

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

Committee	Full Planning Committee - 12/03/2019	Item No: 5.3
Report Originator	Sean Bennett Senior Development Officer	Application No: KET/2018/0770
Wards Affected	St. Michaels and Wicksteed	
Location	Southfield School For Girls, Lewis Road, Kettering	
Proposal	Full Application: New classroom block to include 10 no. classrooms, lecture theatre and associated works	
Applicant	Mrs S Roberts	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To describe the above proposals
- To identify and report on the issues arising from it
- To state a recommendation on the application

2. RECOMMENDATION

THE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL MANAGER RECOMMENDS that this application be APPROVED subject to the following Condition(s):-

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this planning permission.

REASON: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and to prevent an accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions.

2. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the approved plans detailed below.

REASON: In the interest of securing an appropriate form of development in accordance with Policy 8 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy

3. The development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the Finished Floor Levels hereby approved on drawing 6788-17-A (External Works) unless otherwise approved in a discharge of conditions application where in that event the proposal shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: To protect the amenities of adjoining properties in accordance with Policy 8 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

4. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the following documents hereby approved:

- Drainage Strategy, Flood Risk Assessment & Sustainable Drainage System Statement ref 6081R001 FRA rev B prepared by BCAL Consulting dated January 2019.
- Microdrainage File 6081_SW_03-01-2019_Rev B dated 3rd January 2019
- Anglian Water Pre-Planning Assessment Report Southfield School ref 1307/903929002/1/0001095 dated 17th December 2018

REASON: In the interest of securing an appropriate form of development in accordance with Policy 5 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy in relation to the protection and enhancement of the water environment.

5. The Travel Plan referenced 928/5400 dated November 2018 hereby approved shall be implemented following first use of the building hereby permitted. The Travel Plan shall be subject to annual monitoring for a period of 5 years from the date of its implementation and include a monitoring form outlining activities undertaken and travel data collected from completed surveys indicating progress against targets and outlining mitigation measures should the targets not be met. On request this information should be made available to the local planning authority.

REASON: In the interests of securing sustainable means of transport opportunities to and from the site in accordance with Policy 8 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

6. Prior to the commencement of development a Demolition and Construction Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period and the approved measures shall be retained for the duration of the demolition and construction works.

REASON: Details are required prior to the commencement of development because demolition and construction management occurs early in the construction process and in the interests of safeguarding highway safety and residential amenity in accordance with Policy 8 of the Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy

7. Prior to the commencement of piling operations a scheme for the control and mitigation of noise, including vibration, affecting surrounding premises shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such measures shall operate throughout the piling operations in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: Details are required prior to the commencement of development in the interest of safeguarding residential amenity in accordance with Policy 8 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

8. Before above ground works commence a surface water drainage scheme for the site, based on sustainable drainage principles and an assessment of the hydrological and hydro geological context of the development, shall be submitted to the local planning authority for approval in writing. The details of the scheme shall include:

- a) Details (i.e. designs, diameters, invert and cover levels, gradients, dimensions and so on) of all elements of the proposed drainage system, to include pipes, inspection chambers, outfalls/inlets and attenuation basins.
- b) Cross sections of all control chambers (including site specific levels mAOD) and manufacturers' hydraulic curves should be submitted for all hydrobrakes and other flow control devices.
- c) Full specification for any permeable paving.

The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is completed.

REASON: To reduce the risk of flooding both on and off site by ensuring the satisfactory means of surface water attenuation and discharge from the site in accordance with policy 5 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

9. Before above ground work commences a detailed scheme for the ownership and maintenance for every element of the surface water drainage system proposed on the site will be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the maintenance plan shall be carried out in full thereafter.

Details are required of which organisation or body will be the main maintaining body where the area is multifunctional (e.g. open space play areas containing SuDS) with evidence that the organisation/body has agreed to such adoption.

The scheme shall include, a maintenance schedule setting out which assets need to be maintained, at what intervals and what method is to be used.

