to an extended school building that would preserve the character of the original build. The expanded school, with suitable planning conditions, will generate additional vehicle movements that can be safely accommodated on the local road network. With the separation of the proposed building from the boundary with properties in Poplar Road South the building is acceptable in terms of potential impact on residential amenity.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to conditions:

1. A1 – Time limits
2. Approved plans - The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:- 752 001 P001, P002, P003 Rev E, P004, P006 Rev C, P020, P021, P022, P023, P030 Rev A, P031 Rev B, P032 Rev A, P033 Rev A, P034 Rev B, P040, 2013004/TCP002 & 2013004/TPP002; planning policy statement, tree constraints plan received 08/08/2013, transport statement, construction access statement, sustainability statement, noise assessment, geotechnical and contamination assessment, sustainability statement & BREEAM report.
3. B1 - External materials to be approved
4. B4 - Details of surface treatment
5. D3 - Restriction on Music/Amplified Sound
6. D5 - Soundproofing of Plant and Machinery
7. D6 - Kitchen Ventilation Extract System
8. D10 - External Lighting
9. D11 - Construction Times
10. E5 - Restriction – Use of Premises
11. F4 - Tree Survey Approved – Drawing No 2013004/TPP002
12. F5P - Tree Protection
13. F7 – Trees, notification of start
14. F8 - Site Supervision (Trees)
15. H6P – Cycle Parking – details
16. H9 Construction Vehicles
17. L6P - Pre-commencement
18. L7 - Pre- occupation

Non standard Condition

School Parking Management Strategy

Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted, a draft Parking Management Strategy demonstrating how the school will manage the off street parking area of within the school shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The measures as approved shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted and shall be maintained for the duration of the use unless the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority is obtained to any variation.

Reason: To promote road safety and sustainable travel measures and comply with policy CS18 and CS20

Non standard condition

School Travel Plan

Within 6 months of occupation of the development hereby permitted, a School Travel Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and Transport for London. The Plan shall follow the current 'School Travel Plan Guidance' issued by TfL and shall include:

- i) Targets for sustainable travel arrangements;
- ii) Effective measures for the ongoing monitoring of the Plan;
- iii) A commitment to delivering the Plan objectives for a period of at least 5 years; and
- iv) Effective mechanisms to achieve the objectives of the Plan by both present and future occupiers of the extension.

The Travel Plan shall be updated and submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and Transport for London on a yearly basis and the development shall be implemented only in accordance with the approved Travel Plan.

Reason for Condition: To promote sustainable travel measures and comply with policy CS18, CS19 and CS20

Non standard condition

[Multi Use Games Area] The proposed Multi Use Games Areas shall be provided in accordance with the External Works General Arrangement Plan and made available for use before first occupation of the development hereby permitted Reason for condition: To ensure the satisfactory quantity, quality and accessibility of compensatory provision.

Non standard condition

Prior to the completion of the extended school and Multi Use Games Area details of a scheme of community access to the facilities shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority

and the School Buildings & Multi Use Games Area shall be operated in full accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason for Condition: To promote greater community use of facilities in accordance with Merton UDP policy C.12 and Merton LDF Core Strategy Policies CS11 & 13 and London Plan Policies 3.16, 3.18 & 3.19

Non standard condition

Prior to development a drawing should be submitted clearly showing the existing and proposed sports pitch capacities (including run-off areas) to clearly demonstrate the feasibility of the proposals.

D6 – Informative INF 19