

PLANNING COMMITTEE: 2nd July 2019
DEPARTMENT: Planning Service
HEAD OF PLANNING: Peter Baguley

APPLICATION REF: N/2019/0401

LOCATION: Rectory Farm Farmhouse, Olden Road

DESCRIPTION: Extension to existing educational building and perimeter fencing

WARD: Rectory Farm Ward

APPLICANT: Billing Brook School Academy Trust
AGENT: Sursham Tompkins & Partners

REFERRED BY: Head of planning
REASON: Council owned land

DEPARTURE: No

APPLICATION FOR DETERMINATION:

1 RECOMMENDATION

1.1 **APPROVAL** subject to the conditions as set out below and for the following reason:

The proposed development would support education facilities and, as part of a balanced assessment, is considered acceptable subject to conditions. As such, no objections are raised with regards to the National Planning Policy Framework; Policies S10, RC2, E6, and BN9 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and Saved Policies E20 and R9 of the Northampton Local Plan.

2 THE PROPOSAL

2.1 The application seeks planning permission for an extension to the existing building and perimeter fencing to facilitate the use of the site for the expansion of Billing Brook School.

2.2 The proposed extension would be located to the north western rear corner of the existing building. It would be single storey with a gabled roof and measure 6.4 metres in width, 14.3 metres in depth and a maximum of 5.1 metres in height.

2.3 The new fencing which is the subject of the application would comprise 2.4 metre high wire mesh fencing located along both the western boundary of the site with properties on Lowlands Close and the eastern boundary of Rectory Farmhouse with the parking and open space that is shared with the community centre.

- 2.4 The submitted plans also show new 2 metre high solid timber close boarded fencing to the frontage of Rectory Farmhouse with the playing field footpath and 2 metre wire mesh fencing to the footpath to the eastern boundary of the site. However, these works would fall within permitted development rights and therefore the planning merits of these works do not fall for consideration under this application.
- 2.5 The application has been amended since its submission to reduce the height of the extension and set it further in from the boundary with No 54 Lowlands Close. In addition, the proposed fencing has been revised with the wire meshing fencing to the side boundaries of Rectory Farmhouse reduced in height from 6 metres to 2.4 metres.

3 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 3.1 The application site forms part of the Rectory Farm Local Centre and contains Rectory Farmhouse, an attractive detached two storey building set in a spacious plot. It benefits from a line of mature trees running along the eastern boundary of the site and also a belt of trees running along the rear boundary. The site is open to car parking and open space shared with Rectory Farm Community Centre to the east and fronts onto Rectory Farm Playing Field to the south. The site neighbours residential properties on Lowlands Close to the western side and northern rear boundaries. Overall, the site has an open feel and a parkland character.
- 3.2 The application property does not benefit from any recent planning history. Although, it is understood that it has previously been used by various community groups including the Indian Hindu Welfare Organisation, the Police and by Community Spaces Northampton as an ancillary office to the community centre in the Rectory Farm Community Centre.

4 PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 None relevant.

5 PLANNING POLICY

5.1 Statutory Duty

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires a planning application to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for the purposes of this application comprises the adopted West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2014), and Northampton Local Plan (1997) saved policies.

5.2 National Policies

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the current aims and objectives for the planning system and how these should be applied. In delivering sustainable development, decisions should have regard to the mutually dependent social, economic and environmental roles of the planning system. The NPPF should be read as one complete document. However, the following sections are of particular relevance to this application:

Paragraphs 7-12 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Paragraph 127 - Create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Section 8 - Promoting healthy and safe communities.

Section 9 - Promoting sustainable transport

Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places.

Section 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

5.3 West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2014)

The West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) provides an up to date evidence base and considers the current Government requirements for plan making as it has been prepared in full conformity with the NPPF. Policies of particular relevance are:

S10 - Sustainable Development Principles
BN9 - Pollution Control
RC2 - Community Needs
E6 - Education, skills and Training

5.4 **Northampton Local Plan 1997 (Saved Policies)**

Due to the age of the plan, the amount of weight that can be attributed to the aims and objectives of this document are diminished, however, the following policies are material to this application:

E20 - New development (design)
R9 - District and local centres

5.5 **Supplementary Planning Documents**

Northamptonshire Parking Standards (September 2016)
Planning out Crime in Northamptonshire SPG 2004

6 **CONSULTATIONS/ REPRESENTATIONS**

Comment received are summarised as follows:

6.1 **Environmental Protection (NBC):**

- The extension would be in close proximity to residential properties and no windows or openings should be introduced to the façade which sits along the border with No 54 Lowlands to prevent noise break out.
- No external plant is shown on the plans; any plant should not be sited on the side neighbouring residential properties and should be set more centrally within the development and conform to specific noise levels.
- One of the proposed building room end uses is annotated as a kitchen, but the application does not give an indication of the numbers of meals being prepared and cooked in this room and how the kitchen will be ventilated. Further information regarding this is sought together with details of odour control to ensure that the amenity of the surrounding residents is not compromised by any new end use of the building.
- Restrictions should be placed on construction hours.