A site plan including access points, maintenance access easements and outfalls. Maintenance operational areas to be identified and shown on the plans, to ensure there is room to gain access to the asset, maintain it with appropriate plant and then handle any arising's generated from the site.

Details of expected design life of all assets with a schedule of when replacement assets may be required

REASON: To ensure the future maintenance of drainage systems associated with the development in accordance with policy 5 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

10. No Occupation shall take place until the Verification Report for the installed surface water drainage system for the site based on the approved Flood Risk Assessment document; ref. no. ref 6081R001 FRA rev B prepared by BCAL Consulting dated January 2019 has been submitted in writing by a suitably qualified drainage engineer and approved by the Local Planning Authority The report shall include:

- a) Any departure from the agreed design is keeping with the approved principles
- b) Any As-Built Drawings and accompanying photos

c) Results of any Performance testing undertaken as a part of the application process (if required / necessary)

d) Copies of any Statutory Approvals, such as Land Drainage Consent for Discharges etc.

e) Confirmation of adoption or maintenance agreement for all SuDS elements as detailed within the drainage strategy is in place

REASON: To ensure the installed Surface Water Drainage System is satisfactory and in accordance with the approved reports for the development site in accordance with policy 5 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

11. No development shall commence on site above ground level until details of the types and colours of all external facing, window and roofing materials to be used and their finish have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the approved details and shall remain in that form thereafter.

REASON: In the interests of the visual amenities of the area in accordance with Policy 8 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

12. No development shall commence above ground level until a scheme for the storage of bicycles has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The use of the building shall not commence until the approved scheme has been fully implemented and shall be retained as approved thereafter.

REASON: In the interests of sustainable forms of transport in accordance with Policy 8 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

13. Prior to commencement above ground level, a scheme detailing the security standards to be incorporated within the building hereby approved shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved scheme shall be put in place prior to first occupation and shall remain in that form thereafter.

REASON: In the interest of the security of the future users in accordance with Policy 8 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

14. Prior to occupation an external lighting scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be carried out in accordance with the approved conditions and shall remain in that form thereafter

REASON: In the interest of safeguarding residential amenity in accordance with Policy 8 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

15. In the event that unexpected contamination is found at any time when carrying out the development hereby approved, it must be reported immediately to the Local Planning Authority. Development works at the site shall cease and an investigation and risk assessment undertaken to assess the nature and extent of the unexpected contamination. A written report of the findings shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority, together with a scheme to remediate, if required, prior to further development on site taking place. Only once written approval from the Local Planning Authority has been given shall development works recommence.

REASON: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised in accordance with Policies 6 and 8 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

16. Works audible at the site boundary will not exceed the following times unless with the written permission of the Local Planning Authority. Monday to Friday 08.00 to 18.00 hrs, Saturday 08.30 to 13.30 and at no time whatsoever on Sundays or Public/Bank Holidays. This includes deliveries to the site and any work undertaken by contractors and sub-contractors.

REASON: In the interests of safeguarding residential amenity in accordance with Policy 8 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

17. No additional openings, other than those shown on the approved drawings, shall be formed in the south facing elevation of the building hereby approved unless otherwise approved by planning permission.

REASON: In the interests of the amenity and protecting the privacy of the neighbouring property in accordance with Policy 8 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

Officers Report for KET/2018/0770

3. Information 0

Relevant Planning History

KET/2004/0691 – Proposed mobile classroom – APPROVED – 26/08/2004

KET/2004/1260 – Infilling of existing courtyard and internal alterations to existing changing room to provide multi-use indoor facility – APPROVED – 18/01/2005

KET/2006/0803 – New sports hall and associated works – APPROVED – 10/11/2006

KET/2007/0656 – Single storey double mobile classroom – APPROVED – 01/10/2007

KET/2009/0204 – Two storey extension to sports hall – APPROVED – 03/06/2009

KET/2009/0445 – Retention of mobile classroom block – APPROVED – 02/10/2009

KET/2018/0526 - NCC Own Development - The installation of a temporary (until August 2023) double mobile classroom (60 places) (NCC, reference 18/00025/CCDFUL) – NO OBJECTION – 27/07/2018

Site Visit

Officer's site inspection was carried out on 09/11/2018 and 03/12/2018

Site Description

The application site relates to an established Secondary School with approximately 1062 pupils located within a predominantly residential area with the main access via Lewis Road and has on-site parking provision for 140 vehicles.

