

Planning Applications Committee

Section B

13 November, 2008

Agenda Number:	B6
Section/Area:	OUTER
Ward:	CROME
Officer:	Anne Napier
Valid Date:	7 October 2008
Application Number:	08/01064/CF3
Site Address :	Heartsease High School Marryat Road Norwich NR7 9DF
Proposal:	Proposed demolition of existing school and construction of new Academy and Sports Centre; new access and parking arrangements; remodelling of existing hall to provide car and motorcycle maintenance training facility.
Applicant:	Ms Lisa Christensen
Agent:	Miss Sophie Campbell

PLEASE NOTE: Norfolk County Council is the determining planning authority for this application. Norwich City Council has been consulted on the proposal as the other local planning authority for the area as part of this process.

THE SITE

The site is located at the junction of Heartsease Lane with Salhouse Road and is visible from and abuts the Outer Ring Road. Part of the application site lies to the west of the Ring Road and currently comprises a football pitch which, it is

understood, is currently used by teams from within the local community rather than the school. Beyond this, to the west, the site adjoins Mousehold Heath, with Heartsease Primary School to the south, the Heartsease housing estate to the east and the Salhouse Road retail park to the north. The majority of the site is allocated as urban greenspace within the Replacement Local Plan.

The main site is relatively flat, the majority of which is laid out as open playing fields. The existing school buildings occupy the north east corner of the site, tight to the boundaries of Salhouse Road and Marryat Road in the residential area. The existing school buildings are typical of the period, ranging from single to four storeys in concrete frame with brick infill panels and flat asphalt roofs.

The site is largely free of vegetation. There are small groups of semi-mature trees to the north of the existing school buildings and at the edge of the playing fields at the junction of Heartsease Lane and Salhouse Road.

The School site was originally agricultural land adjacent to Mousehold Heath. At the beginning of the 20th century, it was used as a drill ground for the Royal Norfolk Regiment. In October 1914 the old cavalry training ground was taken over by the Royal Flying Corps and became Mousehold Heath Aerodrome. The Norfolk & Norwich Aero Club was formed at Mousehold in 1927 and in 1933 it became Norwich Airport. By the Second World War the airfield had fallen into disuse. However, it was used as a 'dummy' airfield with decoy aircraft, to fool German aircraft attacking Norwich.

Heartsease High School was established in 1966 in Norwich as a mixed 11 -18 community school. Although the School was originally designed to accommodate approximately 1000 pupils, currently there are only 490 students on the roll.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

There have been no relevant previous applications on the site, although a number of applications relating to the educational use of and minor alterations to the existing buildings have been submitted, together with an application which related to the use of the premises for social services in 2005.

THE PROPOSAL

It is proposed to demolish the existing school, which is comprised of buildings ranging from one to four storeys and are typical of the late 1960's as they are constructed from concrete frames with brick infill panels and flat asphalt roofs. They are stated to be in poor condition and are considered to provide a low quality learning environment for the pupils. The application proposes the construction of a new secondary school, known as the Open Academy, and a sports centre on a site adjoining the existing buildings, enabling the current school buildings to remain in use during the construction period and minimising

the disruption to the school community, whilst resulting in the main school buildings being sited further away from the adjoining residents to the east.

Although the location of the car park would remain in a similar position, new access and parking arrangements are proposed, with the existing parking bays softened with planting and paving. There would be two main pedestrian points of entrance to the site with the main one, off Marryat Road, accentuated by a formal avenue of tree planting and the secondary one, off Salhouse Road, leading through meandering birch woodland planting. Both pedestrian routes will act as cycle paths. Cycle parking would be located adjacent to the main building entrance with further cycle parking located adjacent to the car park. Also included within the proposal is the retention and remodelling of existing school hall to provide a car and motorcycle maintenance training facility known as Open Road.

The building comprises of two distinct geometrical structures: a three storey, cedar clad rotunda with a domed roof, which would provide the main teaching element of the development with classroom bases and a large Open Forum for use as a large central community space; and a rectangular, brick block for the sports hall and expressive arts department. Where these two forms unite marks the main entrance with a projecting glass box, known as the Open Book, over the front door and providing views through into the library and resource area within.

The building is located in a central position on the site and its orientation is determined by the two pedestrian routes that enter from the current access boundaries. The first from Marryat Road retains the current primary pedestrian route and reflects the school's main likely catchment area in the neighbouring housing estate. The secondary pedestrian approach off Salhouse Road would align with the sports building on this axis and is designed to highlight the main entrance doors. The entry points to the Academy have been organised to segregate the pedestrian entrances from cars and service vehicles.

