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**F/YR24/0857/F**

**Applicant: Department for Education**

**Agent : Miss Abigail Tucker  
DPP**

**Land South West Of Thomas Clarkson Academy, Corporation Road, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire**

**Erect a secondary school (3-storey) with associated fencing (up to 3.0m high), PE courts, external lighting, parking, access, landscaping and drainage**

**Officer recommendation: Grant**

**Reason for Committee: Town Council comments contrary to Officer recommendation**

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## **1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a new secondary school and associated works.
- 1.2 Wisbech Town Council object to the application due to reasons relating to overdevelopment of the site and impacts on the residential amenity of nearby residents during construction and operation of the proposed school. There are no outstanding objections to the application from any other consultees and no representations have been received from any nearby residential or commercial properties.
- 1.3 The Fenland Infrastructure Delivery Plan identifies a critical need for new secondary school provision within the Wisbech / March area, due to demographic pressures on secondary schools. The proposed development would provide a new secondary school with capacity for up to 600 pupils within one of the district's most sustainable settlements, which would contribute towards addressing an identified need for additional secondary school capacity in the locality.
- 1.4 The proposed development would broadly accord with the development plan in respect of the principle of development and its impacts in relation to flood risk and drainage; highway safety, transportation and parking provision; sports facilities provision; the character and appearance of the area; residential amenity; resource use; biodiversity and trees; and biodiversity Net Gain.
- 1.5 It is therefore recommended that planning permission is granted.

## **2 SITE DESCRIPTION**

- 2.1 The application site is located to the north and west of Weasenham Lane, and to the west of Corporation Road, within the settlement of Wisbech. The application site contains two vehicular accesses, two car parking areas, playing fields and

sports courts associated with the existing Thomas Clarkson Academy. The application site is enclosed by metal railings and wire mesh fencing. There are large mature trees located along the southern boundary of the site. There is an open watercourse located to the north-west and east of the application site, which adjoin each other via a culvert located underground along the western and southern boundaries of the application site.

- 2.2 The surrounding area comprises predominantly commercial and industrial uses to the south and west, and residential uses to the south and east. The existing Thomas Clarkson Academy building is located to the north / north-east of the application site.

### **3 PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a new secondary school and associated works. The proposed secondary school would be a separate school to the Thomas Clarkson Academy, however it is understood that it would operate under the same academy trust. The application states that the proposed school would have capacity for of up to 600 pupils aged 11-16 years and approximately 50-70 full-time equivalent staff.
- 3.2 The proposed school building would comprise a three-storey building with a flat roof (circa 15.3 metres in height) and an elongated form in a north-south orientation. The principal elevation of the proposed school building would face eastward, and the rear elevation of the proposed building would face westward, with these elevations containing the majority of glazing serving the proposed school building. The roof of the proposed school building would contain a large photovoltaic solar array and plant equipment.
- 3.3 The proposed school building would be immediately surrounded by amenity landscaping and includes areas for social space, cycle storage, a horticulture area and services. The proposed development includes improvements to the existing sports court and playing field to the west of the proposed school building, in addition to external canopies containing renewable energy generation infrastructure. The proposed development would retain the majority of existing boundary treatments and erect additional boundary treatments.
- 3.4 The proposed development includes alterations to the existing car parking layout of the Thomas Clarkson Academy, including the creation of a vehicular connection between the existing bus/drop-off car park (accessed from the south) and the main car park (accessed from the east) which are currently segregated in terms of vehicular access. The proposed school would be accessed via those two existing accesses.
- 3.5 Full plans and associated documents for this application can be found at:  
<https://www.publicaccess.fenland.gov.uk/publicaccess/>

### **4 RELEVANT SITE PLANNING HISTORY**

F/YR25/0296/BNGP - Details reserved by condition 14 (Biodiversity Net Gain Plan) of planning permission F/YR25/0097/F (Erect a 2-storey temporary modular school building) – Condition discharged 16.04.2025

F/YR25/0097/F - Erect a 2-storey temporary modular school building - Granted 04.04.2025

F/YR25/0023/BNGP - Details reserved by condition 15 (BNG) of planning permission F/YR24/0729/F (Siting of 2 x temporary modular school buildings with associated access ramps (for up to 2 years) and the formation of hardstanding, erection of fencing and gates and a cycle shelter, and the widening of an existing internal access road) – Condition discharged 27.02.2025

F/YR24/0729/F - Siting of 2 x temporary modular school buildings with associated access ramps (for up to 2 years) and the formation of hardstanding, erection of fencing and gates and a cycle shelter, and the widening of an existing internal access road – Granted 07.11.2024

F/YR24/0663/SC - Screening Opinion: 3-storey secondary school with associated alterations to existing PE courts, parking, access, landscaping and drainage - Environmental Statement Not Required 02.09.2024

F/02001/10/CC - Demolition, redevelopment and extension of Thomas Clarkson Community College and refurbishment of administrative building on Corporation Road to provide a 10 form of entry 11 to 18 school with Community facilities, including an enlarged school hall that will also function as a Community Theatre, provision of new car park, improved sports facilities and associated works. Temporary buildings to provide teaching and office space and hard play area for duration of construction – Granted 11.05.2010 (by Cambridgeshire County Council)

F/YR09/0135/SC - Screening Opinion: Rebuild/Refurbishment Development under the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) Programme - Environmental Statement Not Required 24.02.2009

F/YR06/0319/F - Erection of 8 separate fences within existing school grounds - Granted 04.05.2006

F/YR05/0957/F - Erection of part 2.4 metre high and part 1.8 metre high galvanised steel palisade fencing to Milner Road/Elm Road boundary, 1.8 metre high chain link fence to staff car park boundary and 1.8 metre high chain link fence to hardcourt area and Weasenham Lane exit - Granted 01.11.2005

F/YR04/3579/F - Construction of full size synthetic football pitch and erection of 5.0 and 3.0 metre high galvanised fencing and 8 no 16.0 metre high floodlights - Granted 12.08.2024

## **5 CONSULTATIONS (Summarised)**

### **5.1 Wisbech Town Council**

Object due to:

- Overdevelopment of the site;
- Detrimental impact on the amenity of nearby residents at daily school opening and closing times because of the additional traffic and the likelihood of inconsiderate parking;

- Detrimental impact upon the amenity of nearby residents during the construction phase because of contractor vehicle movements.

## 5.2 **Cambridgeshire County Council Transport Assessment Team**

[Originally requested that the application be refused due to it not being accompanied by an adequate assessment of the highway impacts (with specific concerns raised regarding junction capacity and increased on-street parking) and not proposing any pedestrian improvements to encourage or aid pupils to walk or cycle to the proposed school.]

Following receipt of additional information from the applicant during the course of the application, it has been demonstrated that the proposal should have no significant detrimental impact on junction capacity.

Retain concerns regarding the proposals, especially around existing pupil numbers and the lack of walking and cycle improvements proposed as part of the development.

Do not wish to object to the application subject to the following:

1. Prior to first occupation of the development by pupils, the applicant shall pay £150,000 (one hundred and fifty thousand pounds) contribution towards Cambridgeshire's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) pedestrian and cycle improvements along Weasenham Lane.
2. Within 3 months of first occupation of the Secondary School, the occupiers shall be responsible for the provision and implementation of a School Travel Plan to be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The School Travel Plan shall include suitable measures and incentives to promote sustainable travel. The School Travel Plan is to be monitored annually, with all measures reviewed to ensure targets are met.

## 5.3 **Cambridgeshire County Council Highways Development Management Team**

The Transport Assessment Team are leading on this application on behalf of the Local Highway Authority. No further comments from Highways Development Management perspective.

## 5.4 **Lead Local Flood Authority**

No objection in principle, based on the following documents:

- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy, HEXA, Ref: 600796, Rev: P01, Dated: August 2024
- Geotechnical Ground Investigation Report, Wood, Rev: 02, Dated: 12th July 2024
- SuDS Operations and Maintenance Manual, HEXA, Ref: 600796, Rev: P01. Dated: August 2024

The above documents demonstrate that surface water from the proposed development can be managed through the use of a system of tanked permeable paving, attenuation tanks and swales. Surface water will then be discharged at a restricted rate of 2.0l/s via flow control device into the existing IDB drain. A detailed maintenance plan outlining maintenance practices, frequency and adoption details of all surface water drainage features has been submitted.

Supportive of the use of permeable paving as, in addition to controlling the rate of surface water leaving the site, it provides water quality treatment which is of particular importance when discharging into a watercourse.

Water quality has been adequately addressed.

Request conditions are imposed requiring a detailed scheme of surface water drainage, and a scheme for surface water during construction, to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

Provide informatives in relation to IDB consent, pollution control and Construction Surface Water Maintenance.

## **5.5 Middle Level Commissioners**

No objection.

The Board originally had several concerns but following proactive discussions these have largely been allayed.

The Board comments as follows:

- A. The site of the proposed school buildings is extremely small and severely constrained by the existing TCA, to the north; the bus park to the east; and Weasenham Lane to the south. This just provides suitable space for the existing arrangement but would not allow future growth of the school and/or the ability to upgrade the drainage system to facilitate this and/or accommodate the impacts of climate change as predicted in the Tyndall Report.
- B. The surface water design meets current accepted design standards, but these do not allow for the “Fenland Situation” and/or and the circumstances of more extreme events such as those experienced in December 2020, Storm Babet etc.
- C. Due to the changes in land ownership/maintenance responsibility it is hoped that an improved, more sustainable and efficient access route will result for both the day to day and emergency situations. Some changes have been made to fence lines and the provision of larger gates to permit this.
- D. The provision of a detailed maintenance plan and agreement covering all aspects of the on site drainage and not limited to the SUDS facilities has been requested.
- E. There are some encroachments within the Boards 9.0m wide maintenance access strip. These are currently being discussed and formal applications, as required under the Boards Byelaws, are currently awaited.
- F. The Boards piped and open District Drains are becoming increasingly important as the area that it serves becomes further urbanised by a mix of development including housing, retail, manufacturing, food production and industrial based development, including some of the larger employers within the town.