Proposed Development

The application seeks full planning permission for a new predominately two storey teaching block located on an area of hard-surfacing toward the southern side of the school and to the north of dwellings fronting Martin Road.

The proposed 1948sqm flat-roofed building is to be used by the Schools Sixth Form year group and internally would comprise Classrooms, Lecture Theatre, Social Areas and associated store rooms and welfare facilities. The proposal would also involve the removal of two temporary classrooms from the site. The

areas of the school vacated by the Sixth Formers shall then be occupied by other year groups with a steady increase in school intake proposed up to a total of 1228 pupils by 2024/25.

The application was supported by a Travel Plan, a Drainage Strategy, Flood Risk Assessment and Sustainable Drainage System Statement.

Any Constraints Affecting the Site

None

4. Consultation and Customer Impact

0

NCC - Local Highway Authority (LHA): *Object* – failure to demonstrate and mitigate impact on the local highway. The following summarised comments are provided:

- The existing site is known to cause congestion and obstruction at school pick up and drop off times
- The travel plan provided does not show that the provision will be made to enable the children to be pick-up and dropped off within school grounds and does not make provision for the reduction of car usage. The highway congestion issues are therefore unresolved.
- It may be difficult to enforce the non-car usage of sixth form students
- Question whether school bus usage will be required to increase with the removal of public bus service options
- Some contradicting information provided with regard non-car use of sixth formers
- No details provided as to how deliveries will be reduced and catered for
- Cycle storage facility is of poor quality
- The travel plan is not approved
- A Construction Management Plan should be required by condition
- *“Cannot support the application due to the potential harm to the safe operation of the local network”*

NCC – Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA): *No objection* subject to the imposition of a condition requiring approval of a surface water drainage scheme, including its ownership and maintenance arrangements and the requirement for a Verification report.

Anglian Water: Make the following summarised comments:

- No Anglian Water assets within the site
- Anglian water would take the necessary steps to ensure that there is sufficient wastewater treatment capacity
- The sewerage system has available capacity for flows

- The preferred method of surface water disposal would be to a sustainable drainage system
- The surface water strategy/flood risk assessment is unacceptable and therefore a condition should be attached requiring approval of a surface water management strategy

Sports England: Say that they do *not wish to raise an objection*

Northamptonshire Police: Say that the applicant should be approached for information regarding security and crime prevention which should follow guidance of Secured by Design for Schools

Environment Agency: *no comments* stated

Neighbours: Five third-party letters of comment have been received from surrounding residents; the comments are summarised below:

- Little or no impact to property
- There are existing road congestion issues in the area that will likely worsen particularly in Bryant Road and Martin Road which School buses and parents use
- Inconvenience and disturbance caused during construction
- Potential increase in noise

5. Planning Policy 0

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

2. Achieving sustainable development
8. Promoting healthy and safe communities
9. Promoting sustainable transport
12. Achieving well-designed places
14. Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Planning for schools development: Policy Statement 15th August 2011

Development Plan Policies

North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS):

1. Presumption in favour of sustainable development
7. Community services and facilities
8. Place shaping
9. Sustainable buildings
11. The network of urban and rural areas

6. Financial/Resource Implications 0

None

7. Planning Considerations

0

The key issues for consideration in this application are:-

1. The principle of the development
2. Loss of outside space
3. Impact on character and appearance
4. Impact on residential amenity
5. Impact on highway safety
6. Impact on flooding and drainage
7. Sustainable buildings
8. Other issues

1. The principle of the development

The site is located within Town boundaries as defined by Saved policies in the Local Plan and relates to an established school. As such the basic tenet of development is considered to be consistent with Policy 11 of the JCS which seeks to focus development to Growth Towns in the interests of securing a sustainable pattern of growth and protection of the rural area.