Materials:

The Design and Access Statement submitted with the application states: 'A simple materials palette of brick, glass and timber cladding is proposed externally, where each material works to reinforce the design concept. The ground floor storey is a rich reddish coloured multi-brick which offers the Academy a robust material at a storey level where it will be most prone to vulnerability. This brick continues on the entire Sports Wing. The Sports wing has purposefully been given a different elevational treatment to the main lozenge part of the building, which is the main teaching block in order to express the different type of activity that goes on here.

The first and second storey of the lozenge block is clad in western red cedar wood. This is a much softer treatment than the brick at the ground level in order to express a lighter material which enhances the concept of the floors rotating above the grounded base of the reddish brick level. [...] The concept behind the

window strategy on the lozenge façade is to assist with the rhythm of the cog analogy on each storey. By maintaining a consistent rhythm using the three grouped windows around the perimeter a logic and understanding is generated. The colour of the spandrel panels between the window groupings stops this rhythm becoming institutional and repetitive.

The house bases centred on the four learning zones will have a unique colour to identify them, developing a strong sense of identity and belonging. These pastoral bases will provide welcoming centres for pupils within the school. The colours assist in orientating visitors and students around the Academy. Externally these are apparent on the elevations in the spandrel panel between the windows. This reveals a playful but subtle burst of colour along the radius of the lozenge block elevation. This in turn is read through into the interiors of the building into the relevant teaching zones. These four autumnal tones of blue, red, yellow and green have been carefully selected to compliment the cedar throughout all stages of the weathering process and the stronger tones of the brick'

Landscape:

The Statement goes on to explore the landscape concept for the site and states: 'The external spaces have been developed in careful response to the function and layout of the proposed school building. External spaces will be designed to extend the internal environment of the school, by creating for example outdoor teaching spaces, helping to maximise use of the outdoors, especially in the summer months. The external spaces have also been developed to maximise the local microclimate by maximising solar aspect and providing protection in exposed locations with the introduction of planting.

The concept is to create visual interest and variety by creating a blend of different surface treatments within a strong design layout. This will mean the use of differing surface materials to define active or more passive spaces, using seating and planting to break down larger areas, introducing softer elements such as lawns, tree planting, shrub planting or wildflower meadows to enrich the character and add colour to the external spaces.

The elements that make up the external landscape can be identified as follows: Access and circulation; Amphitheatre; Car parking, vehicular and pedestrian circulation; Piazza; Recreational and educational spaces; Informal soft and hard play areas; Outdoor horticulture/allotment space; Sports facilities; Sports pitches (summer / winter); Multi Use Games Areas (MUGA)/Netball Courts; Fitness/Trim trail; Greenspace; Existing mature treescape retained where possible; Wildlife habitat zone; Native infrastructure planting; Formal tree and shrub planting; and Enhanced boundary planting'

The proposals seek to retain most of the mature trees on site, including those on the boundary with the junction with the Ring Road, and to supplement these with additional planting within the site and on the boundary.

Energy efficiency:

The design of the building seeks to maximise sustainable construction methods and the energy efficiency of the building. A BREEAM 'excellent' rating is considered likely to be achieved by the developers. A minimum of 60% CO₂ savings will be made from the site through the use of on-site renewable energy generation via a biomass boiler installation and solar hot water collectors. Other aspects of the scheme include the use of passive solar design, natural ventilation where possible, optimised building fabric performance and use of energy saving equipment, low water use and the use of recycling maximised both during construction and operational phase of the development.

Lighting and security:

The external lighting scheme seeks to minimise the possibilities of light pollution and light spillage and disturbance to others by the location and type of lighting proposed, the use of movement sensors and by restricting the use of facilities such as the Multi Use Games Area (to be located to the west of the site) to no later than 10pm.

The design of the development has also referred to Secured by Design – Schools (2004) and specific advice has been taken from the Police Architectural Liaison Officer in this regard. A CCTV provision is included within the proposal, with 2.4m high weldmesh fencing proposed to the site boundaries, supplemented by additional hawthorn hedge planting along parts of the eastern boundary.

