

PLANNING COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Date: Thursday 5 November 2020

Time: 10.00 a.m. to 10.50am

Present: Councillors D Connor (Chairman), I Gardener (Vice-Chairman), L Harford, B Hunt, S Kindersley, M Smith and J Scutt.

Officers: Emma Davies – Principal Sustainability Officer, Dr Jon Finney – Highway Development Management Officer, Emma Fitch – Joint Interim Assistant Director, Environment and Commercial, Philippa Kelly – Principal Planning Officer (Strategic Sites Team) Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Team, Jaspreet Lyall – LGSS Law, Travine Monteiro – Built Environment Team Leader, Dallas Owen – Development Management Officer and Daniel Snowdon – Democratic Services Officer.

107. Apologies:

Apologies were received from Councillor Ashwood.

108. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

109. Minutes – 1st October 2020

The minutes of the 1st October 2020 were agreed as a correct record and would be signed by the Chairman at a later date

110. Erection of a two-storey, 2 form entry primary school to accommodate 420 pupils with a 52-place nursery, creation of new access for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians, car park, landscaping and associated infrastructure.

At: Land north of Newmarket Road, Cambridge

Applicant: Cambridgeshire County Council

Application Number: FMW/003/20

The Committee considered a report that sought planning permission for the erection of a two-storey, two form entry primary school to accommodate 420 pupils with a 52-place nursery together with the creation of new access for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians, car park, landscaping and associated infrastructure.

The presenting officer provided a summary of the agenda pack and plans provided to the Committee.

Members noted that a previous planning application had been refused by the Joint Development Control Committee - Cambridge Fringes (JDCC) so it was considered prudent for the application to be brought before the Committee and noted further that no objections had been received from statutory consultees. The application focussed on the reasons for the previous refusal of planning permission relating to design, access and sustainability.

An aerial view was shown to Members that illustrated the wider context of the location of the site with nearby villages and roads highlighted, together with a further slide that provided the location of the nearby park and ride site and Cambridge Airport. A plan was shown that provided details of proposed public rights of way to the site that had been submitted to the Highway Authority for approval. A site plan was also shown that highlighted residential properties to the west and north which were in various stages of construction.

School plans had been designed in accordance with the masterplan for the wider site and various drawings and elevations were shown to the Committee. Construction materials had not yet been agreed and a slide was shown that provided an indication of the likely materials to be used.

Members' attention was drawn to play areas together with possible ideas for playground markings to encourage imaginative play.

The presenting officer concluded that on the basis that there were no objections received from statutory consultees and the work the applicant had undertaken to improve the application, the recommendation before the Committee was to grant planning permission subject to the conditions set out in paragraph 11.1 of the officer report.

In response to Member questions officers:

- Clarified that regarding paragraph 6.13 of the officer report, relating to road safety and the travel plan, was in relation to the draft condition. When applications were submitted they were submitted on the basis of an outline travel plan but would require a formal one to be submitted.
- Explained that with regard to surface water drainage, when the conditions are discharged the developer would consult the lead local flood authority which looked at the wider context of the development as a whole. The applicant had connected to the wider development and maintenance and access was secured by condition.

- Provided clarification regarding the gate to the staff carpark. A Member expressed concern that if it was not controlled at opening and closing time of school it would encourage parents to use it as a drop off location. Officers explained that it would be a management issue for the school and encompassed by the Travel Plan. The school was aware of the Highway Authority's concerns and therefore an informative had been drafted as part of the report that clearly set out how access should be controlled. Officers were confident that the gate could be successfully managed through the Travel Plan. The school had been designed on the basis of its intake of children living on the wider development and those children arriving from further afield would most likely use the park and ride car park which was more convenient and there was an attractive footpath route to the school.
- Explained that the comments from CamCycle related to areas outside of the red line boundary for the school planning application site and had therefore been addressed by the wider development. Officers explained further that the guidance referred to by CamCycle came into effect a month later than the crossing was granted under the permission for the wider site. Crossing points should be installed when traffic moved at high flows and high speeds. Officers were of the view that the route did not represent high flow and it was unlikely to be high speed. The lack of a controlled crossing allowed cyclists to maintain momentum and cross carefully. What CamCycle was requesting was not necessarily an appropriate solution and would not be in the context of the wider development.

The Chairman invited Mrs Lisa Skinner, agent for the applicant to address the Committee. Mrs Skinner began by highlighting the importance of the school and nursery to the infrastructure of the wider development. Extensive work had been undertaken since the decision of the JDCC to refuse planning permission to mitigate concerns; specifically regarding the access strategy for the site and the sustainability of the building. The work resulted in a new application being submitted on the main master plan of the development which was approved earlier in the year. The application also updated internal access design. The building had been designed to a high standard regarding sustainability to receive a good rating. The school integrated with the market square and provided a focal point and would fully integrate with future buildings. South Cambridgeshire District Council's Urban Design Officer strongly supported the application and the Quality Panel acknowledged the improvements that had been made to the application.

Mrs Skinner informed the Committee that the school would be intending to close the gates 30 minutes before and after the opening and closing of school and would form part of the Travel Plan.

In response to Member questions Mrs Skinner confirmed that the application was entirely separate to any proposed development at Marshalls Airfield.

Local Member Councillor John Williams had been invited to address the Committee. However, the clerk informed Members that he had been unable to attend.

During debate of the application Members:

- Commented that the application was sensible, with one area of concern that was outside of the red-line boundary. There was therefore no reason for refusal of the application.
- Supported and welcomed the approach to imaginative play set out within the application.
- Noted the concern of the JDCC regarding conflict between different modes of transport and having carefully assessed the modifications to the application and noting that the site was not without constraints would be supporting the application.

Officers drew attention to informative 7 contained on page 43 of the agenda pack and suggested with the approval of the Committee that it be amended to make reference to the pedestrian gate being opened but the car access being closed. The Committee indicated its support for the amendment.

It was proposed by Councillor Kindersley and seconded by Councillor Hunt that the recommendation be put to the vote.

It was resolved unanimously:

That permission is granted subject to the conditions set out in Appendix A to these minutes and the amendment of Informative 7.

111. Summary of decisions made under delegated powers

The Committee considered a summary of decisions made under delegated powers.

It was resolved unanimously to note report.

Chairman