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| Application Number: | 2018/0134/FUL |
| Site Address: | Land Adjacent To The Myle Cross Centre, Macaulay Drive, Lincoln |
| Target Date: | 21st April 2018 |
| Agent Name: | GVA |
| Applicant Name: | GF Tomlinson On Behalf Of Wellspring Academy Trust |
| Proposal: | Erection of a new two-storey school. |

Background - Site Location and Description

The site is located in St Giles, a predominantly residential area approximately two miles north east of the centre of Lincoln. To the north and north-west are residential properties on Macaulay Drive. To the east is the Myle Cross Centre, a training facility and offices used by the County Council. To the south is green open space, beyond which is a primary school, nursery and a Sure Start Centre. To the west are commercial and residential units on Lamb Gardens.

The application proposes the erection of a new 'alternative provision' school with secured play areas, landscaping, car parking and associated engineering works. It would be served via a new vehicular access off Macaulay Drive. The school would accommodate up to sixty-three pupils aged from five to sixteen.

Wellspring Academy Trust operates eleven existing AP schools in Yorkshire and Humberside. The Trust's aim is to provide the best possible education to children who cannot be in mainstream education. The Trust has been very successful at improving the life chances of its pupils in these regions and it is now seeking to use its expertise in Lincolnshire. This application is part of a wider programme to deliver four new schools in the County.

Site History

No relevant site history.

Case Officer Site Visit

Undertaken on 22nd February 2018.

Policies Referred to

- National Planning Policy Framework
- Central Lincolnshire Local Plan – Policy LP26 Design and Amenity Standards

Issues

- Residential Amenity
- Visual Amenity
- Highways
- Trees
- Ecology
- Drainage

Consultations

Consultations were carried out in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement, adopted May 2014.

Statutory Consultation Responses

| Consultee | Comment |
|---|----------------------|
| Anglian Water | Comments Received |
| Environment Agency | Comments Received |
| Upper Witham, Witham First District & Witham Third District | Comments Received |
| Education Planning Manager, Lincolnshire County Council | Comments Received |
| Lincolnshire Police | Comments Received |
| Lincoln Civic Trust | No Response Received |
| Highways & Planning | Comments Received |

Public Consultation Responses

| Name | Address |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|
| Mr Norman Haigh | 82 Macaulay Drive Lincoln LN2 4EL |

Consideration

National and Local Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework Paragraph 72 states “The Government attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. They should:

- give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools; and
- work with schools promoters to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.”

Policy LP26: Design and Amenity

All development, including extensions and alterations to existing buildings, must achieve high quality sustainable design that contributes positively to local character, landscape and townscape, and supports diversity, equality and access for all.

Development proposals will be assessed against the relevant design and amenity criteria as set out in detail within the policy.

The Proposed Development

The application proposes the erection of a new 'alternative provision' school. The ground floor would comprise general teaching rooms with a food and dining room. It would also include staff areas, music rooms a fitness suite and a main hall. The first floor would comprise teaching rooms and two other food and dining areas.

The proposed school would employ approximately thirty members of staff and would accommodate up to sixty-three pupils. The school day would start at 08:45 and finish at 14:45 Monday to Thursday. On Fridays, the school would finish earlier at 13:00. The school would not typically be open at weekends or out of term-time. The pupils would stay on the school premises throughout the day, including lunch breaks.

Visual Amenity

The proposed building is mainly two-storey and would be a similar height to the adjacent Myle Cross Centre. Some of the building would extend to one or one and a half storeys to create visual interest.

The proposed materials have been selected by the applicants to reduce on-going maintenance costs and create a positive image for the school within the community. The materials comprise red brick and white render with elements of coloured render to create interest and support the Trust's branding. Much of the ground floor is red brick with the rendered element used to the first floor.

There would be fences around the site perimeter. The fences would be weld mesh and two metres in height. There would be other internal fences within the site that pupils would stay within during school hours.

Policy LP26 requires all development proposals to take into consideration the character and local distinctiveness of the area (and enhance or reinforce it, as appropriate) and create a sense of place. It is considered that the proposed building relates well to the site and surroundings, particularly in relation to positioning and scale. The building would be of an appropriate height to be in keeping with adjacent buildings and would sit comfortably in the streetscene. The use of high quality materials would enhance the local area whilst also being appropriate in the surrounding context. This is in accordance with local plan policy.

Residential Amenity

The amenities which all existing and future occupants of neighbouring land and buildings may reasonably expect to enjoy must not be unduly harmed by or as a result of development. The proposed building has been designed in such a way that there would be no overlooking into windows to the north and west boundaries. The school has been

positioned on the site so there is some distance between the proposals and the adjacent neighbours.

The proposed school would also have an external Multi Use Games Area (MUGA). The MUGA is an essential aspect of the school provision, allowing pupils much needed space for physical activity. This could give rise to concerns in terms of noise and lighting impacts on the surrounding area, however the applicants have confirmed that the MUGA would only be in use during school opening hours and as such there would be no requirement for floodlighting. Similarly there would be no adverse noise impacts on adjacent properties as the area would only be in use during normal school operating hours. There are no plans for this area to be used by anyone other than the school. To ensure that this is the case, it is recommended that a condition be attached to any consent granted, to control the hours of use to between the hours of 8.30am and 5.00pm, Mondays to Fridays (inclusive), and shall not be used at any other time.