Therefore, the applicant has been asked to undertake an Assessment which identifies any hazards and measures, processes and controls taken to reduce the impact of any risk that could negatively affect:

1. The efficiency and future integrity of the Boards pipelines and associated system together with the applicant's property for the current situation.
2. As 1 but for emergency works and/or a replacement/uprated pipeline on the same alignment.
3. As 2 but on a new alignment between the current route and the sports facilities to the north.
4. Ensure that the health, safety and welfare requirements of all parties are met during both the construction and in the long term including the replacement / upgrading of the pipeline.

Any restrictions such as minimum working distances when working in close proximity to utilities must be identified.

The failure to consider these items would have a significant impact on the local community and economy.

Discussions concerning several Byelaw Consent related issues are continuing and further information together with the applications themselves are awaited. Any consents must be submitted and issued before work on this school commences.

It should be noted that to reach an amicable situation both the location of the utilities and fencing/access gates are likely to be repositioned and not as shown on the current planning application submission documents.

Whilst some of these issues have the potential to detrimentally affect flood risk it is hoped that these can be dealt with during the consenting approval process and on this basis the Board withdraws its opposition to the planning application.

## **5.6 Anglian Water**

Wastewater treatment - West Walton Water Recycling Centre has available capacity for the flows.

Used water network - The sewerage system has available capacity for the flows.

Surface water disposal - The proposed method of surface water management does not relate to Anglian Water operated assets. As such, do not provide comments on the suitability of the surface water management.

## **5.7 Environmental Health**

No objections.

Accepts the content of the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). Recommends a condition to ensure the CEMP is complied with in the interests of amenity protection.

The Air Quality Survey is satisfactory. The recommended mitigation measures during the construction phase can be addressed by complying with the CEMP.

Accept the findings of the Environmental Noise Impact Assessment. A condition will be required to secure a follow-up noise impact assessment when the specifications of the building services plant are known, to ensure amenity of nearby noise sensitive receptors are not adversely affected, and to confirm the required specification for ventilation and glazing to ensure adequate protection for teaching rooms.

Accepts the findings of the Geotechnical and Geoenvironmental Ground Investigation Report and the Geo-Environmental Assessment. Accepts the lower risk ground gas threshold level due to the location of the elevated carbon dioxide levels remaining as a grass area. Ground gas protection measures are not required.

In respect of site safety, is satisfied with the findings of the Stage 1 preliminary unexploded ordnance risk assessment report.

Accepts the external lighting details.

## **5.8 Sport England**

No objection as the application meets exception 5 of Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and accords with paragraph 104 of the National Planning Policy Framework, subject to the following conditions being appended to any grant of planning permission:

1. (a) The approved scheme shall be carried out in full and in accordance with the document submitted titled A feasibility study for the proposed relocation of a natural turf pitch at Thomas Clarkson Academy, Corporation Road, Wisbech, PE13 2SE undertaken by TGMS dated 3rd November 2023 [Revision 1, 30th August 2024], including the development options and work programme, before first occupation of the new educational establishment development. (b) Use of the development shall not commence until a schedule of playing field maintenance, management and monitoring including a programme for the implementation for a minimum period of five years starting from the commencement of use of the development has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority after consultation with Sport England. Following the commencement of use of the development the approved schedule shall be complied with in full. Reason: To ensure that the playing field is first established as a functional playing field to an adequate standard and is fit for purpose. Informative: It is recommended that the maintenance schedule and programme for implementation is developed by a specialist turf consultant. The applicant should be aiming to ensure that any new or replacement playing field is fit for its intended purpose and should have regard to Sport England's technical Design Guidance Note entitled 'Natural Turf for Sport' (2011) and relevant design guidance of the National Governing Bodies for Sport e.g. performance quality standards produced by the relevant pitch team sports, for example the Football Association.
2. No development above ground level shall commence until a scaled drawing showing the court line markings in the sports hall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority after consultation with Sport

England. The sports hall shall not be constructed other than in accordance with the approved details. Reason: To ensure the development is fit for purpose and sustainable.

3. Prior to first occupation of the multi use games area, sports hall and football pitch hereby permitted, a community use agreement prepared in consultation with Sport England will be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and a copy of the signed completed approved agreement will be provided to the Local Planning Authority. The agreement shall apply to the artificial grass pitch, natural turf playing fields, multi-use games areas, sports hall and supporting ancillary facilities and include details of pricing policy, community use programming, hours of use, access by non-educational establishment users, management responsibilities and a mechanism for review, and anything else which the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Sport England considers necessary in order to secure the effective community use of the facilities. The development shall not be used at any time other than in strict compliance with the approved agreement. Reason: To secure well managed safe community access to the sports facility/facilities, to ensure sufficient benefit to the development of sport and to accord with Development Plan Policy \*\*. Informative: Guidance on preparing Community Use Agreements is available from Sport England. <http://www.sportengland.org/planningapplications/> For artificial grass pitches it is recommended that you seek guidance from the Football Association/England Hockey/Rugby Football Union on pitch construction when determining the community use hours the artificial pitch can accommodate.
4. The multi-used games area and replacement playing field (including the 5v5 grass football pitch) shall be constructed and laid out in accordance with the [planning application \*, Section \* and Drawing No. \*\*] and details approved under condition 1 (playing field provision) and shall be made available for use before first use of the development hereby permitted. Reason: To ensure the quality of pitches is satisfactory and they are available for use before development (or agreed timescale).

## 5.9 Fenland District Council Principal Ecologist

*[Following review of the Cambridgeshire County Council Ecology Advisory Service consultation response and the additional information received from the applicant subsequent to those comments]:*

Accepts the revised Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Metric and BNG information and agrees that the development could achieve the required BNG on site.

Accepts the conclusions of the Ground Level Tree Assessment (for bats), that none of the trees scheduled for removal has the potential to support bats. No further surveys are required prior to deciding the planning application.

If permission is to be granted, advises the following:

- The application is subject to the statutory Biodiversity Gain Condition. Accepts that the development could achieve the required 10%+ biodiversity net gain through the provision of on-site Landscaping. Does not regard the habitats to be created and/or enhanced as part of the scheme to be 'significant' and therefore future management and monitoring of the habitats does not need to be secured for



30 years by means of an S106 agreement. However, the preparation and implementation of a general long-term Landscape Management Plan should be secured by condition.

- The draft Construction Environmental Management Plan provided to inform the application should be required to be finalised and, once agreed, implemented in full.

#### **5.10 Cambridgeshire County Council Ecology Advisory Service**

Recommended refusal, unless the following information be provided prior to determination:

- Completion of further survey work (bats) recommended in the Extended Phase 1 Habitats Survey (Preliminary Ecological Appraisal) Report. This should include assessment of trees scheduled for tree works or that will be affected by lighting.
- Updated Biodiversity Net Gain assessment.

#### **5.11 Cambridgeshire Constabulary Crime Prevention Design Team**

Considers the area to be of medium/high risk to the vulnerability of crime.

Security and Crime Prevention measures should incorporate 'Secured by Design' (SBD) standards and demonstrate how the development proposals address the following issues to design out and reduce the incidence and fear of crime:

- Physical protection
- Access and movement
- Safe routes
- Structure
- Lighting
- Private space
- Surveillance
- Ownership
- Activity
- Management and maintenance

External lighting - Whilst the plan and layout appears to be acceptable, requested a copy of the full lighting plan, including lux levels and calculations. Provides recommendations regarding types of external lighting.

Potential conflict between two schools - Requested clarification of the proposed school times, and process or procedure to stagger start and finish times, to reduce risks of anti-social behaviour resulting from potential conflict of two schools within close proximity.

Access – Proposed fencing and gates are acceptable. Provides recommendations regarding security features for access.

Bin storage – Proposed bin storage appears to be acceptable. Provides recommendations regarding security features for bin storage.

Landscaping – Provides recommendations regarding landscaping to ensure surveillance.

Alarm – Provides recommendations regarding types of alarm systems.

CCTV – Provides recommendations regarding CCTV standards and locations.  
Requests to see final details of CCTV once available.

Cycle parking - The proposed cycle shelter appears acceptable. Provides recommendations for cycle parking standards.

Signage – Provides recommendations regarding types of security.

Construction Phase Security – Recommends that security measures are in place prior to, and during, construction.

Community safety and crime reduction can be achieved by conditions

**5.12 Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service**

Requests that adequate provision for fire hydrants is secured by a Section 106 agreement or planning condition.

**5.13 FDC Tree Officer**

The arboricultural report identifies the constraints of the trees and their quality satisfactorily.

No objection to the removal of the trees to facilitate the scheme. This will not impact on wider public amenity.

A pre-commencement condition requiring an Arboricultural Method Statement is required, to demonstrate the trees to be retained will be suitably protected.

The proposed planting is considered acceptable and is suitable for the scheme.

**5.14 Environmental Services**

No objections.

**5.15 Cambridgeshire County Council Area Education Officer**

The Education Service at Cambridgeshire County Council is supportive of this planning application and the development of the new school accommodation.

There has been and forecast to continue to be an increase in secondary aged children living in Wisbech. Consequently, there is a need for a further school to serve this community. This project will deliver the capacity needed to meet the demand.

**5.16 Local Residents/Interested Parties**

53 neighbouring properties (comprising residential and commercial properties) were directly notified of the planning application by letter. In addition, two site notices were displayed in separate locations near to the application site.

No representations have been received from local residents / interested parties.

## **6 STATUTORY DUTY**

- 6.1 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 Fenland Local Plan (2014) and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021).