In addition Policy 7 of the JCS seeks development to support and enhance community facilities. This Development Plan approach is consistent with Chapter 8 of the NPPF and in particular its paragraph 94 which says:

“It is important 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:

a) give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools through the preparation of plans and decisions on applications...”

The School is the highest achieving in the County, oversubscribed and is the smallest of all other Secondary Schools in Kettering and as a result was asked by the Local Education Authority (LEA) to increase its Published Admissions Number (PAN) from 168 to 198 at Year 7 for this

academic year. This increased level of intake would increase incrementally each year up to a total of 1228 students by 2024/25. In addition this follows the publication of information by the LEA which says that Secondary School provision within the Kettering area, due to continued demographic growth, is already full and thereby rather than wait for a new Secondary School further provision for spaces is required now at existing sites.

This sustained level of increased PAN is not sustainable within the existing infrastructure at the school where currently poor and temporary accommodation is currently being utilised and overcrowding is a fear. The proposal would rationalise some of that poor quality student accommodation and result in their removal from the site. The first two years (60 pupils) of this increased intake has already been approved under the 2018 consent for a double class room, which has been constructed and already accommodating the additional intake for 2017/18 and 2018/19.

As well as the year 7 PAN increase an increase in sixth form intake from 200 students to 250 is proposed to allow for the larger feeder years that would then be coming through in time and expansion within Kettering generally.

The extension is primarily aimed at provision of a modern sixth form facility including a lecture auditorium and would mean that the areas that the current sixth form occupy around the School would be available to gradually expanding lower years. The following projected student numbers for the school is envisaged:

Year	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Academy Total	1043	1062	1095	1134	1167	1195	1214	1228

As such the proposal would meet an identified need for School places and at the same time would have the benefit of improving existing curriculum facilities within the School and overcrowding avoidance.

Thereby the proposal is considered to be acceptable in principle consistent with the Development Plan and NPPF advice and in such circumstances the provision of such facilities is to be afforded '*great weight*' in the decision making process. The Government Policy Statement on 'planning for schools development' also strongly advocates support for school development in planning decisions and attach '*significant weight*' to school development when determining applications.

2. Loss of outside space

Policy 7 of the JCS consistent with Chapter 8 (para. 97) of the NPPF seeks to protect existing playing fields.

The application would involve the loss of a small incidental grassed area, which is too small to be used as an area for play, two temporary classrooms in a poor state of repair and an area of hard-standing which appears to be used as a social space with seating and tables evident. As such the area subject to development has no function as 'playing fields'.

Sport England recognise this situation in their response by saying that "*The proposed development affects only land incapable of forming part of a playing pitch as the area lost is currently a hard surfaced informal recreation/break out space*" and thereby do not raise any issue.

As such the proposal would not result in the loss of any notable areas of outside space and therefore is considered to be acceptable in this regard.

3. Impact on character and appearance

Policy 8 (d) of the JCS, consistent with Chapter 12 paragraph 127 of the NPPF seeks development to respect its surroundings.

The proposal is set within established and well-defined school grounds and thereby should be considered in that context rather than in the context of the surrounding residential scales and densities of development.

The School consists of a range of one to four storey flat-roofed buildings with significant glazing and lightly coloured cladding systems and also includes a detached sports hall and temporary classrooms with surrounding associated play and parking areas.

The proposal comprises a detached building with predominately two storey heights and is broken up in sections. This includes the provision of mono-pitched rooves between recessed flat-roofed sections and a stone effect external finish interspersed with light brick work, timber clad and fully glazed sections. The proposal is considered to have successfully broken up the proposals expansive long elevations whilst also respecting the existing proportions and external appearance of the existing school buildings whilst also introducing some modern and interesting features and materials. Details of the materials and their finish shall be required by condition.

As such the proposal is considered to respect the character and appearance of the established school and would be read in conjunction with the scale and functionality of the existing school buildings and therefore is acceptable in this regard.