6.2 **Three letters of objection** were received to the application as originally submitted which raised the following points:

- Entrance to the building should be kept to the community centre side to limit disturbance to neighbours.
- The extension has been unnecessarily placed on the wrong side of the building.
- Extension will impact on light received by neighbours, its proximity would present security and privacy issues due to children climbing on its roof, the kitchen would generate noise and odour, fire safety issues, and encourage vermin in the area.
- Fencing 6 metres in height is excessive and would create the feel of a prison and block light from neighbours.
- The building has historically suffered with issues of anti-social behaviour and vandalism.

6.3 Following the receipt of amended plans, one representation has been submitted which details that the revised plans are acceptable.

6.4 In addition, a further representation has been submitted following the receipt of the amended plans which objects to the principle of the educational use of the site on the basis of noise and property values/saleability.

7 APPRAISAL

Principle of development.

- 7.1 The application site is in a local centre and has previously been used for various community uses such that an education use would be in line with the established use of the property.
- 7.2 In addition, Policy E6 of the Joint Core Strategy encourages education facilities. Furthermore, Paragraph 94 of the NPPF details that it is important to ensure that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities and that Local Planning Authorities should give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools. The principle of an extension and ancillary works to support a school use on the site is therefore also acceptable.

Design and layout

- 7.3 Saved Policy E20 of the Local Plan and the guidance in the NPPF advise that planning should always seek to secure high quality design.
- 7.4 The application property comprises an attractive detached building of stone and brick construction with strong gable and window features in a parkland setting. The application as originally submitted proposed a deep single storey extension close to the boundary with No 54 Lowland Close and a steep roof pitch to match the existing dwelling. However, to limit the impact on neighbours and create a sense of space around the building, the application has been amended to set the extension some 2 metres in from the common boundary and reduce its roof pitch. Whilst the roof pitch would no longer match the existing dwelling, due to the siting of the extension to the rear corner of the property and the single storey scale of the proposed development, it is considered that it would not appear unduly prominent in the streetscene.
- 7.5 Turning to the proposed means of enclosure of the site, the application proposes 2.4 metre wire mesh fencing to the side boundaries of Rectory Farmhouse with the car park and properties on Lowlands Close. The wire mesh fence would retain a sense of openness to the site and also ensure that the rear part of the school is secure. The submitted plans also show sections of 2 metre high fencing to both the frontage of the site with the playing field and to the footpath to the east of the site, however these works would benefit from permitted development rights. As such, it is considered that objections could not be sustained to the proposed means of enclosures.
- 7.6 Overall, and subject to conditions relating to materials for the extension and preventing alterations to the boundary treatments, it is considered that the proposal would not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area.

Residential amenity

- 7.7 Saved Policy E20, Policy BN9 of the of the Joint Core Strategy and the guidance in the NPPF all seek to secure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.
- 7.8 In respect of the amenity of neighbours, the application has been amended to set the extension further in from the boundary with No 54 Lowland Close and reduce its roof height. As such, and although the extension is relatively deep, it is considered that it would not have unduly prominent or enclosing effect on this neighbour. Furthermore, due to its single storey scale, the proposed extension would not result in a loss of privacy. The initial neighbour concerns and the comments of the Environmental Health Officer regarding the potential impact of the kitchen are noted. However, the applicant has indicated that the kitchen would be of domestic scale to reflect the limited number of pupils that the school could accommodate and the proposal does not include openings in the flank wall facing No 54 Lowlands Close. Furthermore, a condition could be imposed preventing the installation of any windows or kitchen vents in this flank elevation. In

addition, a kitchen could be accommodated in the existing building without requiring planning permission. In any event, any external flues or plant would require planning permission in their own right and this matter can be addressed by condition. As such, it is considered that the proposed extension would not have an adverse impact on the residential amenity of any neighbouring property.

- 7.9 In respect of the new enclosures, the fencing along the western boundary has been reduced from 6 metres to 2.4 metres in height. Whilst this is higher than the 2 metre fencing that would be allowed under permitted development rights, it is required as a ball stop and the fencing would be of wire mesh construction such that it would allow views and light through. As such, it is considered that it would not appear unduly prominent or overbearing when viewed from neighbouring properties on Lowlands Close.
- 7.10 Overall, it is considered that the proposal would not give rise to an unacceptable impact with regard to the amenities of neighbours and would afford an acceptable standard of amenity for future occupiers of the site.

Other considerations

- 7.11 The proposed extension is for a dining and kitchen area and, as such, it would have no parking or highway safety implications.
- 7.12 The Environmental Health Officer has requested a condition relating to construction hours, however this would not be reasonable as the proposal is only for a single storey extension with fencing and there are controls under the Environmental Health and Highway legislations to address issues arising from such small construction site should they arise.

8 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The proposed development would support the expansion of education facilities and, as part of a balanced assessment, is considered acceptable subject to conditions. As such, no objections are raised with regards to the National Planning Policy Framework; Policies S10, RC2, E6, and BN9 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and Saved Policies E20 and R9 of the Northampton Local Plan.