## **7 POLICY FRAMEWORK**

### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024**

Chapter 2 - Achieving sustainable development

Chapter 4 – Decision-making

Chapter 5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

Chapter 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities

Chapter 9 – Promoting sustainable transport

Chapter 11 – Making effective use of land

Chapter 12 – Achieving well-designed places

Chapter 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Chapter 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

### **National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)**

### **National Design Guide 2021**

### **Fenland Local Plan 2014**

LP1 – A Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

LP2 – Facilitating Health and Wellbeing of Fenland Residents

LP3 – Spatial Strategy, the Settlement Hierarchy and the Countryside

LP8 – Wisbech

LP13 – Supporting and Managing the Impact of a Growing District

LP14 – Responding to Climate Change and Managing the Risk of Flooding in Fenland

LP15 – Facilitating the Creation of a More Sustainable Transport Network in Fenland

LP16 – Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments across the District

LP17 – Community Safety

LP19 – The Natural Environment

### **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2021**

### **Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments in Fenland SPD 2014**

### **Resource Use and Renewable Energy SPD 2014**

### **Developer Contributions SPD 2015**

### **Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD 2016**

### **Emerging Local Plan**

The Draft Fenland Local Plan (2022) was published for consultation between 25th August 2022 and 19 October 2022, all comments received will be reviewed and

any changes arising from the consultation will be made to the draft Local Plan. Given the very early stage which the Plan is therefore at, it is considered, in accordance with Paragraph 49 of the NPPF, that the policies of this should carry extremely limited weight in decision making. Of relevance to this application are policies:

LP1: Settlement Hierarchy  
LP4: Securing Fenland's Future  
LP5: Health and Wellbeing  
LP6: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Infrastructure  
LP7: Design  
LP8: Amenity Provision  
LP11: Community Safety  
LP19: Strategic Infrastructure  
LP20: Accessibility and Transport  
LP22: Parking Provision  
LP24: Natural Environment  
LP25: Biodiversity Net Gain  
LP27: Trees and Planting  
LP28: Landscape  
LP31: Open Space and Recreational Facilities  
LP32: Flood and Water Management  
LP33: Development on Land Affected by Contamination  
LP34: Air Quality

## **8 KEY ISSUES**

- Principle of development
- Flood risk and drainage
- Highway safety, transportation and parking provision
- Playing field provision
- Character and appearance of the area
- Residential amenity
- Contamination
- Resource use
- Biodiversity and trees
- Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

## **9 BACKGROUND**

### Pre-application advice

- 9.1 On 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2024, the Local Planning Authority provided a pre-application advice response in relation to the following proposal:  
*'Proposed construction of a new 3-storey, 4 form entry secondary school with sociated works to improve and reconfigure existing parking arrangements, access, sports facilities and landscaping.'*
- 9.2 The Local Planning Authority's pre-application advice response was provided on the basis of a very limited level of detail comprising only a proposal description and a proposed site plan, however it was supportive of the principle of development subject to other material planning considerations being satisfied.

## Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Opinion

- 9.3 On 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2024, the Local Planning Authority issued a Screening Opinion in relation to the following proposal:  
*'3-storey secondary school with associated alterations to existing PE courts, parking, access, landscaping and drainage'*

- 9.4 The Screening Opinion confirmed that an Environmental Statement was not required.

### Temporary school buildings

- 9.5 There are extant planning permissions for temporary modular school buildings and associated works within the application site (planning permission references: F/YR24/0729/F and F/YR25/0097/F). The temporary modular school buildings are currently under construction and will provide temporary school accommodation for students enrolling to the proposed new school.

## **10 ASSESSMENT**

### **Principle of development**

- 10.1 Policy LP1 of the Local Plan states that, at the heart of the strategy for Fenland, there is a desire to deliver sustainable growth; growth that is not for its own sake, but growth that brings benefits for all sectors of the community - for existing residents as much as for new ones.
- 10.2 Policy LP2 of the Local Plan requires that development proposals positively contribute to creating a healthy, safe and equitable living environment by creating an environment in which communities can flourish, facilitating healthy lifestyles and considering the equality of residents / local communities.
- 10.3 Policy LP3 of the Local Plan states that the overall strategy is for sustainable growth in order to facilitate the health and wellbeing of Fenland's residents. In addition, policy LP3 of the Local Plan states that 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 LP3 of the Local Plan focuses the majority of the district's growth, including wider service provision (i.e. educational facilities), in and around the district's four market towns, of which Wisbech is one.
- 10.4 Policy LP8 of the Local Plan states that all development [within Wisbech] should contribute to the promotion of Wisbech into a strong, safe and community focussed market town.
- 10.5 Paragraph 100 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states the importance of a sufficient choice of school places being available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. In addition, it states that Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education, by giving great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools through decisions on planning applications.

- 10.6 Paragraph 101 of the NPPF states that significant weight should be placed on the importance of new, expanded or upgraded public service infrastructure when considering proposals for development.
- 10.7 Paragraph 4.88 of the Fenland Infrastructure Delivery Plan identifies a need for new secondary school provision within the Wisbech / March area, stating the following:
- “The greatest pupil pressures will be from housing growth, but also from the existing larger primary school cohorts ageing through the school system, which are predominantly in the Wisbech / March area. Housing growth in March will mean that Neale-Wade Community College will fill from within its own catchment area. This will restrict the current pattern of parental preference under which a number of parents in Wisbech choose to send their children to Neale-Wade. This trend, coupled with higher rates of house building in Wisbech, suggests that new secondary school provision should be made in the Wisbech / March area to ensure that the County Council can meet the overall demand for secondary school places arising from growth which is likely to require a site of around 8ha.”*
- 10.8 The Fenland Infrastructure Delivery Plan includes a schedule (the Independent Delivery Plan Schedule) which provides a detailed list of infrastructure which is likely to be required within the district. The Independent Delivery Plan Schedule identifies a critical need for 9-10 form entry secondary capacity to serve March and Wisbech, due to demographic pressures on secondary schools.
- 10.9 The proposed school has been designed to accommodate 600 secondary school pupils aged 11 to 16 years. The Planning Statement accompanying the application states that the proposed new school will provide much needed additional pupil spaces for Wisbech, as well as improvements to the sports facilities that will be shared by both schools.
- 10.10 The proposed development would provide a new secondary school, to contribute towards addressing an identified need for additional secondary school capacity, within one of the district’s most sustainable settlements. It is therefore considered that the principle of development is acceptable, in accordance with policies LP1, LP2, LP3 and LP8 of the Local Plan and paragraph 100 of the NPPF.

### **Flood risk and drainage**

- 10.11 The proposed development is located within Flood Zone 1 and an area of very low risk of other sources of flooding, where the principle of development is acceptable in flood risk terms.
- 10.12 Paragraph 181 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that, when determining any planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere.
- 10.13 Paragraph 182 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that applications which could affect drainage on or around the site should incorporate sustainable drainage systems to control flow rates and reduce volumes of runoff, and which are proportionate to the nature and scale of the proposal. In addition, paragraph 182 states that sustainable drainage systems provided as part of proposals for major development should:- a) take account of advice from the Lead Local Flood

Authority; b) have appropriate proposed minimum operational standards; and c) have maintenance arrangements in place to ensure an acceptable standard of operation for the lifetime of the development.

- 10.14 Policy LP14 of the Local Plan requires that all development proposals adopt a sequential approach to flood risk from all forms of flooding. Furthermore, it requires major development proposals to be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment and a Drainage Strategy demonstrating that suitable consideration has been given to surface water drainage, appropriate arrangements for attenuating surface water run-off can be accommodated within the site, and issues of ownership and maintenance are addressed. In addition, policy LP14 of the Local Plan states that the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) will be required to ensure that runoff from the site (post development) is to greenfield runoff rates for all previously undeveloped sites, which should include sufficient area within the site to accommodate SuDS for the short term management of surface water drainage.
- 10.15 Policy LP16 of the Local Plan requires proposals for all new development to demonstrate that the site is suitable for its proposed use with layout and drainage taking account of ground conditions, with no significant surface water impacts.
- 10.16 Figure 6.8 of the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD provides a surface water drainage hierarchy, which is consistent with the surface water drainage hierarchy contained within National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). Figure 6.8 of the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD states that rainwater shall discharge to the following, listed in order of priority:
1. To ground in an adequate soakaway or some other adequate infiltration system; or where that is not reasonably practicable
  2. A watercourse; or where that is not reasonably practicable
  3. A surface water sewer, highway drain or other drainage system; or where that is not reasonably practicable
  4. A combined sewer.
- 10.17 Local and national planning policies and guidance steer new development towards areas with the lowest risk of flooding from all sources, through the application of a sequential test and an exception test (where necessary). Due to the application site being located within Flood Zone 1 and being at low risk of flooding from all other sources, the application passes the sequential test and the exception test is not necessary.
- 10.18 The application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy. The Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy indicates that there is an existing private surface water drainage system within the site which discharges the majority of surface water into the Internal Drainage Board culverted watercourse at the southern boundary of the site.
- 10.19 The Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy states that, based on the investigated site geology and recorded shallow groundwater levels, it is unlikely that discharging surface water into the ground will be a suitable solution for the proposed development and therefore infiltration has been discarded as a surface water discharge solution on this site. The application therefore proposes to discharge surface water into the culverted Internal Drainage Board watercourse, in accordance with the surface water drainage hierarchy set out within Figure 6.8 of the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD.

- 10.20 The drainage strategy comprises a system of tanked permeable paving, underground attenuation tanks, swales and filter drains to attenuate surface water, prior to discharging into the existing Internal Drainage Board watercourse at a restricted rate of 2.0 litres per second via a gravity connection. The Lead Local Flood Authority support the application, stating that it demonstrates that surface water from the proposed development can be managed through the use of these SuDS features.
- 10.21 The application is also accompanied by a SuDS Operations and Maintenance Manual which comprises a detailed maintenance plan outlining maintenance practices, frequency and adoption details of all surface water drainage features. This indicates that the long-term maintenance responsibilities for the system are expected to be dealt with by the client's management team, which is understood to be the current arrangement for the Thomas Clarkson Academy.
- 10.22 Within their most recent consultation responses (received 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> July 2025), the Middle Level Commissioners state that many of the Boards previous concerns have been allayed and they have withdrawn their opposition to the application. Notwithstanding this, the Boards outstanding drainage concerns, and requests for additional information, are summarised below:
- Lack of space for future growth of the school and / or ability to upgrade the drainage system to facilitate this and accommodate climate change.
  - Surface water design meets current accepted design standards, but these do not allow for the "Fenland Situation" and/or the circumstances of more extreme events.
  - Request a detailed maintenance plan and agreement covering all aspects of on-site drainage.
  - There are some encroachments within the Boards nine metre wide maintenance access strip. These are currently being discussed and formal applications, as required under the Boards Byelaws, are currently awaited.
  - Has requested the applicant undertake an assessment which identifies any hazards and measures, processes and controls taken to reduce the impact of any risk that could negatively affect:- the efficiency and future integrity of the Boards pipelines and associated system together with the applicant's property for the current situation; emergency works and/or a replacement/uprated pipeline on the same alignment; a new alignment between the current route and the sports facilities to the north; and health, safety and welfare requirements.
- 10.23 In respect of the Middle Level Commissioners' concerns regarding the ability to upgrade the drainage system to facilitate future growth of the school, this would be a matter for consideration as part of any potential future planning application for growth of the school. The Middle Level Commissioners acknowledges that the site provides suitable space for the existing arrangement and that the surface water design meets current accepted design standards. With consideration given to the individual merits of the current planning application (and not the impacts of speculative future development proposals), and the consultation responses from the Lead Local Flood Authority and Middle Level Commissioners, it is considered that an acceptable surface water drainage scheme could be secured by a planning condition. In addition, a detailed maintenance plan for all aspects of on-site drainage, as recommended by the Middle Level Commissioners, could also be secured by a planning condition.