4. Impact on residential amenity

Policy 8 (e) of the JCS consistent with Chapter 12 paragraph 127(f) of the NPPF seeks development to protect amenity.

In terms of direct impacts derived from the physical presence of the building; the proposal could have a propensity to impact those neighbours to the south at 38-48 (even) Martin Road greatest.

The proposal would involve the provision of a blank 8.2m high by 9.8m wide light-brick work elevation 8m from the rear boundary of 40 and 42 Martin Road. These neighbours are in direct alignment with the closest element of the proposal and approximately 28m from the rear elevations of those dwellings. The scale of the proposal and the resulting relationship with neighbours is consistent with normal back-to-back relationships in a domestic situation. Whilst these neighbouring dwellings to the south would experience a change in their outlook the separation distances involved and the relative scale of the proposal are not considered to result in an overbearing impact or otherwise result in such a negative change in outlook that would be considered harmful to residential amenity. In addition due to the proposal being located to the north of the Martin Road dwellings the proposal would not cause overshadowing.

Moreover; the closest opposing first floor windows in the proposal to neighbours would be 19m from the rear boundary of 40 and 42 Martin Road and approximately 39m to their rear elevations. This is considered to be sufficient distances so as to avoid any adverse impacts to the privacy of neighbours.

In terms of indirect impacts arising from the proposal; whilst the School intake will be increasing, the level of increase will be gradual and would be relatively small with an increase in pupils of 166 over the next 6 years in a school that currently has over 1000 pupils. As such it is unlikely and with no reason to believe otherwise that this increase in student intake would result in a significant increase noise and disturbance that would not currently exist. In terms of impacts to amenity experienced by local residents with respect to vehicular movements the same is considered to apply with no reason to conclude that such an increase in student numbers would cause an adverse impact to amenity significantly over and above existing impacts experienced in the locality.

Given the relationship of the proposal to surrounding properties it is important to control significant impacts that might be experienced by neighbours during construction. As such and whilst it is accepted that all impacts in this regard cannot be fully mitigated a Demolition and Construction Management Plan (including piling details) shall be required to be agreed by condition.

The proposal would provide light internal spaces for its future users with good access to outside spaces and thereby would be a pleasant place to learn.

As such the proposal is considered to respect amenity consistent with Policy 8 (e) of the JCS and therefore acceptable in this regard.

5. Impact on highway safety

Policy 8 (b) of the JCS seeks development to provide a satisfactory means of access and provision for parking.

With regard existing site arrangements; the application was accompanied by a Travel Plan which says that currently there are 123 members of staff (including full and part-time) with the proposal resulting in an increase of 10 staff members. In preparation, in August 2018 the School increased its parking capacity from 90 to 140 spaces. Whilst the proposal was not accompanied by a parking beat survey an indication of the site's ability to absorb the relatively small increase in traffic movements expected can be seen on site. The Officers site visit was taken mid-morning on a typical school day and thereby there is no reason to believe that the circumstances seen are anything other than a true representation of the level of parking available at the School on any given day during term time.

During the site visit there were significant amounts of vacant parking spaces available (between 20-30) including the provision of disabled spaces close to the reception, 5-6 designated visitor spaces, at least 5 designated teacher spaces, contractor spaces and up to 20 spaces within the newly created areas depending on how users fill up the non-designated areas. As such and with no evidence provided that would justify coming to a different conclusion the site is considered to have sufficient capacity available to cope with the additional 10 teachers indicated in the submission and the relatively small number of additional sixth formers that could arrive in a car. Thereby the site currently has sufficient parking provision to cope with the increased demand associated with the day-to-day use of the proposal. The proposal therefore would not cause an increased demand toward on-street parking in the surrounding street and thereby would not lead to congestion of the surrounding road network. In any event the main access road; Lewis Road is restricted to permit holders only.