9 CONDITIONS

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from 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 be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: PL00A, PL01D, PL02B, PL03B, PL04B, PL05B, PL06C, PL07C, and PL08C.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to accord with the terms of the planning application.

3. The external walls and roof of the extension shall be constructed with materials of the same type, texture and colour as the external walls and roof of the existing building.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Saved Policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan.

4. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no windows, doors, boiler flues, kitchen extract vents or roof lights shall be installed in the western side elevation of the proposed extension.

Reason: To safeguard the privacy of adjoining properties in accordance with Saved Policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan.

5. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), the proposed 2.4 metre high wire fencing shall be installed in accordance with the approved details and no alterations shall take place to this approved fencing thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to safeguard the amenities of neighbouring properties in accordance with Saved Policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan.

10 BACKGROUND PAPERS

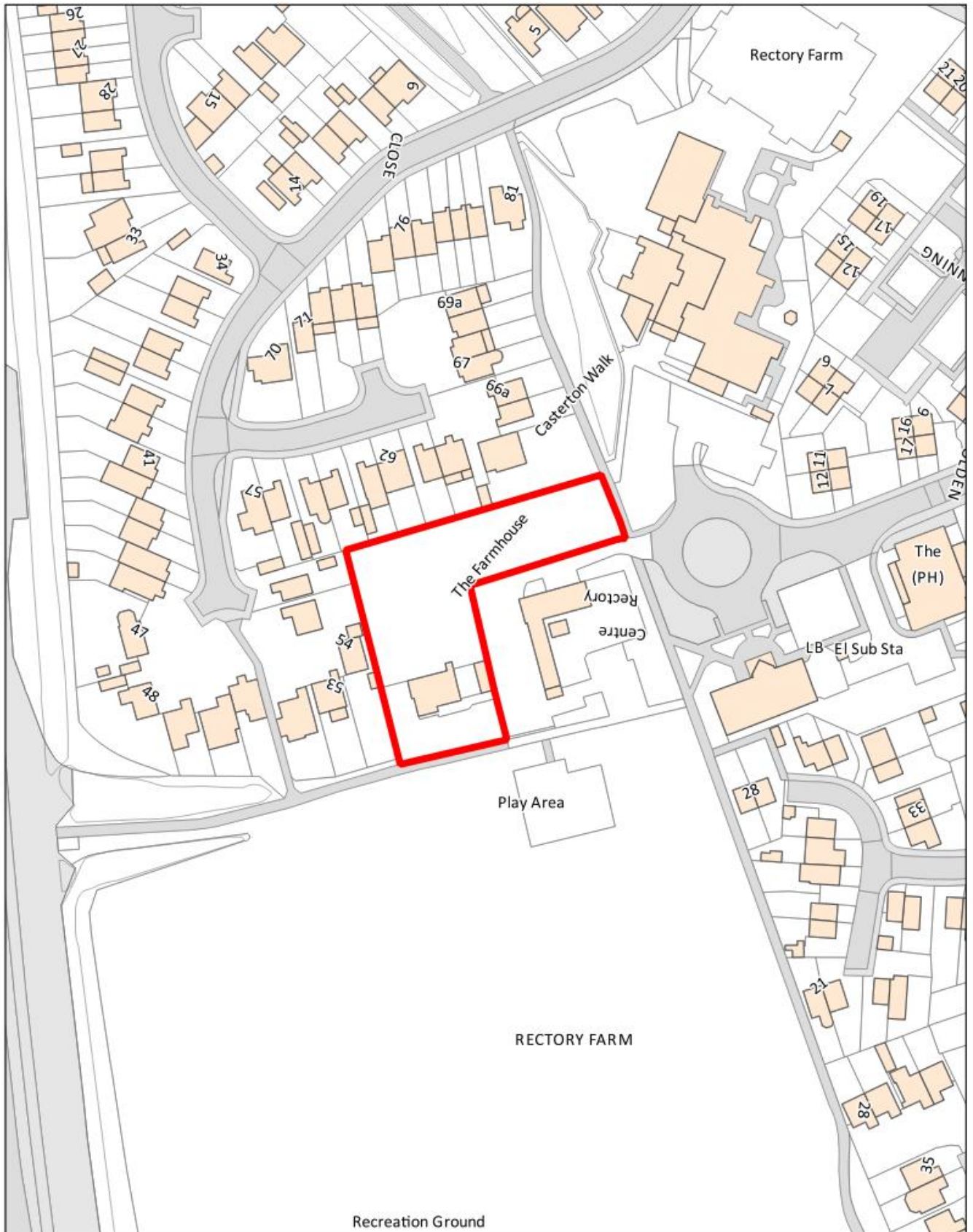
- 10.1 N/2019/0401

11 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The development is CIL liable

12 SUMMARY AND LINKS TO CORPORATE PLAN

- 12.1 In reaching the attached recommendations regard has been given to securing the objectives, visions and priorities outlined in the Corporate Plan together with those of associated Frameworks and Strategies.



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Title: **Rectory Farm Farmhouse, Olden Road**

© Crown copyright and database rights 2018 Ordnance Survey licence no. 10019655

Date: 20-06-2019

Scale: 1:1,250

Drawn by: -----