- 10.24 The most recent comments received from the Middle Level Commissioners also suggest that there are discussions ongoing, outside of this planning application, relating to encroachments into the Boards maintenance access strip and relevant byelaw consents, and also relating to the undertaking an assessment to reduce the impact of any risks in relation to the efficiency and future integrity of pipelines, in addition to health, safety and welfare requirements. The Middle Level Commissioners have not requested that these matters be addressed as part of the planning application. Any requirements for approval of separate consents under the Land Drainage Act, or under any other Acts or legislation, fall outside of the scope of this planning application.
- 10.25 The Middle Level Commissioners have stated that, whilst some of the issues have the potential to detrimentally affect flood risk, it is hoped that these can be dealt with during the [Internal Drainage Board] consenting approval process. The Middle Level Commissioners have stated that discussions concerning several Byelaw Consent related issues are continuing; that further information, together with the applications themselves, are awaited; and that any consents must be submitted and issued before work on this school commences.
- 10.26 Furthermore, the Middle Level Commissioners have stated that, to reach an amicable situation, both the location of the utilities and fencing/access gates are likely to be repositioned and not as shown on the current planning application submission documents. Notwithstanding the boundary treatment details accompanying the planning application, a condition can be appended to any grant of planning permission requiring details of boundary treatments to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority prior to first use of the development. This condition would provide flexibility to the applicant to progress with construction of other parts of the development whilst separate consents are being sought from the Internal Drainage Board.
- 10.27 With consideration given to the submitted Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy, and the recommendations of the Lead Local Flood Authority (the statutory consultee for surface water drainage on major planning applications) and the Middle Level Commissioners, it is considered that an acceptable detailed surface water drainage strategy could be reasonably secured by a planning condition prior to commencement of any development.
- 10.28 The application proposes to discharge foul water into a main foul sewer, which is the most sustainable form of foul water disposal. Anglian Water state that the sewerage system has available capacity for the flows from the proposed development. With consideration given to the submitted Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy, and the recommendation of Anglian Water (the relevant water and sewerage undertaker), it is considered that the proposed development would be served by acceptable and sustainable foul water drainage arrangements.
- 10.29 It is therefore considered that the proposed development would have acceptable flood risk and drainage impacts, with appropriate minimum operational standards and maintenance arrangements to ensure an acceptable standard of operation for the lifetime of the development, in accordance with policies LP13, LP14 and LP16 of the Local Plan, paragraphs 181 and 182 of the National Planning Policy Framework, and guidance contained within the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD and National Planning Practice Guidance.

#### **Highway safety, transportation and parking provision**

- 10.30 Policy LP8 of the Local Plan states that the growth of Wisbech is constrained by the capacity of the highway network both internal (i.e. within the town) and external (i.e. the A47). As such, all Wisbech development proposals must have an exceptionally strong focus on the provision of deliverable measures which should result in a modal shift to sustainable transport modes.
- 10.31 Policy LP15 of the Local Plan states that the Council is seeking to deliver an integrated approach to transport in Fenland that is sustainable, facilitates growth, links town and country, encompasses cross boundary transport issues and improves accessibility for everyone by all modes of travel. An overarching aim of the Council is to reduce the need to travel, but, where travel is necessary, to minimise the distance needed to travel and increase the options available to undertake such journeys. All development proposals are expected, in proportion to the size and impact of the development being proposed, to contribute to the delivery of this vision. In addition, policy LP15 requires all development proposals to, inter alia, contribute to:
- Delivering robust networks and facilities for walking and cycling, which are suitably linked and integrated into the wider transport network and which help facilitate other schemes such as Safe Routes to Schools and travel plans.
  - Providing well designed, safe and convenient access for all, giving priority to the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, people with impaired mobility and users of public transport by providing a network of pedestrian and cycle routes and green corridors that give easy access and permeability to adjacent areas.
- 10.32 The application site is located within the built settlement of one the district's main market towns, where it is generally well served by public footway links and public transport comparative to most other locations within the district. Therefore, the location of the application site provides an opportunity to ensure that the proposed development is suitably linked and integrated into the wider transport network, providing well designed, safe and convenient access for all, and providing a network of pedestrian and cycle routes to encourage active travel, subject to any necessary improvements or contributions which may be necessary to mitigate the impacts of the proposed development. The site is also well-located to both the local road network and wider strategic routes (most notably the A47) via the A1101 Churchill Road/ Elm High Road and the B198 Cromwell Road. Weasenham Lane is a single carriageway road with a 30 miles per hour speed limit in the location of the existing vehicular access to the school, which increases to 40 miles per hour to the west. There are existing public footways on the north and south sides of Weasenham Lane, along the frontage of the school grounds.
- 10.33 The application states that the proposed school would have capacity for of up to 600 pupils aged 11-16 years and approximately 50-70 full-time equivalent staff.
- 10.34 The application is accompanied by a Transport Assessment report. Some of the key information contained within the Transport Assessment is summarised below:
- The proposed new school shall utilise the existing vehicular access via Weasenham Lane. However, the proposals include changes in internal roads between the two school sites to allow access for buses, servicing and parking (with buses to depart the site via the Thomas Clarkson Academy egress onto Corporation Road).
  - A segregated pedestrian and cycle access will be provided from Weasenham Lane.
  - Cambridgeshire Road Traffic Collision Data indicates there were 15 recorded incidents of road traffic collisions in the period between 2017-July

2023, comprising one fatal incident, five serious incidents and nine slight incidents. Three incidents involved child casualties, including the fatal accident, of which all were pedestrians. One incident involved a cyclist casualty. All other incidents only involved motorised vehicles.

- The recorded incidents are considered to be infrequent and not in consistent locations. Therefore no clear pattern of highway safety concerns can be discerned that would warrant further review in the context of this development. The proposed school also benefits from an existing level of infrastructure along Weasenham Lane that is deemed suitable to accommodate the uplift in cross-modal demand without resulting in a worsening of highway safety.
- The surrounding highway network can satisfactorily accommodate the existing traffic flows and the future traffic flows from the proposed development without detriment to safety on the surrounding highway network (or the need for additional mitigation). There is no existing safety issue that is likely to be exacerbated by the proposed development.
- To help deliver improvements and better support the school community, the Travel Plan prepared by the school proposes measures to educate pupils on highway safety and cycle confidence training. These measures will help to ensure that site users are best placed to access the site safely.
- TCA currently has an existing parking provision of circa 190 spaces plus an additional five accessible spaces. The proposed scheme includes the provision of 66 parking spaces for the new Wisbech Free School. The 66 spaces consisting of 15 echelon parking spaces within the access loop which will permit pick-up and drop-off in addition to visitor spaces during the day, including 4 accessible spaces, with the remaining 51 spaces comprising 9 newly created parking spaces and 42 parking spaces reallocated from the existing parking provision from TCA. An additional row of 12 echelon parking spaces will therefore be provided for TCA on the western side of the existing parking area to replace some of this loss. The resulting parking provision for the TCA is 160 spaces with 4 bus drop off bays. While the 160 spaces represent a 30-space reduction in total, it is noted that TCA was originally consented for 1,800 etc pupils and thus would have required more parking based on that capacity. Due to the current enrolment and subsequent staff levels being less than this, there is currently an overprovision of parking serving the TCA element of the site. This is supported by staff parking surveys conducted by the Trust as part of the Travel Plan.
- The TCA currently accommodates circa 1,440 pupils, including sixth form pupils. 150 of these secondary pupils would be moving across to the proposed school, resulting in approximately 1,200 secondary pupils and up to 300 sixth form students at the TCA site. The Trust have confirmed that the approved capacity of the TCA is 1,800 pupils, a capacity that was approved and assessed under a planning application to expand the school in 2010, however it has been highlighted that the school does not operate at this capacity and the Trust have confirmed that the PAN will revert to 240 per year once the Wisbech Free School opens. This would result in a maximum intake of 1,500 pupils including sixth form pupils. When considering the existing 1800 pupil capacity at the site, the provision of 600 new pupil places would represent, in real terms across the combined site, a net increase of 300 pupils across the school campus. However, for robustness, the assessment has considered an increase of 450 pupils in order to provide a robust assessment and to demonstrate the acceptability of the proposals in highways terms.