Transportation:

The entry points to the school have been organised to segregate the pedestrian entrances from cars and service vehicles. The main pedestrian entrance to the academy would be maintained in its current location on Marryat Road. A secondary pedestrian entrance would be located on Salhouse Road. This would also provide a cycle entry for the future cycle lane proposed on Salhouse Road. Cycle parking would be located on site. That adjacent to the main building entrance would provide a 30 no. cycle store for staff, with 120no. student cycle parking located adjacent to the car park, and 18no. cycle parking located at the Open Road Facility.

The existing vehicular entrance on Salhouse Road would be retained for the proposed Academy. This entrance would provide access for staff and visitor parking, including disabled parking. It would also provide access for coach, fire and service vehicles. The car park area would provide for 100 car spaces. Only one pedestrian/vehicular cross-over would exist on site. This would facilitate access to the service yard to the West of the site. This crossover would be a raised table with a distinctive paved surface, so as to differentiate between the road surface and the pedestrian flow area.

A further vehicular entrance would be provided for the Open Road facility off Marryat Road. This would be purely for the Open Road facility and would provide for 12 car spaces. The main pedestrian entrance to this building is proposed to be on the northern side of the Open Road building, which would enable a further segregation of pedestrians and vehicles on site.

The car parking provision proposed is stated to be in line with Norfolk County Council Parking Standards.

CONSULTATIONS

All notifications, publicity and consultations with interested bodies or statutory consultees are carried out by Norfolk County Council as the determining planning authority.

Prior to the submission of the formal application, the applicants undertook a lengthy consultation process involving officers from the City Council and others and with members of the existing school and local community. These are detailed within the Design and Access statement.

Environmental Health: No objections in principle. Detailed conditions suggested concerning contaminated land and noise and disturbance.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

National Planning Policies:

PPS1 – Delivering sustainable development
Supplement to PPS1 – Planning and climate change
PPG13 Transport
PPG17 Sport and Recreation
PPS23 – Planning and pollution control
PPG24 – Planning and noise
PPS25 – Development and flood risk

East of England Plan 2008:

ENG1 – Carbon Dioxide emissions and energy performance
WM6 – Waste management in development
ENV7 – Quality in the built environment
NR1 – Norwich key centre for development and change

Relevant Local Plan Policies:

NE9 Comprehensive landscaping scheme and tree planting
HBE12 High quality of design
HBE19 Design for safety and security including minimising crime
EP1 Contaminated land

EP10 Noise Protection between different uses
 EP16 Water conservation and sustainable drainage systems
 EP17 Protection of watercourses from pollution from stored materials, roads and car parks
 EP18 High standard of energy efficiency for new development
 EP19 Renewable energy development
 EP20 Sustainable use of materials
 SR3 Criteria for development of urban greenspace and recreational open space
 SR6 Dual use of facilities provided in educational and other establishments
 SR13 Locational considerations for indoor sports activities
 SR14 Criteria for Sports development
 TRA3 Modal shift
 TRA5 Approach to design for vehicle movements and special needs
 TRA6 Parking standards - maxima
 TRA7 Cycle parking standard
 TRA8 Servicing provision
 TRA10 Contributions by developers for works required to access to the site
 TRA12 Travel Plans for employers and organisations
 TRA14 Enhancement of the pedestrian environment and safe pedestrian routes
 TRA15 Cycle network and facilities

Main issues:

Taking into account that the County Council will receive responses direct from other bodies and consultees on matters relating to their particular areas of specialism, the following are considered to be the main issues for consideration in respect of the proposal:

- Principle of the proposed replacement building and the potential loss of urban green space
- Landscaping and tree planting proposed
- Transportation
- Potential for contamination
- Noise and disturbance for neighbouring residents
- Energy efficiency

Principle of replacement and loss of urban greenspace:

A secondary school has existed on the site since the late 1960's. The use of the site for this purpose is an established and ongoing one and the principle of the continued use of the site for an educational facility is considered to be acceptable. The current proposal seeks to expand the community use of the facilities outside the school day and incorporate a new vocational element focusing on car repairs linked to their engineering specialist status, with the provision of the Open Road facility which, whilst it would be available to students both of the Open Academy and other establishments, would also potentially be available for a community use at weekends and in the evenings. However, the principle of an expanded community use of the site is considered to be an

acceptable one and one that reflects the move towards a more integrated use of school sites generally.