Therefore it is considered that the proposed development would have no adverse impact on adjacent neighbours.

One letter has been received from a local resident, whilst this isn't a letter of objection it does raise some interesting points. However the points raised are not material planning considerations and as such cannot be given any weight in the decision making process.

Trees

Three semi-mature trees would need to be removed to create the site access from Macaulay Drive. None of these trees are of high value. This view is shared by the City's Arboricultural Officer who has no objections to the proposal.

The site would be enhanced with new soft landscaping around the edges to create an attractive boundary. The specification of this could be secured by condition.

This is in accordance with LP26 which requires scheme to provide appropriate landscape treatment to ensure that the development can be satisfactorily assimilated into the surrounding area with well-designed boundary treatments. The proposed development is in accordance with this policy.

Highways

The school would be accessed via a new access off Macaulay Drive with a controlled access gate at the site entrance. The proposed parking area is situated at the front of the site. Thirty spaces are proposed for staff and visitors with staff arriving between 7.15 and 8.30. There would also be six drop-off bays and two accessible spaces.

It is anticipated that the majority of pupils would arrive by taxi from 8.40am. The site has been designed to ensure that there would be sufficient capacity for taxis queuing within the site boundary without affecting the highway network. The proposal allows for up to 26 taxis to queue within the site. These taxis would be managed by school staff.

Drop-off and pick-up arrangements would be carefully managed. Pupils would arrive by transport arranged by the school and met by a member of staff at the school entrance. The details are set out within the schools Traffic Management Plan which forms part of the application.

The Highways Authority have raised no objections to the proposal but have requested a condition be attached should consent be granted to ensure that the highways arrangements are available at all times when the school is in use.

Ecology

The site comprises areas of unmanaged grassland, along with areas of ornamental shrubs, scattered trees and hedgerow associated with the adjacent school found to the north east. An extended Phase I habitats survey found that the majority of the habitats at the site are considered to be of importance to nature conservation at the site level only.

As a precautionary measure, it is recommended that tree clearance works be undertaken outside of the bird breeding season i.e. between September to February (inclusive), unless preceded by a nesting bird check no more than 48 hours prior to vegetation removal commencing. As hedgehogs have some potential to move across the site, as a precautionary measure, it is recommended that any excavations left overnight should be covered or have a suitable escape ramp e.g. a long scaffold board, inserted to allow escape should a hedgehog fall in.

Drainage

The preferred method of surface water disposal would be to a sustainable drainage system (SuDS) with connection to sewer seen as the last option. The surface water strategy/flood risk assessment submitted with the planning application requires further information. Further information has been submitted, however at the time of writing the report no further comment had been made by Anglian Water. Notwithstanding this matter, Anglian Water have suggested a condition to ensure the submission of a surface water management strategy to be agreed prior to the commencement of development which is considered a reasonable approach.

Similarly a foul water strategy would be required to ensure that the development would not lead to an unacceptable risk of flooding downstream. This could be secured by condition.

Contaminated Land

Due to past uses on the site there is the potential for significant contamination to be present. In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development that was not previously identified in the submitted investigation and risk assessment then it must be reported immediately. This requirement would be secured by condition.

Noise and Lighting

The applicant's noise report recommends that any externally mounted plant (e.g. air conditioning units) are designed//installed so as to ensure that the rating level of any such equipment does not exceed the existing background sound levels at any noise sensitive receptor, which would appear to be reasonable. In order to ensure that this requirement is met it is recommended that a condition be imposed to ensure a noise impact assessment report is submitted for approval prior to installation.

In order to ensure that any external lighting installed at the development does not have any unreasonable impact offsite, it is recommended that a condition be attached to any

consent granted that prior to its installation an assessment of the offsite impact of all external lighting shall be undertaken and submitted to the planning authority for approval.

Conclusion

The application proposes the erection of a new 'alternative provision' school with secured play areas, landscaping, car parking and associated engineering works. The school would accommodate up to sixty-three pupils aged from five to sixteen.

The application supports the aims set out in the NPPF to ensure that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. The design of the school is appropriate and relates well to the site and surroundings, particularly in relation to siting, height and palette of materials in accordance with local plan policy LP26. More over the design of the development is appropriate given the end user to ensure that the design is both appropriate and safe and secure and would have no adverse impacts on residential amenity.

Application Determined within Target Date

Yes.

Recommendation

That the application is granted conditionally.

Conditions

- Development to commence within 3 years
- Development to be carried out in accordance with the plans
- External plant or machinery
- Time restriction on use of MUGA
- Internal highway layout to be carried out in accordance with the plans
- External lighting assessment
- Submission of surface water management strategy
- Submission of foul water strategy
- Landscaping
- Unexpected contamination