- The 66 parking spaces are deemed to be an appropriate level of parking to accommodate staff and visitor parking demands.
- The trip generation considered in Section 5.0 suggest a potential maximum parking demand of 62 spaces by staff. Considering the potential lower staff numbers and teaching staff acting across both sites this demonstrates that there is sufficient parking available to deter any potential parking on the local highway network.
- The development proposals include the creation of 20 secure and sheltered cycle parking spaces for pupils.
- Whilst the school proposes a capacity of 600 pupils, this will only represent a net uplift of 450 pupils when considering that TCA is currently operating above its PAN by 30 pupils per year. Once the new school opens, TCA will revert to its typical PAN. All trip generation set out below therefore reflects the net uplift in pupils of 450, as the additional 150 will already be captured in baseline highway conditions around the site.
- Based on a Hands Up Survey carried out at TCA, makes assumptions that approximately 22% of pupils (approximately 99 pupils) will travel to the proposed new school by car.
- Based on a Hands Up Survey carried out at TCA and National Travel Survey Data, makes assumptions that up to 50 pupil two-way vehicle trips (both departing and arriving within the peak hour) could occur as a result of the proposals.
- A small amount of short-stay pick-up and drop-off is likely to occur in nearby unrestricted streets. However, the provision of the drop off area within the access loop will provide a more attractive proposition within the site.
- Based on a Hands Up Survey carried out at TCA, makes assumptions that school buses are likely to cater for 33% of pupil trips and 38% will likely arrive on foot.
- Staff vehicle trips of up to 65 movements may occur in the morning and afternoon respectively, however these are expected to mainly occur outside of the typical peak periods (expected to be 08:00 – 09:00 and 15:00 – 16:00).
- All junctions can accommodate the proposed development without significant detrimental impact on the capacity or safety. The Elm Highroad Crossroads are due to benefit from an improvement scheme conditioned against the Linnet Drive housing development which will provide further benefit once delivered. The implementation of the Travel Plan will serve to reduce both staff and pupil-related car trips in favour of sustainable modes of transport.
- The car trips generated by the proposed development can be accommodated by the existing local highway network without resulting in severe detrimental impacts. The proposed development will have a negligible impact on the local highway network and the access junction and local highway junctions will all operate within capacity during the development peaks.

10.35 Cambridgeshire County Council Transport Assessment Team have reviewed the application, including the Transport Assessment and junction capacity assessments carried out by the applicant. They originally requested that the application be refused due to it not being accompanied by an adequate assessment of the highway impacts (with specific concerns raised regarding junction capacity and increased on-street parking) and not proposing any pedestrian improvements to encourage or aid pupils to walk or cycle to the proposed school. However, following a review of additional highway information

submitted by the applicant during the course of the application, Cambridgeshire County Council Transport Assessment Team confirms that the proposal should have no significant detrimental impact on junction capacity and that they do not wish to object to the application subject to the following:

1. Prior to first occupation of the development by pupils, the applicant shall pay £150,000 (one hundred and fifty thousand pounds) contribution towards Cambridgeshire's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) pedestrian and cycle improvements along Weasenham Lane.
2. Within 3 months of first occupation of the Secondary School, the occupiers shall be responsible for the provision and implementation of a School Travel Plan to be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The School Travel Plan shall include suitable measures and incentives to promote sustainable travel. The School Travel Plan is to be monitored annually, with all measures reviewed to ensure targets are met.

- 10.36 With consideration given to the recommendations of the Local Highway Authority, it is considered that the LCWIP contribution and School Travel Plan condition are necessary to ensure that the proposed development has acceptable impacts on highway safety and the local transport network. The applicant has provided written agreement to enter into a legal agreement with the Council to provide the £150,000 contribution towards the LCWIP, and agreement of a School Travel Plan can be secured by a planning condition. Therefore, there is no objection to the proposed development from the Local Highway Authority.
- 10.37 In respect of parking provision, policy LP15 of the Local Plan states that development proposals should provide well designed car and cycle parking appropriate to the amount of development proposed, ensuring all new development meets the Council's defined parking standards set out in Appendix A of the Local Plan. However, Appendix A of the Local Plan does not provide parking standards for schools.
- 10.38 Planning permission F/02001/10/CC approved 203 car parking spaces within the TCA main car park. From the observation carried out during the case officers' site visit, the approved 203 car parking spaces appear to have been laid out in accordance with the approved plans relating to that planning permission. In addition, the TCA drop-off car park contains a further 17 car parking spaces.
- 10.39 The Transport Assessment accompanying the current application states that the existing car parking capacity was provided to accommodate an intake of 1,800 pupils. Therefore, due to the current intake at TCA being circa 1,440 pupils and the maximum intake at TCA (following opening of the proposed new school) being 1,500 pupils, the Transport Assessment suggests that there is capacity within the existing TCA site to accommodate additional car parking demand. The Transport Assessment states that, when considering the existing 1800 pupil capacity at TCA, the provision of 600 new pupil places at the proposed new school would represent a net increase of 300 pupils in real terms across the combined site. However, for robustness, the Transport Assessment provides an assessment based on an increase of 450 pupils.
- 10.40 The application proposes 66 car parking spaces for the proposed new school, comprising 51 car parking spaces within the existing TCA main car park and 15 car parking spaces within the existing TCA drop-off car park. This would reduce the

car parking provision retained by TCA to 160 car parking spaces within the existing TCA main car park and zero car parking spaces within the existing TCA drop-off car park.

- 10.41 The Transport Assessment accompanying the application includes travel mode data obtained from Hands Up Surveys carried out by TCA. The pupil travel mode data obtained from the Hands Up Surveys indicates that it is likely that circa 78% of pupils would travel to school via school bus, walking, cycling or taxi / public bus, with circa 22% travelling to school by private car which the Transport Assessment predicts to be circa 50 two-way private car trips per day occurring during peak hours. The staff travel mode data obtained from the Hands Up Surveys indicates that it is likely that circa 92% of staff would travel to school by private car which the Transport Assessment predicts to be circa 65 two-way private car trips per day occurring mainly outside of peak hours.
- 10.42 A Parking Accumulation survey was carried out on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2024 and the results were submitted to the Local Planning Authority in relation to a separate planning on the application site (reference: F/YR25/0097/F), which established the peak parking demand with the existing TCA main car park was 162 car parking spaces for a 15 minute period between 14.45pm-15:00pm, and was less than 160 car parking spaces at all other times of the day. The results of that Parking Accumulation survey indicate that the proposed development would likely result in sufficient car parking capacity being retained for TCA for all periods of the day, with the exception of a 15 minute period where capacity would be exceeded by demand by circa two car parking spaces (based on TCA's intake remaining consistent the December 2024 intake levels).
- 10.43 Due to the location of the proposed new school being within the grounds of TCA and having a similar pupil catchment, it is a reasonable assumption that TCA and proposed new school would generate a comparative ratio of school capacity to car parking demand. Therefore, based on the results of the Parking Accumulation survey referenced above, in addition to Hands Up Surveys carried out by TCA in relation to pupil and staff travel modes, it is a reasonable assumption that the peak parking demand of the proposed new school would be 66 car parking spaces. As the application proposes 66 car parking spaces for the proposed new school, it is considered that the proposed development would likely result in sufficient car parking capacity to serve the proposed new school during all periods of the day. Furthermore, the provision of 66 car parking spaces exceeds the maximum parking demand of 62 car parking spaces estimated within the Transport Assessment accompanying the current application for the new school.
- 10.44 The application is also accompanied by a Framework School Travel Plan identifying various methods which can be implemented by the school to further encourage sustainable travel and minimise the levels of private car travel to the school. However, with consideration given to the consultation response from the Local Highway Authority, it is considered necessary to append a condition to any grant of planning permission requiring a Travel Plan for the proposed school, containing suitable measures and incentives to promote sustainable travel. The Local Planning Authority consider this condition is necessary to ensure that the final Travel Plan is robust and enforceable.
- 10.45 The proposed development would provide 20 secure, sheltered cycle parking spaces. The pupil travel mode data obtained from the Hands Up Surveys indicates that it is likely that circa 5% of pupils (circa 23 pupils) would travel to school by

bicycle). In order to ensure that the proposed development provides adequate cycle parking provision and encourage active modes of travel to the school, it is considered necessary to append a planning condition to any grant of planning permission requiring additional cycle parking provision to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

- 10.46 It is therefore considered that, subject to the LCWIP contribution and School Travel Plan being secured by a legal agreement and planning condition respectively, and a planning condition requiring additional cycle parking provision, the proposed development would have acceptable highway safety and transportation and parking impacts, in accordance with policy LP15 of the Local Plan.

### **Playing field provision**

- 10.47 Paragraph 104 of the NPPF states that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields and formal play spaces, should not be built on unless:
- a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
  - b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
  - c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.
- 10.48 Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and Guidance states that Sport England will oppose the granting of planning permission for any development which would lead to the loss of, or would prejudice the use of:
- all or any part of a playing field, or
  - land which has been used as a playing field and remains undeveloped, or
  - land allocated for use as a playing field
- unless, in the judgement of Sport England, the development as a whole meets with one or more of five specific exceptions.
- 10.49 One of the five exceptions (Exception 5) states:
- "The proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor facility for sport, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice to the use, of the area of playing field."*
- 10.50 The proposed development would replace an existing five court Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) with a four court MUGA and would replace the partial loss of a playing field with the provision of replacement playing field. In addition, the proposed development includes a new sports hall.
- 10.51 Sport England has no objection to the application, confirming that it meets exception 5 of Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and accords with paragraph 104 of the National Planning Policy Framework, subject to conditions securing full implementation of the approved scheme; a schedule of playing field maintenance, management and monitoring to be agreed with the LPA; a drawing showing court line markings in the sports hall to be agreed with the LPA; a community use agreement to be agreed with the LPA to secure effective community use of the facilities; and construction of the multi-used games area and replacement playing field to be constructed in accordance with the plans accompanying the application.

- 10.52 It is considered necessary to append conditions (albeit reworded to ensure they meet the relevant tests for planning conditions) to secure the recommendations of Sport England and to ensure that the proposed development would secure sports facilities of sufficient benefit to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice to the use, of the area of playing field.
- 10.53 With consideration given to the recommendation from Sport England, and subject to conditions, it is considered that the proposed development would provide sports facilities of sufficient benefit to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice to the use, of the area of playing field, in accordance with paragraph 104 of the NPPF and Exception 5 of Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and Guidance.

