

## COMMITTEE REPORT

**Date:** 8 March 2018                      **Ward:** Bishopthorpe  
**Team:** Major and                      **Parish:** Bishopthorpe Parish  
                    Commercial Team                      Council

**Reference:** 17/02749/FUL  
**Application at:** Archbishop of York Church of England Junior School  
                    Copmanthorpe Lane Bishopthorpe York YO23 2QT  
**For:** Erection of 1.8m high metal mesh boundary paladin fence  
**By:** City of York Council  
**Application Type:** Full Application  
**Target Date:** 1 February 2018  
**Recommendation:** Approve

### 1.0 PROPOSAL

1.1 Archbishop of York C of E Junior School is situated in the centre of Bishopthorpe village. The site is surrounded on all sides by housing, with the main pedestrian entrance on Appleton Road. Trees, hedging and low lying timber fencing bound the outer boundary.

1.2 It is proposed to install 1.8m high paladin fencing around the perimeter of the site to provide increased security to the school. Proposals also include replacing existing pedestrian and vehicle gates which would remain locked during the school day.

1.3 The application is referred to sub-committee as it has submitted by the City Council and objections have been received.

### 2.0 POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Policies:

2005 Draft Development Control Local Plan

GP1Design

2018 Draft Local Plan

Policy D1 Placemaking

### **3.0 CONSULTATIONS**

#### Bishopthorpe Parish Council

3.1 No objections.

#### Publicity

3.2 Six letters of objection have been received. The following issues have been raised:

- the design and height of fencing is excessive and will transform a pleasant rural setting into an institutionalised one. The appearance is more fitting of an inner city school.
- the proposals would affect the character of the village
- proposals need to be scaled back
- will all the trees and hedgerows be retained
- the need for increased security is understood but could it not be achieved without harming the appearance of the school
- the fencing would affect the outlook of houses in Copmanthorpe Lane

### **4.0 APPRAISAL**

#### KEY ISSUES:-

- Impact on the visual appearance of the site and surrounding area
- Impact on neighbouring property

#### RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012) sets out 12 core planning principles that should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. Of particular relevance here is that planning should always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. Paragraph 187 states that Local Planning Authorities should look for solutions rather than problems and decision takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

4.2 On 21 February 2018 the Publication Draft York Local Plan 2018 (“2018 Draft Plan”) was published for the final six week consultation. The emerging Local Plan policies contained within the 2018 Draft Plan can only be afforded limited weight at this stage of its preparation, and subject to their conformity with the NPPF and the level of outstanding objection to the policies in accordance with paragraph 216 of the NPPF. However, the evidence base underpinning the emerging Local Plan is capable of being a material consideration in the determination of planning

applications.

4.3 Pre-Publication Draft Policy D1 (Placemaking) seeks to secure improvements to existing urban and natural environments, enhance York's special qualities and better reveal the significances of the historic environment. Development proposals that fail to make a positive design contribution to the city, or cause damage to the character and quality of an area will be resisted.

4.4 The draft Development Control Local Plan (DCLP) was approved for development control purposes in April 2005. Its policies are material considerations in the determination of planning applications although it is considered that their weight is very limited except when they are in accordance with the NPPF. DCLP Policy GP1 (Design) requires that development proposals respect or enhance the local environment and/or rural character, and do not cause significant harm to residential amenity with regards to loss of light, privacy or outlook.

## APPRAISAL

4.5 The application has been submitted following concerns raised by the school about the level of perimeter security at the school. The existing school boundaries are not deemed adequate to prevent unwanted access and egress of the school premises. Whilst the school are aware of the visual impact the installation of the fencing would have on the school site, and the wider village context, it is also recognised that the school have a responsibility to protect the safety of their pupils, to ensure the school site is secure against trespass, theft or other criminal activity, as well as to prevent unsupervised access to the school grounds to members of the public. Supporting information has been submitted by the school detailing the increasing emphasis Ofsted are putting on the importance of adequate security as part of school inspections as well as guidelines within the document 'Safeguarding: Physical Security and Visitor Control' which states that 'the boundary of the school should be clearly defined and consistent around the entire perimeter. Fencing and gates should be in good condition, at least 1.8 metres high' and that 'hedging is generally not acceptable unless particularly dense and well developed'.

4.6 The existing boundary is comprised of a mixture of deciduous trees and low lying hedging to Appleton Road, with slightly denser hedging to Copmanthorpe Lane. Housing along The Coppice prevents access to the western elevation. Currently the site is relatively open and the existing planting does not form a secure perimeter. Also the existing gates are not of a sufficient height to prevent trespass. Due to the nature of the school buildings and the existing fire safety regulations, all classroom doors have to be left unlocked therefore the school site requires additional security.

4.7 Whilst it is regrettable that such measures are required, it is considered that the type of fencing proposed is the most suitable for the village school environment and although there have been objections in terms of the proposed height and the

resulting visual impact, it is clear that in order to meet Ofsted guidance the fencing must be at least 1.8m high. In order to prevent harm to the existing trees and hedgerow all of which will remain in situ, the fencing has been set back 2m from the boundary so that it can be installed behind existing planting. It is envisaged that this will help to soften the impact of the fencing as it will be located further into the site. In some locations due to the existing planting the fencing would not be particularly visible.

4.8 It is acknowledged that the fencing would cause some harm to the visual appearance of the village setting, contrary to the requirements of Pre-Publication Draft Local Plan policy D1. However it has not been possible to find an alternative method of securing the site that both safeguards the existing open visual appearance of the school site and meets the security requirements of the school and Ofsted. The harm is mitigated by the setting back of the fencing behind the existing perimeter and the design of the fence. Given the importance in school security and lack of a secure perimeter, it is considered that the harm to the appearance of the site is outweighed by the requirement to provide a safe environment for children and staff of the primary school.

4.9 Objections have been received with regard to the impact on the outlook of properties on Copmanthorpe Lane. It is considered however that whilst the fencing will be visible, given its location on the opposite side of the road, it is not considered that it would have a significant detrimental impact on residential amenity.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION**

5.1 Whilst it is acknowledged that the erection of the fence would result in some harm to the rural appearance of the area contrary to policy D1, it is considered that in the planning balance this harm is outweighed by the need to provide a secure perimeter for the school.

## **COMMITTEE TO VISIT**

### **6.0 RECOMMENDATION:** Approve

1 TIME2 Development start within three years

2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans:-

Proposed Perimeter Fencing - dated 19.02.2018

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out only as approved by the Local Planning Authority.

## **7.0 INFORMATIVES:**

### **Notes to Applicant**

#### 1. STATEMENT OF THE COUNCIL`S POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE APPROACH

In considering the application, the Local Planning Authority has implemented the requirements set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 186 and 187) in seeking solutions to problems identified during the processing of the application. The Local Planning Authority took the following steps in order to achieve a positive outcome:

Officers requested further information and justification for the installation of the type and height of fencing. A more accurate position of the fencing behind existing trees and hedges was also requested.

#### **Contact details:**

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