

**Open Report on behalf of Andy Gutherson
Interim Executive Director for Place**

Report to:	Planning and Regulation Committee
Date:	4 February 2019
Subject:	County Council Development - 138681

Summary:

Planning permission is sought to erect a new single storey extension to form three classrooms at Saxilby C of E Primary School, Highfield Road, Saxilby.

The development would see an addition of three classrooms to the rear of the school, one will be an extra classroom to the whole school site. The remaining two will be compensatory classrooms from within the school building where toilets and a staff room are being placed. The existing temporary units will remain on site as the planning permission has not expired. It is therefore concluded that there will be one single classroom addition to the overall school site. The proposed development would result in the loss of existing tarmacked play area which will be replaced by a playground extension.

Concerns have been raised by local residents regarding parking by staff and parent parking that already exists and would deteriorate with an increase in pupils attending the school. The concerns raised have been taken into consideration and it is evident that the key issue to be considered in the determination of this application is whether the proposal for a permanent learning space, a staff rest area and extra toilets, which would enhance the learning environment of the children, outweighs the impacts that the development would have on the amenity of the local residents.

Recommendation:

Following consideration of the relevant development plan policies and the comments received through consultation and publicity it is recommended that conditional planning permission be granted.

Background

1. Saxilby C of E Primary school are having to address increased pressures on providing school spaces due to a rise in children of primary school age in the local area over recent years. This school is now oversubscribed and will be taking 60 pupils in September 2019 as opposed to the PAN (pupil admission

number) of 50. The current number of pupils within the school is 343 (July 2017). In order to accommodate the influx in pupils from the surrounding area, planning permission has been sought for the addition of one classroom in the overall school site and two compensatory classrooms due to internal reconfiguration.

2. Previously the site has sought various planning permissions regarding extra space for teaching and staffrooms-
 - PL/0140/06 - Retain the existing relocatable classroom unit;
 - PL/0155/12 - To seek retrospective planning permission to retain two existing mobile classrooms for three years;
 - PL/0040/16 - To seek retrospective planning permission to retain two existing mobile classrooms for five years. This permission will expire within 2021.

The Application

3. Permission is sought to erect a new single storey extension to form three classrooms at Saxilby C of E Primary School. A brief outline of the works proposed as a part of the application is set out as follows:

Extension of the existing school - the school, in keeping with national policy, is offering school spaces to those in the local area. Due to the increase in pupils needing school spaces, an addition of one classroom is needed overall. The extension will consist of three classrooms, two of which will compensate for the removal of classrooms within the existing building which are being converted to a staff room.



Existing school building and extension site

4. The extension would measure 29m in length by 13m in width which will have a mono pitched roof with a height of 6m. The extension will be in keeping with the school design and the brickwork will be matching to the existing school. Windows will be white uPVC and the roof will have tiling which is the same as the existing school building roof tiles.
5. The applicant submits that the proposed development would be of benefit to both pupils and staff in the school. Temporary units are not a long term solution to meeting deficiencies in accommodation requirements so it would not be appropriate to station another mobile unit at the school to address the anticipated increase in pupil numbers. The number of pupils requiring school spaces has increased in the local community and a need to continue to provide these additional spaces has led to the submission of this application in order to provide for new pupils in September 2019. It is expected that longer term these places will continue to be filled, hence the proposed long-term solution.
6. A Travel Plan submitted with the application shows the school's proactive approach to remedying parking issues and traffic safety. The school has introduced a drop off session between 08:50 hours and 09:00 hours where pupils will be supervised once dropped off by parents. This creates a staggering approach to the drop off time and will help decrease parking on roads. There is also an agreement with the Parish Council who allow parents to use the pavilion car park at the rear of the school for pick up and drop off times. As seen within the Travel Plan, it is evident that the school is

taking a positive approach to encouraging sustainable ways of travelling to school and are involved in many schemes which teach pupils about the importance of sustainability.

7. Currently 41% of student walk to school, 10% travel by bike, 7% by scooter and 41% travel by car. Therefore it has to be noted that 58% of students are choosing alternative methods to travelling by car. This is expected to increase over time if the school continues to engage with their Action Plan which emphasises giving encouragement to sustainable transport methods.
8. There are 22 parking spaces for staff. The school has 47 staff, 26 of which travel to school by car or car share. This means there are 4 staff members who have to use local roads to park during day time. It also has to be remembered that of these 47 staff, not all are full time and are in the school for the whole day.
9. The proposed development would result in the loss of part of the existing playground which is used for netball courts. In order to compensate for the loss of the playground it is proposed to construct an area of tarmac measuring 14m x 30m to compensate for the loss of the playground to accommodate the proposed extension.



Existing playground and netball court

Site and Surroundings

10. Saxilby is situated just to the west of Lincoln where the A57 crosses the River Witham. The Primary School is centrally situated in Saxilby village within a residential area. It is to the west of Mill Lane (B1241) and immediately south of Highfield Road, from which access is gained.
11. There is a recreation ground and other community facilities, including tennis courts and a bowling green, to the south of the school. A public footpath bounds the south of the site and the school is bounded on all sides by close board wooden fencing, hedging or mature trees. The closest dwelling is to the west of the property which is approximately 13m away from the proposed extension, this dwelling is single storey. The school buildings are comprised of single storey, modern, brick blocks and are compatible in design with the adjoining residential properties

Main Planning Considerations

National Guidance

12. The National Planning Policy Framework (July 2018) sets out the Government's planning policies for England. It is a material consideration in determination of planning applications and adopts a presumption in favour of sustainable development. A number of paragraphs are of particular relevance to this application as summarised:

Paragraph 8 - Core planning principles

Paragraph 11 - Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development

Paragraph 38 - Local planning authorities should approach decision on a proposed development in a positive and creative way

Paragraph 55 - Planning conditions should only be imposed where they are necessary, relevant to planning, enforceable, precise and reasonable

Paragraph 94 - It is important that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meeting the needs of existing and new communities

Paragraph 97 - existing sports land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless the loss from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location

Paragraph 102 - Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals

Paragraph 124 - Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, as it creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities

Paragraph 127 - The way in which decisions should achieve well designed places

Paragraph 213 - Weight should be given to relevant local plans.

Local Plan Context

13. Central Lincolnshire Local Plan 2017 (CLLP) adopted April 2017. The following policies are relevant to this proposal:

Policy LP1 - When considering development proposals, the authority should take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. The authority will always work proactively with applicants to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in Central Lincolnshire;

Policy LP2 - The spatial strategy focuses on delivering sustainable growth for Central Lincolnshire that meets the needs for homes and jobs, regenerates places and communities, and supports necessary improvements to facilities, services and infrastructure. Development should create strong, sustainable, cohesive and inclusive communities, making the most effective use of previously developed land (except where that land is of high environmental value), and enabling a larger number of people to access jobs, services and facilities locally;

Policy LP13 - Development proposals which contribute towards an efficient and safe transport network that offers a range of transport choices for the movement of people and goods will be supported. All developments should demonstrate, where appropriate, that they have had regard to minimising travel and encouraging the use of sustainable transport modes. Development should also provide well designed, safe and convenient access for all, giving accessibility and convenience to the needs of pedestrians and cyclists;

Policy LP26 - 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.

Results of Consultation and Publicity

14. (a) Saxilby with Ingley Parish Council – has requested the implementation of a Construction Management Scheme in order to minimise large vehicles entering the site in peak congestion times. Issues have been

raised regarding the zig-zags outside the school. The Parish Council have noted that the extension would lead to a loss in a playing area of the children and that the increase of a tarmacked area may increase flood risk along the footpath to the south the school boundary.

- (b) Local County Council Member, Councillor Mrs J Brockway - no comments had been received by the time this report was prepared.
 - (c) Environment Agency (EA) – no comments had been received by the time this report was prepared.
 - (d) Environmental Health Officer (West Lindsey District Council) – no comments had been received by the time this report was prepared.
 - (e) Highways & Lead Local Flood Authority (Lincolnshire County Council) – there is no objections raised with this proposal, however there are conditions which have been attached regarding changes to the travel plan.
 - (f) Sport England - initially an objection was received from Sport England due to the loss of a netball court to the rear of the school. The agent then made changes to the application and subsequently the addition to the tarmacked area provides for a compensatory netball court. This has been deemed acceptable from Sport England subject to commencement conditions and who have subsequently removed the objection.
15. The application has been publicised by notices posted at the site and letters of notification sent to the nearest neighbouring residents. A total of five representations have been received as a result of this publicity/notification and a summary of the objections/comments received are set out below:
- There have been continuous issues with staff and parents parking inconsiderately within the local area and has involved residents having their drives blocked by cars. There is a concern that by taking in more students and increasing the school's capacity, it will encourage more parking issues. The highways issues mean emergency vehicles; delivery vans and tradesmen are not always able to park outside the correct house.
 - Concerns have also been raised about whether the extension will take away light from neighbouring properties.

District Council's Observations

16. West Lindsey District Council were consulted on 28 November 2018 and no comments had been received by the time this report was written.

Conclusions

17. The key issue to be considered in the determination of this application is whether creating a permanent learning space which supports and enhances the learning environment, outweighs the impacts that the development would have on the amenity local residents could reasonably expect to enjoy and the loss of playground provision.

Need, Design and Amenity

18. The drive to provide sufficient school spaces is evident within the NPPF (Policy 94). To respond to the local pressures of increase in local population and children needing school spaces there is a need for additional classrooms at Saxilby Primary School. All three of these classrooms will be used for teaching space, with two compensating for classrooms being taken from the existing school. There is a classroom in the existing school which is being converted into toilets and another which is being converted to a staff room. There are two temporary units on the site which house a full class of children and after school clubs. However, the school is only increasing by one classroom to cater for an extended PAN which will be an addition of 10 children entering the school.
19. The NPPF along with local plan policy stresses the importance of good design in order to establish sustainable communities. Development which is sympathetic to the local area and character defines good design within national and local policy. The proposed extension would be compatible with the existing school and would result in modest changes to the visual character of the area. The proposal would be visible by some properties but is predominantly sheltered by the existing school building and fencing. There are mature trees, planting and fencing along the southern boundary, which would provide screening. Policy LP26 states the importance of the need to consider design and amenity when making decisions. The proposed design demonstrates that the development would not cause any undue harm to visual amenity in that it is to use the same materials and scale of the existing school buildings. It can be determined that there would be little negative impacts to the character as a result of this development given the design and distance of the extension in comparison to residential properties. The closest dwellings are bungalows and the boundary compromises of a closed boarded wooden fence.
20. Although there is a need to remove tarmacking within the school site to make space for the development, compensatory tarmacking would be conditioned to help offset the impact of the loss of play area for the children.
21. Given that Policy LP1 encourages sustainability, the addition of permanent buildings will enhance the efficiency of the school. An application will need to be submitted in 2021 to retain the mobile classroom. An assessment of the planning issues associated with the retention of the mobile classroom will be considered at the time.

Playground Provision and Drainage

22. The development would result in the loss of an existing netball court used by the school. After consultation with Sports England, it was deemed that the loss of the netball court outweighed the potential gain of the development, resulting in Sport England objecting to the proposal. The agent submitted plans for a replacement netball court to be provided to the east of the playground with an extension of around 14sq.m to the existing tarmacked play area. A condition can be attached to any permission granted which will ensure a new, full netball court would be provided, meeting the requirements of paragraph 97 of the NPPF. Sport England has subsequently retracted their objection and has agreed that the scheme is now in keeping with Sport England Policy exception E5 provided the replacement netball court is available within six months of the classrooms first being brought into use.
23. Due to the addition of impermeable ground resulting from the replacement netball court area and the comments from the Parish Council regarding flooding on land to the south a condition could be imposed on any permission granted requiring a drainage scheme to be submitted to ensure there is no detrimental impact through flooding as a result of the construction of the replacement netball court. The proposal is not situated in a flood zone and would result in minimal addition to the impermeable surface, subject to the imposition of a drainage condition it can be concluded that there will be no adverse impact to the amenity of the area through flooding.

Highways

24. There is an expected increase in pupils by 10 in September 2019 and there is potential the development would lead to a modest increase of car parking in the area from parents during school starting and finishing times. However, current Travel Plan initiatives are leading towards lowering the number of cars visiting the school. It is also positive that there is a strong relationship with the Parish Council who let parents use a Parish Council car park close to the school. There is no expected increase in the number of staff, meaning the staff parking issue, is unlikely to worsen. With no increase in staff, it is unlikely that there will be more cars parked on the road during the daytime. Also the staff numbers include midday supervisors, cleaners and caretakers whom work out of peak times when there is likely to be more onsite parking. The spaces are given on a first come basis and are not designated to certain members of staff. There are not enough spaces to cater for all staff members; however, the expectation of there being enough spaces for staff would be unrealistic given the constraints of the school site.
25. The continued proactive attitude towards changing transport behaviours in the school, in line with the Travel Plan, gives reason to conclude the number of people travelling to the site by car will decrease over future years. There is a need to continue to work alongside the Travel Plan and ensure actions are taken in working towards this sustainable objective. Therefore, in order to ensure the continued proactivity, annual updates of the Travel Plan can

be required through an updated Travel Plan which can be secured through a planning condition attached to any planning permission granted.

26. The management of parking can be undertaken through the Travel Plan and the school by encouraging walking or car sharing schemes. It would be unreasonable to not expect congestion during pick up and drop off time. The school do keep records of staff and their car number plates.
27. To address the concerns of the Parish Council regarding construction traffic a Construction Traffic Management Plan can be required to be submitted through a planning condition. This will ensure the control of large vehicles visiting during peak times of the school day.
28. Objections from local residents in relation to local amenity show that inconsiderate parking by parents and staff is an issue for the community. A set of proactive Travel Plan objectives being implemented should have a positive impact in reducing the amount of travel to the school via car. This would help to reduce the amount of car travel to the school but it is acknowledged that there would still be some congestion at school starting and finishing times.
29. On balance taking into account the need for additional school places and the impact the proposed development would have on the amenity local residents could reasonably expect to enjoy it is concluded that with the conditions proposed to mitigate the development it would not be contrary to the policies in the NPPF and Local Plan.

Final Conclusion

30. Notwithstanding the location of the development, within a busy school site, the works are in compliance with national agendas and policy and are considered necessary in order to provide sufficient school places. The loss of the existing netball court has been mitigated to the satisfaction of Sport England. Consideration has been given to the representations and comments received however, on balance, it is considered that the benefits afforded by this development outweigh any negative impacts and the development is in accordance with relevant policies of both the NPPF and Central Lincolnshire Local Plan policies.
31. The proposed development has been considered against Human Rights implications especially with regard to Article 8 – right to respect for private and family life and Protocol 1, Article 1 – protection of property and balancing the public interest and well – being of the community within these rights and the Council has had due regard to its public sector equality duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

1. The development must be begun no later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The development hereby permitted shall only be carried out in accordance with the following documents and plans. The approved documents and plans are as follows:

- Proposed Elevation, Drawing Number 310468 431 03 (Date Stamped 20 November 2018)
- Proposed Site Plan, Drawing Number 310468 431 01 (Date Stamped 20 November 2018)
- Proposed Sports Plan, Drawing Number 31468 431 07 (Date Stamped 20 December 2018)
- Existing Plans and Elevations, Drawing Number 31468 431 06 (Date Stamped 4 December 2018)
- Proposed Floor Plan, Drawing Number 310468 431 02 (Date Stamped 20 November 2018).

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved details.

3. Notwithstanding the details contained in the Travel Plan submitted with the application no part of the development shall be brought into operational use until a written Travel Plan, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The Travel Plan shall then be implemented in accordance with the timetable contained therein and shall continue to be implemented throughout the development's lifetime.

Reason: In order that the Local Planning Authority conforms to the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework, a Travel Plan has been conditioned to ensure that access to the site is sustainable and reduces dependency on the car.

4. Within one month of the date of this permission a Construction Traffic Management Plan for the proposed development shall be submitted for the written approval of the County Planning Authority. The development shall then proceed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the construction phase of the development proceeds without causing any disruption to users of the local highway network or amenity of local residents.

5. Within six months of the development hereby permitted first being brought into use the replacement netball court area shown on Drawing Ref 31468 431 07 'Proposed Sports Plan' dated December 2018 shall be constructed and available for use.

Reason: To compensate for the loss of playground provision and meet the Sport England exemption for loss of playground provision.

6. Before construction of the replacement netball court commences a Drainage Strategy Scheme for this replacement netball court shall be submitted for the written approval of the County Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented in full.

Reason: To minimise the risk of flooding in the interests of local amenity.

Informatives

Attention is drawn to:

- i) Please contact the Lincolnshire County Council Streetworks and Permitting Team on 01522 782070 to discuss any proposed statutory utility connections and any other works which will be required within the public highway in association with the development permitted under this Consent. This will enable Lincolnshire County Council to assist in the coordination and timings of these works;
- ii) Attention is drawn to the requirements of the Local Highway and Lead Local Flood Authority contained in their advice note dated 18 December 2018 which is attached to this Decision Notice.
- iii) In dealing with this application the County Planning Authority has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner by seeking further information to address issues identified and processed the application efficiently so as to prevent any unnecessary delay. This approach ensures the application is handled in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development which is consistent with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and as required by Article 35(2) of the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure)(England) Order 2015.

Appendix

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Committee Plan

Background Papers

The following background papers as defined in the Local Government Act 1972 were relied upon in the writing of this report.

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
Planning Application File - 138681	Lincolnshire County Council, Planning, Lancaster House, 36 Orchard Street, Lincoln, LN1 1XX
National Planning Policy Framework (2012)	The Government's website www.gov.uk
Central Lincolnshire Local Plan (April 2017)	West Lindsey District Council's website www.west-lindsey.gov.uk

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Location:
 Saxilby C Of E Primary School
 Highfield Road

Description:
 To erect a new single storey extension to form
 3no. classrooms

Application No: 138681
Scale: 1:2500