### **Character and appearance of the area**

- 10.54 Policy LP16 of the Local Plan requires proposals for new development to make a positive contribution to the local distinctiveness and character of the area, enhance its local setting, respond to and improve the character of the local built environment, reinforce local identity and not adversely impact, either in design or scale terms, on the street scene, settlement pattern or the landscape character of the surrounding area. In addition, policy LP16 requires proposals for new development to provide well designed hard and soft landscaping.
- 10.55 The site is located within an urban area and is surrounded by built form. The scale, character and pattern of surrounding development is mixed. The surrounding area comprises a mix of commercial and residential uses. There are a large number of nearby commercial buildings with substantial footprints and elongated forms. The nearby commercial buildings are single-storey and two-storey, though some of heights which could accommodate three-storeys. The adjacent Thomas Clarkson Academy building has mixed heights, including three-storey elements with a maximum height of approximately 12.8 metres.
- 10.56 The siting of the proposed school building is in keeping with the mixed pattern of built form in the surrounding area. The proposed school building has a substantial footprint and elongated form, which is characteristic of nearby commercial buildings. The proposed school building is three-storeys and the main flat roof element of the building measuring approximately 12.8 metres in height, which is broadly in keeping with the heights of the Thomas Clarkson Academy and a large number of substantially sized commercial buildings located along Weasenham Lane.
- 10.57 With consideration given to the height, scale, siting and design of the proposed school building and associated development in relation to the visual context of the surrounding area, it is considered that the proposed development would respond appropriately to the character of the local built environment, reinforce local identity and not adversely impact, either in design or scale terms, on the street scene, settlement pattern or the landscape character of the surrounding area.
- 10.58 The proposed landscaping scheme demonstrates that high quality soft and hard landscaping would be provided as part of the proposed development, with the soft landscaping providing suitable mitigation for the proposed tree removals and aiding assimilation of the development into the surrounding area.
- 10.59 It is therefore considered that the proposed development would have acceptable impacts on the character and appearance of the area, in broad accordance with policy LP16 of the Local Plan.



## **Residential amenity**

- 10.60 Paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that planning decisions should ensure that developments create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.
- 10.61 Policy LP16 of the Local Plan requires proposals for new development to demonstrate that they would not:
- Adversely impact on the amenity of neighbouring users such as noise, light pollution, loss of privacy and loss of light; and
  - Result in any unreasonable constraint(s) or threaten the operation and viability of existing nearby or adjoining businesses or employment sites by introducing “sensitive” developments.
- 10.62 The proposed school building would be three-storeys in height, with significant levels of glazing within its east and west elevations. The proposed school building would be located approximately 43 metres in distance from the boundaries of the nearest residential properties to the east, approximately 31 metres and 40 metres respectively from the nearest commercial and residential properties to the south, and approximately 90 metres from the nearest commercial properties to the west. There are extensive grounds within the Thomas Clarkson Academy to the north of the proposed school building.
- 10.63 The north and south elevations of the proposed school building do not contain any windows above ground-floor level. With consideration given to the proposed window arrangements, and the significant separation distances between the proposed school building and the sensitive uses to the north and south, it is considered that the proposed development would not adversely impact the amenity of neighbouring uses to the north and south.
- 10.64 The windows within the west elevation would provide views towards the sports courts and playing fields within the site, and towards commercial uses in excess of 90 metres away. Due to the significant separation distance from the commercial uses, it is considered that the proposed school building would not adversely impact on the amenity of the neighbouring commercial uses. In addition, as the application site already comprises a secondary school use, the proposed school would not result in any unreasonable constraint to, or threaten the operation and viability of, any existing nearby or adjoining businesses or employment sites through the introduction of a sensitive development.
- 10.65 The windows within the east elevation would provide views towards residential properties adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site, however there would be a minimum separation distance of 43 metres between the proposed windows and the nearest boundaries of those residential properties. Due to the significant separation distance from the residential properties to the east, it is considered that the proposed school building would not result in any significant overlooking of those properties or adversely impact their amenity.
- 10.66 The Council’s Environmental Health department accepts the findings of the Environmental Noise Impact Assessment, though they state that a follow-up noise impact assessment will be required when the specifications of the building services plant are known. With consideration given to the recommendation of the Council’s

Environmental Health department, in order to ensure the amenity of nearby noise sensitive receptors are not adversely affected by noise, and in order to confirm the required specification for ventilation and glazing to ensure adequate protection for the classrooms within the proposed school building, it considered necessary to append a condition requiring a follow-up noise impact assessment to be agreed by the Local Planning Authority.

- 10.67 The application is accompanied by an external lighting plan and lighting specifications, which have been reviewed and accepted by the Council's Environmental Health department. With consideration given to the external lighting information accompanying the application and the recommendation of the Council's Environmental Health department, it is considered that the proposed development would not adversely impact on the residential amenity of nearby properties as a result of light overspill and glare. Notwithstanding any external lighting details which may be approved as part of any grant of planning permission, should any unacceptable external lighting impacts occur in the future, it is acknowledged that the Council's Environmental Health department may take action under statutory nuisance legislation.
- 10.68 It is acknowledged that construction of the proposed development would result in additional traffic, noise, light, air pollution, and other potential nuisances to existing neighbouring properties during the construction period. However, such impacts would be temporary and could be mitigated to acceptable levels by appending a condition requiring a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) to be agreed by the Local Planning Authority. The application is accompanied by a draft CEMP; however, due to the major scale of the proposed development, and its location in relation to roads and neighbouring properties, it is considered necessary for a final CEMP to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority, in order to ensure acceptable highway impacts and protect the residential amenity of neighbouring properties during the construction phase. The Council's Environmental Health department accepts the contents of the draft CEMP and indicates that compliance with the CEMP would also ensure compliance with the satisfactory mitigation measures specified within the Air Quality Survey accompanying the application.
- 10.69 It is therefore considered that the proposed development would not cause any significant adverse impacts to the amenity of neighbouring users, and it would provide a high standard of amenity to future users of the proposed school, in accordance with policies LP2 and LP16 of the Local Plan and paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

### **Contamination**

- 10.70 Policy LP16 of the Local Plan requires proposals for new development to identify, manage and mitigate against any existing or proposed risks from sources of contamination. In addition, it requires that the site is suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground conditions, contamination and gas risks.
- 10.71 The application is accompanied by a Geotechnical and Geoenvironmental Ground Investigation Report, in addition to a Geo-Environmental Assessment.
- 10.72 The Council's Environmental Health department accepts the findings of these assessments and accepts the lower risk ground gas threshold level due to the location of the elevated carbon dioxide levels remaining as a grass area.

Therefore, the Council's Environmental Health department recommends that ground gas protection measures are not required.

- 10.73 With consideration given to the proposed use being the same as the existing use of the site, the information contained within the Geotechnical and Geo-environmental Ground Investigation Report and the Geo-Environmental Assessment, and the recommendation from the Council's Environmental Health department, it is considered that the site is suitable for its proposed use and the application satisfactorily identifies and manages contamination risks, in accordance with policy LP16 of the Local Plan.

### **Resource use**

- 10.74 Policy LP14 of the Local Plan states that, in order to address the following:
- (a) the urgent need to combat the causes of, and adaptation to, climate change;
  - (b) the chronic levels of fuel poverty in selected parts of the district;
  - (c) the need to compensate for the embodied energy of new buildings;
  - (d) the need to create local jobs in Fenland;
  - (e) the increasing need to use water more efficiently;
  - (f) the desire to develop skills and experience in the 'green economy';
  - (g) the desire to minimise, as a result of new development, the need for costly and resource intensive upgrades and capacity increases to the wider power infrastructure network, and
  - (h) the need, generally, to upgrade existing dwellings to better energy performance (acknowledging the fact that 85% of today's existing, mostly energy inefficient, homes in the UK will likely still be in existence in 2050), the Council will expect all developments of 100 square metres or more, for non-dwellings, to explicitly demonstrate what reasonable contribution the development will make towards minimising resource consumption above and beyond what is required by Building Regulations and/or other standard planning policies.
- 10.75 The Resource Use and Renewable Energy Supplementary Planning Document provides guidance on measures to meet the 'reasonable contribution' test specified within policy LP14 of the Local Plan.
- 10.76 The proposed development demonstrates that it would provide a reasonable contribution towards minimising resource consumption through implementation of the following measures which are specified within the measures listed within the Resource Use and Renewable Energy Supplementary Planning Document:
- Photovoltaic solar array on the roof space of the proposed school building and external canopies;
  - Renewable energy generation infrastructure on the roof space external canopies;
  - Cycle storage in a prominent, overlooked position;
  - Electric vehicle charging points;
  - Native species soft landscaping.
- 10.77 It is therefore considered that the proposed development demonstrates a reasonable contribution towards minimising resource consumption above and beyond what is required by Building Regulations and/or other standard planning policies, in accordance with policy LP14 of the Local Plan and the Resource Use and Renewable Energy Supplementary Planning Document.

### **Biodiversity and trees**

- 10.78 Policy LP16 of the Local Plan requires proposals for new development to retain and incorporate natural features, such as trees, and to protect and enhance biodiversity on and surrounding the site, taking into account locally designated sites and the special protection given to internationally and nationally designated sites, in accordance with policy LP19.
- 10.79 Policy LP19 of the Local Plan states that the Council will conserve, enhance and promote the biodiversity interest of the natural environment throughout Fenland and, through the processes of development delivery (including the use of planning obligations), will ensure opportunities are taken to incorporate beneficial features for biodiversity in new developments.

#### *Biodiversity*

- 10.80 The application was originally accompanied by an Extended Phase One Habitat Survey, a Biodiversity Net Gain Metric and a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment.
- 10.81 The Extended Phase One Habitat Survey confirmed no evidence of protected species on the site which could be affected by the proposed development. However, it included a recommendation for completion of a Bat Roost Assessment of all trees to be removed which was required prior to determination of the application. A Ground Level Tree Assessment was received during the course of the application, in order to address the recommendation for a Bat Roost Assessment within the Extended Phase One Habitat Survey. The Ground Level Tree Assessment concludes that none of the trees to be removed as part of the proposed development have the potential to support bats. The Council's Principal Ecologist has confirmed acceptance of the conclusions of the Ground Level Tree Assessment and that no further bat surveys are required. Therefore, this has addressed the recommendation for a Bat Roost Survey contained within the Extended Phase One Habitat Survey.
- 10.82 In addition, the original consultation response from Cambridgeshire County Council Ecology Advisory Service recommended that an amendment was required to the original Biodiversity Net Gain assessment accompanying the application. The Council's Principal Ecologist has confirmed acceptance of a revised Biodiversity Net Gain assessment, received by the Local Planning Authority during the course of the application, and agrees that the development could achieve the required Biodiversity Net Gain on site.
- 10.83 The Council's Principal Ecologist recommends that conditions are appended to any grant of planning permission to secure Biodiversity Net Gain, a long-term Landscape Management Plan and a final Construction Management Plan. With consideration given to the recommendations of the Council's Principal Ecologist, it is considered necessary to append conditions to secure these details in order to ensure that the proposed development protects and enhances biodiversity.
- 10.84 It is therefore considered that the proposed development would protect and enhance biodiversity, in accordance with policies LP16 and LP19 of the Local Plan.

