

**Planning Regulatory Committee
Minutes of the Meeting Held on Friday 9 January 2015
at 10am in the Edwards Room, County Hall**

Present:

Mr D Collis (Chairman)

Mr S Agnew

Mr M Baker

Mr B Bremner

Mrs J Chamberlin

Mr A Dearnley

Mr C Foulger

Mr A Grey (Vice-Chairman)

Mr J Law

Mr B Long

Mr W Northam

Mr W Richmond

Mr M Sands

Mr E Seward

Mr M Storey

Mr J Ward

Mr B Watkins

In attendance:

Mr R Cox

Mrs F Croxen

Mr J Hanner

Mr N Johnson

Ms A Lambert

Mrs J Mortimer

Principal Planner

NPLaw

Highways Authority

Planning Services Manager

Principal Planner

Committee Officer

1 Apologies and Substitutions

Apologies for absence were received from Ms E Morgan (Mr A Dearnley substituted); Mr S Askew (Mr W Richmond substituted) and Mr A White (Mrs J Chamberlin substituted).

2 Minutes from the meeting held on 21 November 2014

- 2.1 The minutes from the Planning (Regulatory) Committee meeting held on 21 November 2014 were agreed as a correct record by the Committee and signed by the Chairman.

3 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

5 **King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council: Y/2/2014/2014: Erection of extension comprising 8 no classrooms, a kitchen extension, a new school hall, staff room and ancillary accommodation. External works include sports pitch provision, MUGA, new car park and associated works at St Martha's RC VA Primary School, Field Lane, Gaywood, King's Lynn: Roman Catholic Diocese of East Anglia/Norfolk County Council on behalf of the Director of Children's Services**

5.1 The Committee received a report by the Interim Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services seeking planning permission for the erection of an extension to the school, external sports provision, a new car park and associated works.

5.2 The following points were noted during the presentation of the report:

- In paragraph 6.44 of the report on page 16 of the agenda, the words Planning Practice Guidance to replace the term Technical Guidance. This change did not affect the status of the application or the information contained within the report.
- As no finds had been made when the archaeological evaluation had been carried out, no further archaeological investigation work would be required.
- An additional letter of representation and some photographs had been received from Mr Paul Harris. The letter was read out to the Committee by the Planning Services Manager and the photographs circulated. The Committee was reassured that all the points raised in the letter were covered in the report.

5.3 In response to general questions from the Committee, the following points were noted:

- The Highways Engineers had considered the application carefully and had made their assessment and recommendation based upon the current situation in the area.
- The aim of the extension was to replace the mobile classrooms currently in use at the school with permanent classrooms.
- A travel plan would be established and adopted.
- It was proposed that a turning circle would be provided near the church for parents to drive into to drop children off. Pupils would then use a dedicated footpath within the school grounds to access the school and this drop off point would be managed by the school. The provision of a drop off point near the church was recognised as a relaxation of policy and had been agreed because of the larger catchment area associated with the catholic school and the known issues along Field Lane.

- If the Committee approved the application, the Highways Authority would be seeking conditions such as Traffic Regulation Orders to ensure no cars parked on the school markings or near the junction with Field Lane. It would also be proposed that provision for double or single yellow lines along the western side of Field Lane should be made to try to avoid other issues along this road, such as cars needing to reverse to allow other cars to pass.
- Bollards would be used to close off the existing access into the church to minimise the number of accesses in close proximity. These bollards could be easily removed to allow access into the church when necessary. All accesses will be simple footway crossings to ensure that pedestrians had priority through the accesses.

5.4 Mr Chris Hey, Head of Place Planning and Organisation, Children's Services, Norfolk County Council spoke on behalf of the applicant, during which it was noted that a need for additional places at the school had been identified which was partly because parental preference allowed parents to choose the school their children attended, and this needed to be managed. Parents would be encouraged to use different ways of getting their children to school, including walking and cycling, through the adoption of a travel plan which the committee noted would need time to embed.