In order to minimize the disruption to the school community, it is proposed to build the replacement buildings adjacent to the existing. Whilst this will have obvious benefits to the school, it will result in the loss of current urban greenspace. However, the developers have demonstrated that a significant proportion of this would then, once the redevelopment of the site is complete, be available for use as amenity space. Part of this would be through the use of facilities such as the proposed Multi Use Games Area but also through an enhanced landscaped environment and setting for the school, with the provision of, for example, an allotment area, a pond, outdoor classrooms and 'breakout' spaces, as well as the formal landscaping proposed which could accommodate, for example, sculptures. In addition, the remaining area available for sports has been shown to accommodate a variety of pitches and uses, including the addition of an under12's football pitch on the western side of the Ring Road.

Consequently, although there would be a net loss of some 980sq.m. of open space, the development as proposed is considered to have adequately compensated for this loss by the enhanced variety of facilities on offer on the site provided through the range of different amenity spaces proposed.

Therefore, subject to the imposition of conditions requiring the provision of the amenity space as proposed and the community use of the facilities being made available as indicated, the development is considered acceptable in this regard.

Landscaping and tree planting:

Linked to this assessment is the consideration of the contribution that the site currently makes in landscape terms. Most of the site is open and without significant landscape planting. The exception to this is the area to the north-west of the site adjacent to the junction with the Ring Road, which contains several mature trees that can be seen, in visual terms, to link with nearby Mousehold Heath.

The landscape strategy for the development looks to retain these existing mature trees to the north-west of the site and enhance the planting to the northern part of the site between the proposed buildings and Salhouse Road. In addition, planting is also proposed to enhance the pedestrian routes into the site and also to soften the area of car parking. However, the main views across the site from the south and the west, from the Ring Road, would still remain largely uninterrupted by additional planting and no further planting is proposed within the sports fields to the south and west of the site. This would enable the existing visual openness of the site and the contribution that it makes to the character of the area to be maintained whilst also providing for an enhanced setting of the school buildings when viewed from the north and north-west.

The orientation of the buildings was the subject of detailed discussion at a pre-application stage, with the current proposal seeking to minimize any excessive intrusion of the buildings within the landscape but also to allow clear views through to the new facility.

Subject to the imposition of conditions regarding the details, implementation and maintenance of the landscaping, together with the protection during construction of existing trees shown to be retained.

Transportation:

The separation between pedestrians and vehicles on site is welcomed, as is the provision of a secondary pedestrian access point from Salhouse Road. Whilst the facilities for pedestrians on site have generally been adequately considered, this is not considered to be the case in respect of the enhanced sport facilities to the west of the Ring Road.

Currently the football pitch at that location is used by the community. There is no dedicated pedestrian crossing facility to enable access from one side of the school site to the other. This has not been addressed as part of the current submission and yet the use of this part of the school site appears to be proposed to be increased, with the provision of another pitch and for this second pitch to cater for under-12's.

It is considered that this aspect of the proposal needs further clarity and that the provision of a pedestrian crossing facility across the Ring Road to enable the safe access by pupils and others to this site should form part of the current submissions and be conditioned as part of any permission granted. However, it is further recognized that it would not be appropriate to encourage access to the main school site in this location and therefore any additional access point between the two parts of the school site would need to be carefully controlled by the school to prevent use as a general point of access.

Furthermore, the provision of cycle storage on site is not considered to have adequately addressed the potential for increased demand in the future. Currently, according to the school Travel Plan, only 7.8% of students cycle, however, given that the number of students is forecast to increase significantly and it is likely that some of these will travel further than currently, the proportion of students cycling could increase beyond that anticipated. Only 120 spaces for student cycle storage are proposed and no area for potential expansion of the cycling facilities has been identified. This would amount to less than 13% provision for the projected student numbers and, given the location of the school and the age range of students concerned, the adequacy of this provision is questioned.

In addition, although the provision of a cycle lane within the vicinity of the school site is mentioned within the Design and Access Statement, no details of this provision have been provided. This omission is not considered acceptable and, in

common with other developments of this nature, it is recommended that the details and implementation of these improved facilities are conditioned to be provided as part of any permission for the proposal.

Although the development proposes to retain the existing car parking provision on site, the number of spaces proposed is 100, which equates approximately to one space per member of staff. Whilst this may accord with the County Council's parking standards, it is considered excessive for a school located within an urban environment. No specific justification has been put forward for the use of these standards and, without this justification, the City Council's parking standards are considered to be a more appropriate guide in this instance. This would suggest the provision of approximately 40 spaces would be appropriate for this type of facility in this location.

In addition to this, although relatively limited in number, it is not clear how parking associated with the Open Road facility would be controlled and who would have access to these spaces. It is considered that this needs clarification and control. It is also noted that the Design and Access Statement indicates that after the start of the school day, all late pupils and visitors to the site will need to gain access via the main pedestrian access where there entry to the site will be controlled. It is not clear from the submissions how visitors arriving by car during the school day will gain access and it is considered that this should be addressed.

Potential for contamination:

Due to the historic uses of the site, it was considered that the potential for the contamination of the land was high. However, a geotechnical survey of the site by the developers has showed that the amount of contamination or potential contamination in the soil is low. Consequently, subject to the imposition of suitable conditions the proposal is considered unlikely to be detrimental in this regard.

Noise and disturbance for neighbouring residents:

The site is currently a school site and the proposal indicates that the majority of the school buildings would be located further from the neighbouring residents than the existing. A noise survey and report has been submitted as part of the scheme and the findings of this are generally accepted.

However, one aspect of the proposal in particular does have the potential to cause problems to neighbouring residents, namely the Open Road vehicle maintenance and repair aspect of the scheme. This is especially the case given the times that it is proposed to operate. However, given the orientation of the building proposed, the limited size of the facility and the assurance that all work on the vehicles would take place within the building with the doors shut, this aspect of the proposal is also considered acceptable, subject to conditions.

Similarly, the proposed community use of the facilities at weekends and in the evenings is not considered likely to cause a problem to neighbouring residents, subject to the imposition of an hours of use restriction and the provision of lighting details.

Finally, the hours of use of the site during the construction phase are considered excessive and likely to cause problems to neighbouring residents as working until 17.30 is proposed on Saturdays. Whilst this aspect can be controlled through the appropriate environmental health legislation, it is suggested that the developer is advised that a midday finish will be required on Saturdays, with no working on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

Energy efficiency:

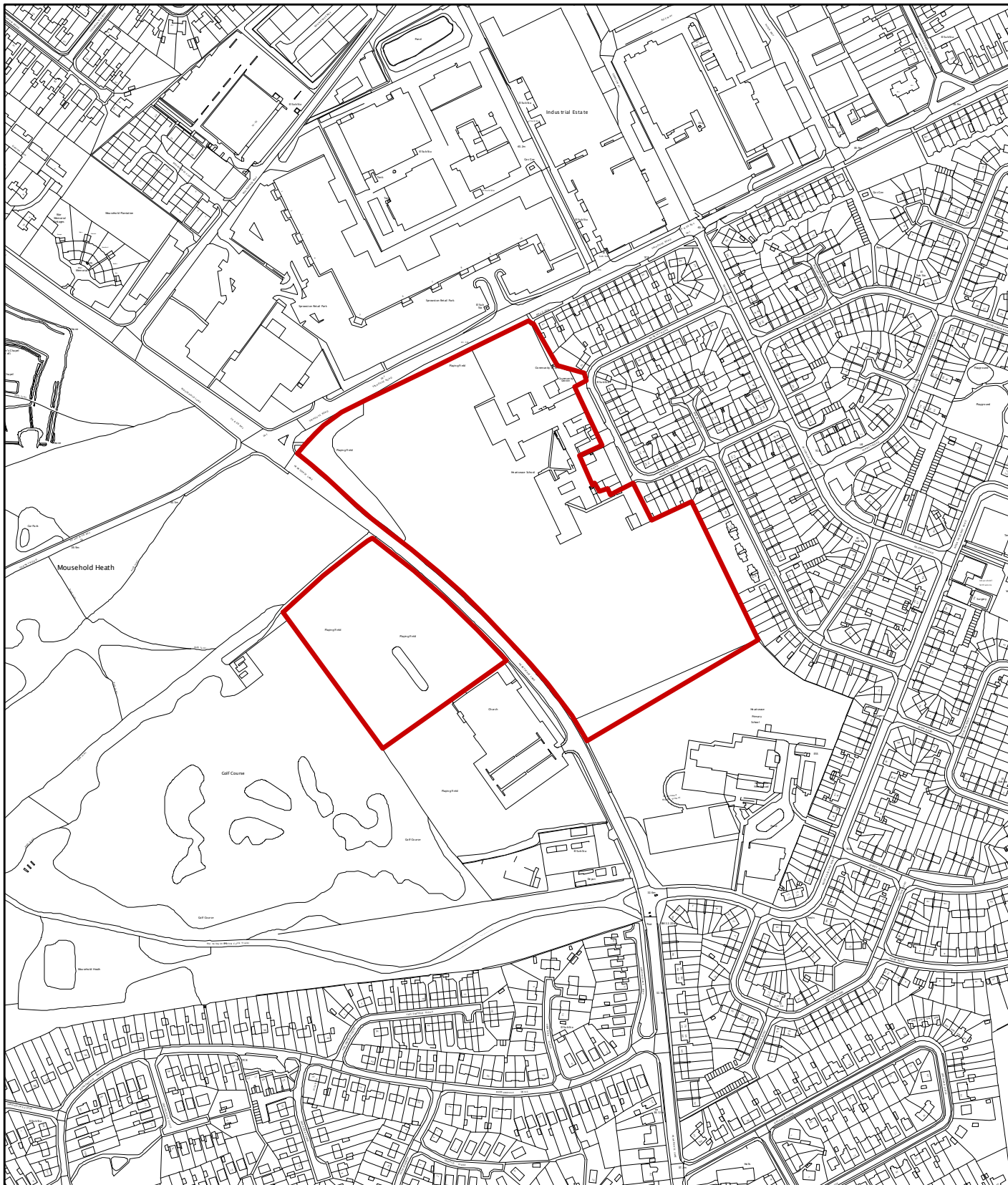
It appears likely that the development as proposed would meet the criteria of policy ENG1 of the East of England Plan 2008 which requires that at least 10% of the energy use of the development should come from renewable sources etc. However, the details submitted with the application do not state this explicitly. It is therefore suggested that this aspect be conditioned as part of any approval.

RECOMMENDATIONS

NO OBJECTIONS raised in principle to the development, subject to the imposition of conditions on the following matters:

- provision of amenity space and sports facilities as proposed
- community use of facilities being made available as indicated
- landscaping details to be agreed and scheme as agreed to be implemented and maintained
- tree protection during construction of trees shown to be retained
- pedestrian crossing facility on Heartsease Lane to be provided before the first use of the pitches to the west of Heartsease Lane by the school
- provision of pedestrian access point between the main school site and the sports pitches to the west of Heartsease Lane before the first use of the pitches to the west of Heartsease Lane by the school
- details of this access point and its management (to ensure that access is restricted and it does not become a general access to the school site) to be submitted and agreed prior to its first use
- cycle parking to be provided and maintained thereafter prior to the first use of the new facilities
- notwithstanding the details submitted an area for the potential expansion of the cycle parking facility to be identified and agreed prior to the commencement of development on the site
- the additional cycle parking to be provided no later than when the annual school travel plan monitoring shows that 100 of the 120 spaces proposed as part of the current submission are being used

- details of cycle lane to be provided and agreed prior to the commencement of development on the site
- cycle lane to be provided prior to the first use of the new facilities
- notwithstanding the details provided, the car parking spaces to be provided shall not exceed 50
- precise details of the car parking proposed for the 'Open Road' facility to be submitted and approved prior to the first use of that facility, the details to include the long-term management of the car parking provision
- details to be submitted of the access arrangements on foot, cycle and by vehicle during the school day. If vehicular access will be controlled by the use of a barrier, details of the barrier and the means of access via the barrier to be submitted and agreed prior to the commencement of development on site and the barrier to be provided prior to the first use of the new facilities
- contaminated land condition – submission of remediation scheme, mitigation methods and implementation in accordance with a timetable to be agreed
- all imported material for landscaped/garden areas to be certified to confirm source and appropriateness for use proposed
- all plant and machinery to be installed in accordance with a scheme first submitted for prior approval
- restricted hours of use of the 'Open Road' facility and all vehicles to be taken inside the building before any work of repair or maintenance is undertaken and all such work to operate within the building with the external doors to remain closed at all times
- no use of any part of the facilities to take place after 22.00hours or before 07.00hours
- lighting details, including security lighting, to be submitted and agreed prior to the first use of the new facilities
- no use of floodlights on the site to take place after 22.00hours or before 07.00 hours
- at least 10% of the energy requirements of the development to be provided from decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources in accordance with policy ENG1 of the East of England Plan 2008
- Note - the developer is advised that construction works should have a midday finish on Saturdays, with no working on Sundays or Bank Holidays.



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Planning Application No - 08/01064/CF3

Site Address - Heartsease High School, Marryat Road

Scale - 1:5000



NORWICH
City Council

DIRECTORATE OF REGENERATION
AND DEVELOPMENT