#### *Trees*

- 10.85 There are a number of trees within the site, however none of them are afforded any statutory protection as they are not subject to a Tree Preservation Order or located within a conservation area.
- 10.86 The application is accompanied by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) which identifies 14 individual trees and one hedge to be removed in order to facilitate the proposed development (AIA references: T5, T6, T14, T15, T16, T17, T60, T61, T73, T74, T75, T89, T90, T91 and H1) and one additional tree to be removed due to its condition (AIA reference: T78). The AIA proposes to retain and protect all other trees and hedging within the site.
- 10.87 With the exception of one Category B tree (AIA reference: T89) and one Category U tree (AIA reference: T78), all other trees and hedgerows to be removed as part of the proposed development are classified as Category C and therefore are of a low quality which can be adequately compensated for by replacement planting.
- 10.88 With consideration given to the detailed contained within the Extended Phase One Habitat Survey and the Ground Level Tree Assessment, and the recommendations of the Council's Tree Officer and Principal Ecologist, it is considered that the proposed development would provide adequate protection and enhancement of biodiversity and trees, in accordance with policies LP16 and LP19 of the Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework, subject to a final CEMP and Biodiversity Net Gain plan being secured via planning conditions.

### **Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)**

- 10.89 The Environment Act 2021 requires development proposals to deliver a net gain in biodiversity following a mitigation hierarchy which is focused on avoiding ecological harm over minimising, rectifying, reducing and then off-setting. This approach accords with Local Plan policies LP16 and LP19 which outlines a primary objective for biodiversity to be conserved or enhanced and provides for the protection of Protected Species, Priority Species and Priority Habitat.
- 10.90 In this instance a Biodiversity Gain Condition is required to be approved before development is begun.

## **11 CONCLUSIONS**

- 11.1 The Fenland Infrastructure Delivery Plan identifies a critical need for new secondary school provision within the Wisbech / March area, due to demographic pressures on secondary schools.
- 11.2 The proposed development would provide a new secondary school with capacity for up to 600 pupils within one of the district's most sustainable settlements, which would contribute towards addressing an identified need for additional secondary school capacity in the locality.
- 11.3 The proposed development would broadly accord with the development plan in respect of the principle of development and its impacts in relation to flood risk and drainage; highway safety, transportation and parking provision; sports facilities provision; the character and appearance of the area; residential amenity; resource use; biodiversity and trees; and biodiversity Net Gain.
- 11.4 It is therefore recommended that planning permission is granted.

## 12 RECOMMENDATION

12.1 Members are recommended to APPROVE the application in accordance with the following terms;

1. The Committee delegates authority to finalise the terms and completion of the legal agreement and planning conditions to the Head of Planning; and,
2. Following the completion of the legal agreement, planning application F/YR24/0857/F be approved; or,
3. The Committee delegates authority to refuse the application in the event that the Applicant does not agree any necessary extensions to the determination period to enable the completion of the legal agreement, or on the grounds that the applicant is unwilling to complete the obligation necessary to make the development acceptable.

### Appendix 1 – Recommended planning conditions

1	<p><b>Commencement</b></p> <p>The development permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure compliance with Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.</p>
2	<p><b>Surface water during construction</b></p> <p>No development, including preparatory works, shall commence until details of measures indicating how additional surface water run-off from the site will be avoided during the construction works have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The applicant may be required to provide collection, balancing and/or settlement systems for these flows. The approved measures and systems shall be brought into operation before any works to create buildings or hard surfaces commence.</p> <p>Reason - To ensure surface water is managed appropriately during the construction phase of the development, so as not to increase the flood risk to adjacent land/properties or occupied properties within the development itself; recognising that initial works to prepare the site could bring about unacceptable impacts, in accordance with policies LP14 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014. The condition is pre-commencement to ensure acceptable surface water drainage impacts during the construction phase of the development.</p>

3	<p><b>Arboricultural Method Statement</b></p> <p>No development shall take place until a detailed Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) has been submitted, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The AMS shall include justification and mitigation for any tree removal proposed and details of how trees will be protected at all stages of the development. Recommendations for tree surgery works and details of any tree surgery works necessary to implement the permission will be required as will the method and location of tree protection measures, the phasing of protection methods where demolition or construction activities are essential within root protection areas and design solutions for all problems encountered that could adversely impact trees (e.g. hand digging or thrust-boring trenches, porous hard surfaces, use of geotextiles, location of site compounds, office, parking, site access, storage etc.). All works shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed AMS.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure that the trees on site are adequately protected, to safeguard the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with policies LP16 and LP19 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014. The condition is pre-commencement in order to ensure that the protection measures are implemented prior to any site works taking place to avoid causing damage to trees to be retained on site.</p>
4	<p><b>Construction Environmental Management Plan</b></p> <p>Prior to any work commencing on the site a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The CEMP shall include, but shall not be limited to, mitigation measures for noise, dust and lighting during the construction phase. The CEMP shall be adhered to at all times.</p> <p>Reason: To mitigate environmental and amenity impacts during the construction phase of the proposed development, in accordance with Policies LP2 and LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014. The condition is pre-commencement to ensure acceptable environmental and amenity impacts during the construction phase of the development.</p>
5	<p><b>Piling Method Statement</b></p> <p>In the event of piling works being required, no piling works shall commence until a method statement detailing the type of piling, mitigation measures and monitoring to protect local residents from noise and/or vibration has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. Potential noise and vibration levels at the nearest noise sensitive locations shall assessed in accordance with the provisions of BS 5228:2009+A1:2014 Code of Practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites.</p> <p>Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved statement.</p> <p>Reason: To protect the residential amenity of the neighbouring properties, in accordance with policies LP2 and LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014. The condition is pre-commencement to ensure acceptable amenity impacts during the construction phase of the development.</p>

6	<p><b>Detailed surface water drainage scheme</b></p> <p>No laying of services, creation of hard surfaces or erection of a building shall commence until a detailed surface water drainage scheme for the site, based on the agreed Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy, HEXA, Ref: 600796, Rev: P01, Dated: August 2024 has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in full accordance with the approved details prior to first use of the development hereby approved.</p> <p>Reason: To prevent the increased risk of flooding, and to improve and protect water quality, in accordance with policies LP14 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.</p>
7	<p><b>Management and maintenance of surface water drainage scheme</b></p> <p>Prior to first use of the development hereby approved, a management and maintenance plan for the on-site surface water drainage system required by condition 6 of this planning permission shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing by, the Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>Reason: To prevent the increased risk of flooding, and to improve and protect water quality, in accordance with policies LP14 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.</p>
8	<p><b>External materials</b></p> <p>No development shall take place above slab level until full details of the materials to be used for the exterior walls and roofs of the development have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless minor variations are otherwise first agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with Policy LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.</p>
9	<p><b>Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan</b></p> <p>Prior to first use of the development hereby approved, a Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan, including details of measures to protect and enhance existing flora, fauna and habitats within the development site, shall be submitted to, and approved by, the Local Planning Authority. The Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan shall be carried out as approved in accordance with the specified schedule contained therein.</p> <p>The plan shall include the following details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long term design objectives</li> <li>• Management responsibilities</li> <li>• Maintenance schedules</li> </ul> <p>Reason: To ensure the visual impacts of the development are appropriately managed and that biodiversity is protected and enhanced, in accordance with Policies LP16 and LP19 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.</p>