5.5 Mrs Helen Bates, Deputy Director, Roman Catholic Diocese of East Anglia, addressed the Committee and reassured them that the school had already given permission for the church to use the school car park when the school was closed. The Church had also made a commitment to try to avoid school times when organising funerals and other events which required church use.

5.6 In response to questions from the Committee, the following points were clarified:

- There was no defined catchment area for Roman Catholic schools as the Diocese identified catchment areas using the parishes within its deaneries. St Martha's School was the only Catholic school in a 20 mile radius.
- The removal of the denominational transport had allowed more local children to attend St Martha's School.
- The Admissions Code of Practice adopted by St Martha's School was no different to any other local authority school admission policy.

5.7 Mr A McGovern, who had been the Headteacher at St Martha's School for 12 years, addressed the Committee. The Committee noted that the school had been graded "good" with outstanding features at its last Ofsted inspection and was well above the national attainment levels of reading, writing and mathematics. The School offered art and sporting opportunities and as the school was a faith school, prayer and worship were used to provide the children with an appreciation of the world around them.

He reassured the Committee that residents' concerns regarding traffic and noise had

been taken very seriously and that the opportunity would be taken to improve the traffic issues and ensure the travel plan was managed to address those concerns.

5.8 The following points were noted in response to questions from the Committee:

- A travel plan had been adopted to try to encourage all pupils to walk or cycle to school and work was being undertaken with parents to try to encourage the older children to walk to school.
- Members requested that condition 11 (set out in detail on page 30 of the agenda) should be implemented before the building work was commenced.
- The two nearby schools (Springwood Academy and Gaywood School) were both oversubscribed and had the maximum number of pupils enrolled.
- The proposed 420 places at the school was considered the optimal size for a primary school based on Diocese specifications; therefore the number of pupils would never exceed 420.
- The proposed turning space to circumnavigate the church to allow parents to drive in to drop their children near the school, was a new option and would be constructed on land which was under the ownership of the school.

5.9 Mr M Cutting, representing Springwood Academy Trust, advised the Committee that, due to safeguarding issues, no permission had been granted for the access between Springwood Academy and St Martha's School to be used as a general thoroughfare, although the gate could be used for school access purposes (such as school visits) only.

5.8 Mrs M Wilkinson, County Councillor for Gaywood South Division which covered the application site, addressed the Committee as Local Member. Residents in the area had contacted her to raise concern about the current traffic problems and the additional traffic issues expected if the application was approved.

5.9 The following points were noted in response to general questions from the Committee:

- 177 children lived less than 1 mile from the school and 10 children lived more than three miles from the school.
- No comments had been received from the Fire Service, who had been consulted as part of the application process.
- Some members of the Committee felt that a site visit should take place, although this was not agreed.

5.10 With 10 votes in favour, 4 votes against and 2 abstentions, the Committee **RESOLVED** that the Interim Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services should be

authorised to:

- i) Grant planning permission subject to the conditions outlined in section 12 of the report.
- ii) Discharge conditions (after discussion with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee) where those detailed in the report required the submission and implementation of a scheme, or further details, either before development commenced, or within a specified date of planning permission being granted.
- iii) Delegate powers to officers (after discussion with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee) to deal with any non-material amendments to the application that may be submitted.

6 South Norfolk District Council: Y/7/2014/7011: Extension to Queens Hill Primary School, Costessey, comprising of 10 no. classrooms, new main school entrance, administrative and ancillary accommodation, new car park, external teaching spaces and play areas: Director of Children's Services

6.1 The Committee received a report by the Interim Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services seeking planning permission to extend Queens Hill Primary School, Costessey. The proposed development consisted of ten new classrooms; a new main entrance, including new lobby, administrative accommodation and toilets; a new car park adjacent to the new main entrance with 41 car parking spaces; new hard play areas with a new playing field, to create a 3 form entry 630 pupil school to meet the needs of the expanding Queens Hill development at Costessey.