In terms of highway impacts associated with students arriving at and leaving the School each day; the Travel Plan included the results of a 2018 student travel questionnaire. This included the mode of transport students used to travel to and from school; the results were as follows:

Car	43%
Bus	25%
Walk	28%
Cycle	2%
Train (would arrive on foot)	2%

The results of this survey means that of the existing intake approximately one-third of all students, equating to approximately 350 pupils, arrive at school under their own power and the remaining two-thirds (approx. 700 pupils) arrive by bus or private car. The increase to student numbers is projected to be 185 over the next seven school terms (including 2018/19) and thereby would be felt gradually. By 2024/25 this results in a total number of students of 1228. Using the same percentage figures as above this means that of the 185 new students approximately 62 would arrive on foot/cycle and approximately 123 would arrive via bus or car.

Looking at the increase in bus usage; the bus arrangements either comprise use of the public bus service or a joint bus service operated with Bishop Stopford School. The bus stops are located either side of Pytchley Road in lay-bys close to the junction with Lewis Road and in Bryant Road where there are local bus service stops. Bryant Road is also where the laid-on school buses stop. Again using the percentage figures available the gradual increase in demand on these services would equate to 31 additional student users by 2024/25 at a rate of 4/5 students a year for the next 7 years (including 2018/19). Such an increase in bus usage, as a result of the proposal, would barely be noticeable as a change particularly against normal day-to-day and annual fluctuations. This scenario would not likely see an increase in the number of buses that are currently laid-on especially as the additional users would be further distributed between the public and school bus service. Thereby no additional bus movements would be expected and therefore no additional highway pressures created.

Moving on to look at impacts associated with increased car movements; using the same percentage figures laid out in the table above the increase in student intake would result in an additional 92 students arriving by car. Approximately 28 of these movements have already been approved by the 2018 permission for the double classroom and are currently being experienced. Assuming worst case scenario this would result in a residual increase in car trips (to and from) arising directly from the proposal of 64 by 2024. This equates to an annual increase in car trips, above those already approved, of 10/11 over the next 6 years; which is relatively low even when allowing margin of error. Moreover these movements will be staggered between a 45 minute period in the mornings from 7.30-8.15am, an hour and a half between 3.00-4.30pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and two hours fifteen minutes between 2.15-4.30pm on Wednesday. Further-still some of these movements would inevitably include shared trips.

An overall increase therefore of 64 students arriving via private car against an existing picture of approximately 500 students arriving via private car is not considered to be significant, particularly when occurring gradually over a six year period. This amount of private car trips would constitute the total amount of additional trips expected to be generated by the proposal given that the

amount of bus trips would not likely increase. Thereby the proposal would not result in a significant increase to existing traffic movements associated with the School and therefore would not have a harmful impact to highway safety on the surrounding road network.

In light of the foregoing and with no cogent information provided that would justify coming to a different conclusion or disputing the figures provided in the Travel Plan the proposal is considered to maintain existing highway safety levels. The Travel Plan and its aims and objectives shall be approved by condition.

The objection of the Local Highway Authority (LHA) relates primarily to existing issues. It is unreasonable to require this development to address existing highway matters. In any event the LHA do not say that those existing arrangements have highway safety harm and constitute a relatively common occurrence experienced during short-lived periods in the mornings and afternoons in the vicinity of schools. Further LHA comments pick up upon some inconsistencies in the submission with regard sixth-form car usage and a situation that may (or may not) involve the cutting of public transport bus routes. These issues are discussed above with sixth form usage assumed and therefore is based on worst case scenario with the existing car parking considered to have capacity to cope with increased demand. The application is considered on the existing bus arrangements available, with no evidence provided as to any future withdrawal (or not) of bus services.

In addition; the Travel Plan has been substantively approved other than the requirement for its annual monitoring and reporting to the LHA on request. As such the Travel Plan shall be approved by condition and include a clause requiring its annual monitoring with the monitoring information to be available to the local planning authority upon request. As such with this condition the Travel Plan is made to be entirely satisfactory.

Furthermore in relation to the LHA comments; details of the cycle arrangements and a Demolition and Construction Management Plan shall be required by condition.