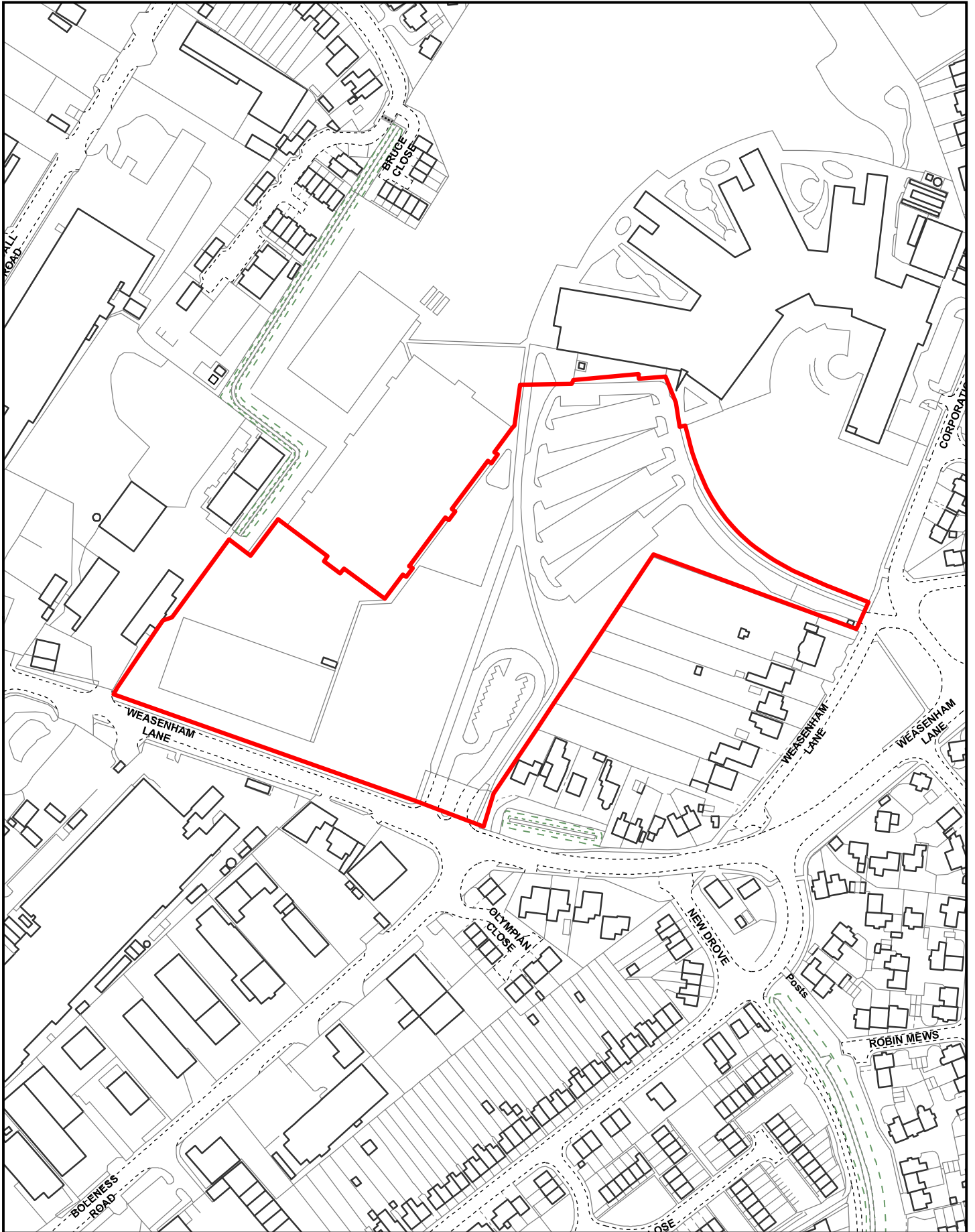


10	<p><b><i>Vehicle parking and turning</i></b></p> <p>Prior to the first use of the development hereby approved, the on-site vehicle parking and turning areas shall be laid out in accordance with the approved plans, surfaced in a bound material and drained within the site. The parking and turning areas shall thereafter be retained as such, and for that specific use, in perpetuity.</p> <p>Reason: In the interests of highway safety, in accordance with Policy LP15 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.</p>
11	<p><b><i>Cycle parking details</i></b></p> <p>Prior to first use of the development hereby approved, full details of a scheme for cycle storage shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall be implemented in full prior to the first use of the development hereby approved.</p> <p>Reason: In the interests of security, the convenience of cyclists at the premises, and to encourage sustainable forms of active travel, in accordance with Policies LP15 and LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.</p>
12	<p><b><i>Fire hydrants</i></b></p> <p>Prior to first use of the development hereby approved, details for the provision of fire hydrants shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented prior to first use of the development hereby approved.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure a satisfactory form of development and ensure public safety, in accordance with Policy LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014 and the National Planning Policy Framework.</p>
13	<p><b><i>School Travel Plan</i></b></p> <p>Prior to first use of the development hereby approved, a School Travel Plan containing suitable measures and incentives to promote sustainable travel shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The Travel Plan shall be implemented prior to first use of the development hereby approved.</p> <p>Reason: To encourage sustainable modes of travel, in accordance with Policy LP15 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.</p>
14	<p><b><i>Follow-up Noise Impact Assessment</i></b></p> <p>Prior to first use of the development hereby approved, a Noise Impact Assessment containing specifications of the building services plant and confirming the required specification for ventilation and glazing shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure adequate protection of the residential amenity of nearby noise sensitive receptors, and adequate protection of teaching rooms, from noise generated by the proposed development, in accordance with Policies LP2 and LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.</p>

15	<p><b><i>Relocation of playing field</i></b></p> <p>Prior to first use of the development hereby approved, the scheme to relocate the playing field shall be carried out and completed in full accordance with the document titled ‘A feasibility study for the proposed relocation of a natural turf pitch at Thomas Clarkson Academy, Corporation Road, Wisbech, PE13 2SE’ undertaken by TGMS and dated 3rd November 2023 [Revision 1, 30th August 2024], including the development options and work programme.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure that the playing field is first established as a functional playing field to an adequate standard and is fit for purpose, and to ensure that the proposed development would provide sports facilities of sufficient benefit to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice to the use, of the area of playing field, in accordance with paragraph 104 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Exception 5 of Sport England’s Playing Fields Policy and Guidance.</p>
16	<p><b><i>Playing field maintenance, management and monitoring</i></b></p> <p>Prior to first use of the development hereby approved, a schedule of playing field maintenance, management and monitoring, including a programme for the implementation for a minimum period of five years starting from the commencement of use of the development, shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. Following the commencement of use of the development, the approved schedule shall be complied with in full.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure that the playing field is first established as a functional playing field to an adequate standard and is fit for purpose, and to ensure that the proposed development would provide sports facilities of sufficient benefit to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice to the use, of the area of playing field, in accordance with paragraph 104 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Exception 5 of Sport England’s Playing Fields Policy and Guidance.</p>
17	<p><b><i>Community use agreement</i></b></p> <p>Prior to first occupation of the multi-use games area, sports hall and football pitch hereby permitted, a community use agreement shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The agreement shall apply to the artificial grass pitch, natural turf playing fields, multi-use games areas, sports hall and supporting ancillary facilities and include, but shall not be limited to, details of pricing policy, community use programming, hours of use, access by non-educational establishment users, management responsibilities and a mechanism for review. The development shall not be used at any time other than in strict compliance with the approved agreement.</p> <p>Reason: To secure well managed safe community access to the sports facility/facilities, to ensure sufficient benefit to the development of sport, and to ensure that the proposed development would provide sports facilities of sufficient benefit to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice to the use, of the area of playing field, in accordance with paragraph 104 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Exception 5 of Sport England’s Playing Fields Policy and Guidance.</p>

18	<p><b><i>Court line markings for sports hall</i></b></p> <p>Prior to first use of the Sports Hall, a scaled drawing showing the court line markings in the sports hall shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Sport England. The sports hall shall not be constructed other than in accordance with the approved details.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure that the proposed development is fit for purpose and sustainable, and to ensure that it would provide sports facilities of sufficient benefit to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice to the use, of the area of playing field, in accordance with paragraph 104 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Exception 5 of Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and Guidance.</p>
19	<p><b><i>Construction and laying out of the MUGA and playing field</i></b></p> <p>The Multi-Use Games Area and replacement playing field (including the 5v5 grass football pitch) shall be constructed and laid out in accordance with drawing no. FS1018-ONE-XX-ZZ-SK-L-0001 and the details approved under condition 15 of this planning permission, and shall be made available for use prior to first use of the development hereby permitted.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure the quality of pitches is satisfactory and they are available for use before development (or agreed timescale), and to ensure that the proposed development would provide sports facilities of sufficient benefit to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice to the use, of the area of playing field, in accordance with paragraph 104 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Exception 5 of Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and Guidance.</p>
20	<p><b><i>Trees and hedgerow removal</i></b></p> <p>No trees or hedgerow removal works shall take place between 1st March and 31st August inclusive in any year, unless it is carried out under a watching brief by an Ecological Clerk of Works.</p> <p>Reason: To protect biodiversity, in accordance with policies LP16 and LP19 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.</p>
21	<p><b><i>Implementation and maintenance of hard and soft landscaping</i></b></p> <p>All hard and soft landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. All planting, seeding or turfing and soil preparation comprised in the above details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following first use of the development hereby approved. Any plants which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation. All landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the guidance contained in British Standards, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.</p>

	Reason: To ensure proper implementation of the agreed landscape details in the interest of the amenity value of the development, in accordance with Policy LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.
22	<p><b>Construction hours</b></p> <p>Construction hours and deliveries, with the exception of internal fit-out, shall be limited to the following hours:- 08:00-18:00 each day Monday-Friday, 08:00-13:00 on Saturdays and none on Sundays or Bank / Public Holidays.</p> <p>Reason: To safeguard the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers, in accordance with policies LP2 and LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.</p>
23	<p><b>Biodiversity Net Gain</b></p> <p>Development may not be begun unless:</p> <p>(a) a biodiversity gain plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and</p> <p>(b) the planning authority has approved the plan.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure compliance with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021).</p>
24	<p><b>Approved Plans</b></p> <p>The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and documents.</p> <p>Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of proper planning.</p>



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**F/YR24/0857/F**

Scale = 1:2,500



 **Fenland**  
CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
Fenland District Council



NOTES

Refer to drawing **FS1018-ONE-XX-ZZ-D-L-0009** for full Access & Security Strategy (Including Fencing Plan)

Refer to drawing **FS1018-ONE-XX-ZZ-D-L-0010** for full Circulation Strategy

Refer to Amenity Tree LTD **Tree Constraints Plan** for all tree categories and specification.

REVISION | P16 | DATE | 07.05.25 | BY | AB | CHECKED | JE

Update to soft landscape proposals to align with drainage strategy. Crossing points and footpath link adjacent to main vehicle entrance adjusted to avoid gate swing. Crossing added to visitor parking area. Fencing updated to suit IDB requirements

REVISION | P16 | DATE | 09.05.25 | BY | AB | CHECKED | JE

Landform extends south of existing AWP updated to suit revised fence line.

REVISION | P12 | DATE | 13.02.25 | BY | YL | CHECKED | AB

Red line boundary revised. Building position adjusted to avoid existing service easement: hydrant location added.

REVISION | P13 | DATE | 19.02.25 | BY | AB | CHECKED | KP

Single gate to North of building replaced with double gate to facilitate maintenance access. Issued for Stage 4.

REVISION | P14 | DATE | 21.02.25 | BY | AB | CHECKED | KP

15no. trees included to meet BNG requirements.

CLIENT | Henry Brothers

PROJECT | **Wisbech Free School**

DRAWING TITLE | Whole Site Plan

DRAWING No. | FS1018-ONE-XX-ZZ-D-L-0003 | REVISION | P16

STATUS | Stage 4 - Technical Design

SCALE | 1:500 @ A1 | DATE | 07.08.23 | DRAWN BY | KP

051020

metres

1:500

ONE-ENVIRONMENTS