6.2 The following points were noted in response to questions from the Committee:

- 41 additional car parking spaces would be provided for staff and visitor parking, which would provide a total of 80 car parking spaces at the school.
- Provision for a community centre, which had been included in the original planning permission which had lapsed, had already been built at a different location at Queens Hills. If the Committee approved the application, the land would be compulsory purchased to extend the school.
- The facilities at the school, including the multi-use games area (MUGA), would be available for the local community to use during out of school hours.
- A bus gate had already been established to allow buses to exit Queens Hills onto Ringland Lane.
- The site had not shown any signs of contamination following appropriate tests, although a gas membrane would be laid and had been included in the design as a safety precaution.

- As the site was still under development and the sewerage and drainage systems had not yet been adopted by Anglian Water, an advisory note would be included in the list of conditions to ensure there were no flooding or drainage problems.
- 6.3 Mr P Bourgeois addressed the Committee as a resident of Queens Hills. Mr Bourgeois raised concern about the lack of local amenities such as shops and community facilities which had been included in the original planning application but had not yet been built. He was also concerned that provision for community facilities would be lost if the land was used to extend the school and no other site was identified to build the promised amenities.
- 6.4 Mr Chris Hey, Head of Place Planning and Organisation, Children's Services, Norfolk County Council spoke on behalf of the applicant. The Committee noted that it was considered crucial that children who lived at Queens Hills, and those that subsequently moved to the area, should be offered a place at the local school on the Queens Hill development.
- 6.5 Mrs P Shepherd, Headteacher at Queens Hill School, addressed the Committee stating that the school had opened in 2008 with 29 pupils. There were now 350 pupils on the register, speaking 13 different languages; it was not an average school.
- 6.6 The following points were noted in response to questions from the Committee:
- Most of the children who attended the school travelled there by car as the roads had not yet been adopted. The school encouraged pupils to get to and from school by walking or cycling and the school was deemed a safe area for children to walk to school as it was situated in a cul-de-sac.
 - The current reception class at Queens Hill School comprised of children from Queens Hill, or their siblings only.
 - It was hoped that various community activities could take place at the school, including using the MUGA, when it was not being used by the school.
- 6.7 With 15 votes in favour, 0 votes against and 1 abstention, the Committee **RESOLVED** that the Interim Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services should be authorised to:
- i) Grant planning permission subject to the conditions outlined in section 12 of the report.
 - ii) Discharge conditions (after discussion with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee) where those detailed in the report required the submission and implementation of a scheme, or further details, either before development commenced, or within a specified date of planning permission being granted.

- iii) Delegate powers to officers (after discussion with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee) to deal with any non-material amendments to the application that may be submitted.

7 Breckland District: C/3/2013/3017: Thetford Household Waste Recycling Centre: Retrospective minor material amendment: Variation of condition 2 of planning permission ref. C/3/2011/3021 to make changes to reuse shelter (PV panels), and layout of site (drainage layout, ramp, car parking and addition of safety bollards): Norfolk County Council, Interim Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services

- 7.1 The Committee received a report by the Interim Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services seeking planning permission to vary condition 2 of planning permission reference C/3/2011/3021 to authorise a number of minor changes to the existing Household Waste Recycling Centre at Telford Way, Thetford. The proposed changes were in respect of the number and configuration of photovoltaic (PV) panels of the roof of the re-use building and the layout of the site with regard to drainage arrangements, the ramp that connected the split levels, car parking and also the installation of safety bollards.
- 7.2 The Committee unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Interim Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services should be authorised to:
- i) Grant planning permission subject to the conditions outlined in section 12 of the report.
 - ii) Discharge conditions (after discussion with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee) where those detailed in the report required the submission and implementation of a scheme, or further details, either before development commenced, or within a specified date of planning permission being granted.
 - iii) Delegate powers to officers (after discussion with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee) to deal with any non-material amendments to the application that may be submitted.

The meeting ended at 1.10pm

CHAIRMAN



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