Overall; the LHA objection does not appear to have been based on the level of additional highway movements that would be created and their impacts and instead focuses on the existing situation and areas of minor inconsistencies within the submission and matters that can be dealt with through conditions. In closing the LHA say that there is '*potential harm*' to highway safety. Such a view is not reflected in the above assessment or substantiated by information the LHA have provided with no clear statement by the LHA saying that the proposal would cause an unacceptable highway impact. Consequently there is no significant robust evidence base provided or apparent that could justify sustaining a highway related reason for refusal based on LHA advice primarily

due to the relatively small and incremental increase in vehicular movements expected (10/11 each year over a 6 year period).

The proposal therefore would not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety and nor would the residual cumulative impacts on the road network be severe, which are the thresholds prescribed in paragraph 109 of the NPPF whereby development may be refused on highways grounds. The proposal therefore is consistent with Policy 8 (b) of the JCS and therefore acceptable in this regard.

6. Impact on flooding and drainage

Policy 5 of the JCS, consistent with Chapter 14 of the NPPF, seeks development to contribute toward the reduction of flood risk and the protection and improvement of the quality of the water environment.

To demonstrate that the proposal is acceptable on this matter the application was accompanied by a Drainage Strategy, Flood Risk Assessment and Sustainable Drainage System Statement. Whilst located within a Flood Zone 1 (least prone to flooding) due to the extent of the proposal such Assessment is required. The Assessment concludes by saying that *“the proposed development can be accomplished without presenting an unacceptable flood risk to occupiers, without increasing flood risk elsewhere and without detriment to the existing drainage infrastructure”*.

Northamptonshire County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority has accepted the information subject to its adherence and the imposition of conditions requiring approval of a drainage strategy. Anglian Water also considers the proposal to be acceptable subject to the imposition of a condition requiring approval of a surface water management strategy. As such the proposal is considered to be acceptable in this regard with the stipulated flood authority and Anglian Water conditions imposed.

7. Sustainable buildings

Policy 9 of the JCS says that the submission should demonstrate how the development has addressed sustainable design principles.

To demonstrate policy compliance on this matter the applicant has provided a brief Statement indicating that the proposal will aspire to achieve BREEAM Very Good although go on to say that viability issues may make this difficult to achieve. Whilst this Statement has not been supported by evidences or workings to substantiate such claims equally there is no reason to believe that this is not the case.

Information provided also indicates that the layout and design of the building shall seek to maximise the use of passive solar design by according to Building Regulations at the time which includes the requirement for a Simplified Building

Energy Model. The building's rooves will also be available for decentralised energy provision in the future through the use of Photovoltaics in the event that such a provision can later come forward.

As such the proposal is considered to be broadly consistent with Policy 9 of the JCS and therefore acceptable in this regard.

8. Other issues

A condition shall be attached requiring the approval of a 'Secured by Design' scheme as required by Northamptonshire Police.

A condition shall be attached to deal with any impacts that may arise from unexpected contamination at the site and there is no reason to believe that the proposal will give rise to adverse biodiversity implications.

The third party comments have been dealt with throughout the above.

Conclusion

For the reasons given above and with no persuasive opposing evidences or views provided that would justify coming to a different conclusion the proposal is considered to be consistent with the Development Plan and the NPPF as a material consideration. As such the proposal is considered to make provision for the NPPFs three dimensions of sustainability (economic, social and environmental) and therefore the Frameworks presumption in favour of sustainable development applies.

As such there is no reason to apply the "*great weight*" afforded to such development by paragraph 94 of the NPPF in a planning balance. In the event that any residual harm does however exist then consideration of this 'weight' shall hold the tilt in any balance.

Consequently and in such circumstances the development should be approved without delay. The application is therefore recommended to the Planning Committee for approval pursuant to the imposition of the conditions laid out.

Background Papers

Title of Document:

Date:

Contact Officer:

Sean Bennett, Senior Development Officer on 01536 534316

Previous Reports/Minutes

Ref:

Date: