

Springwell Alternative Academy, Spalding

South Holland District Council

Planning Statement

October 2017

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this statement is to support Mace's application, on behalf of the Education and Skills Funding Agency, for the development of a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) to the South of the existing South Holland Post 16 Centre in Spalding and associated external works.
- 1.2 In particular the aim of this statement is to give an overview of the project, describe the site and proposal as well as to highlight and assess the relevant planning policies.
- 1.3 A number of Design User Group meetings have been held throughout the design process with key stakeholders to ensure the proposal meets with the Wellspring Trust's operational requirements who will be the end users of the building.
- 1.4 With regards to consultation with South Holland District Council (SHDC), a pre-application meeting was held on 09.08.2017 with David Grant at the South Holland Post 16 Centre. An initial site plan proposal was discussed where the feedback received was positive. In addition to this, at the request of Mace, a letter of comfort (Appendix A) has been received that concluded the initial master plan of the proposal was considered acceptable in principle.
- 1.5 In addition to the above, consultation regarding Highways has been carried out with Dean Whitehead of Lincolnshire County Council. Again an initial site plan proposal has been discussed where the feedback received was positive.
- 1.6 It should be noted this statement draws upon a number of other documents which are submitted in conjunction with this application and are as follows:
 - Submitted Plans and Drawings
 - Traffic Management Plan (Appendix B)
 - Transport Feasibility Study (Appendix C)

2.0 PROJECT OVERVIEW

- 2.1 As an overview, it is proposed to use the existing South Holland Post 16 Centre for the Spalding, Springwell Academy which will provide 63 Alternative Provision spaces for Key Stages 1 to 4, and aged 5-16 yrs. These services will be provided by the Wellspring Academy Trust.
- 2.2 The site is set within the grounds of the existing Sir John Gleed School but is independent and has separate access and car park provision. The building will require minor internal refurbishment and remodelling in order to enable it to be used as a permanent site – no temporary accommodation will be required. Please note, no changes have been proposed to the site access arrangements and there will be a considerable reduction in the number of building users.
- 2.3 The building falls under Use Class D1 and will be re-used as a school without the need for a change of use application to be submitted. However, as part of the external works, the creation of a MUGA is needed to the south of the building which will require planning permission. Details of this have been highlighted within Section 5 of this statement.

3.0 THE SITE

- 3.1 The South Holland Post 16 Centre is located in Spalding and is accessed via Matmore Gate which is a single carriageway road. The area of the site is approximately 0.465 hectares.
- 3.2 The existing Sixth Form centre which opened in September 2008 is a two storey building. Mace have been advised that during the last academic year (2015/16) there were 158 Sixth Form pupils on roll who had access to and used the Post 16 Centre building, whereas the proposal is for a 63 pupil Alternative Provision School.
- 3.3 The building itself is located towards the north of the site whilst towards the south there is a car park consisting of 59 spaces, 4 of which are disabled parking spaces. There is a fence line and a number of gates (allowing both vehicular and pedestrian access) that runs across the sites southern boundary. There is also a fence line which extends along the sites western and northern boundaries as well as a low level timber fence which runs along the car park's north and east boundary.
- 3.4 With regards to the surrounding context this primarily consists of both residential and educational buildings. For example to the south and west of the site there are a number of residential properties whilst to the north and east the site is bound by Sir John Gleed School's playing field. The Sir John Gleed School itself is located to the north. Spalding High School is located nearby also to the west.

4.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 With regards to the brief and the intended works, it is proposed to redevelop the site and refurbish the existing Sixth Form centre to provide an Alternative Provision school that will serve 63 pupils. As a part of these works a MUGA is required where a change to the existing car park layout will be necessary to accommodate this.
- 4.2 The introduction of the MUGA will ultimately result in a reduction of car park spaces. By referring to drawing; 34241-MAC-XX-00-DR-A-002, it can be seen that the existing site plan provides 59 car park spaces, 4 of which are disabled spaces. The car park is located at the front of the building and is segregated by a paved pathway connecting the pedestrian access point to the main entrance of the building.
- 4.3 By referring to drawing; 34241-MAC-XX-00-DR-A-003, it can be seen that the proposal will provide a total of 44 car park spaces designated as follows; 2 disabled parking spaces; 30 staff parking spaces and; 12 taxi parking / holding spaces. When compared to the existing plan this therefore represents a decrease of 15 spaces however it is felt that this is acceptable considering the reduction in pupil numbers. The existing pedestrian and vehicular access routes will be retained.
- 4.4 As a part of the brief the Wellspring Trust advised that 30 car park spaces should be provided for staff members which has been achieved.

- 4.5 Mace have been informed by the Trust that the majority of students will travel to and from the school by taxi's / private hire vehicles and that some will also be accompanied by Lincolnshire County Council escorts. As a result of this therefore there was the requirement for the introduction of a drop-off and pick-up point. After exploring a number of options of how this could be achieved, it was felt that using the MUGA itself at both arrival and departure times would be the best solution for this, especially when taking into account the restricted size of the site and safeguarding of the pupils before and after school.
- 4.6 The drop-off and pick-up point will be managed by the Wellspring Trust Academy staff on the enclosed MUGA ensuring pupil safety is maintained at all times. The Trust have been informed of successful precedents of this kind of arrangement, one of which is the Temple Learning Academy in Leeds. Please refer to the Wellspring Trust's Traffic Management Plan (Appendix B) for further information on how this will be managed.
- 4.7 Additional landscape changes under permitted development will include the introduction of secure play areas, an external PE store and new 2.4m high anti-climb fences and gates to secure the area of the site accessible to pupils.
- 4.8 As part of the proposal also under permitted development, there will be minor modifications to the existing external fenestration in places to allow access to the outside. This will include the change of 4no. existing windows to doors. There will also be the introduction of a 2500mm deep canopy on the northern elevation of the building which is to be the width of one of the proposed classrooms. Mace have been advised by David Grant on 14.08.2017 that these changes are considered de minimis and therefore do not require a planning application.

5.0 PROPOSED MULTI-USE GAMES AREA (MUGA)

Use

- 5.1 The MUGA will be used during the Wellspring Trust's school hours of 08:45 – 14:45 Monday to Friday during school term times. In addition to this the Trust have confirmed that the MUGA will be available for community use during out of school daylight hours and that car parking will be made available to support the community use of this. Please note the MUGA will not be floodlit.
- 5.2 The MUGA is required to provide a hard outdoor PE area for the pupils who will be attending the Springwell Alternative Academy. Games such as Netball, Basketball and five-a-side Football will be able to be taught and played on the MUGA.
- 5.3 As previously mentioned, at both arrival and departure times the proposed MUGA will be used as a drop-off and pick-up point. As advised by the Wellspring Trust, taxi's / private hire vehicles will arrive on site from 08:40 to drop pupils off and will arrive on site in the afternoon from 14:30 to pick pupils up. The pupils will begin to leave at 14:45.

Layout

- 5.4 The MUGA has been proposed to the south of the site in front of the existing building. There is an existing pedestrian pathway leading to the entrance of the building which will be retained

and the MUGA will be immediately adjacent to this and to the west. Due to the restricted size of the site this is the most sensible location for the MUGA for the following reasons:

- Both the existing vehicular and pedestrian access routes will be retained via Matmore Gate.
- Whilst there will be amendments to the existing car park layout, the proposed MUGA location keeps these to a minimum.
- The MUGA is located near the main entrance of the building meaning its location is ideal for use as a drop-off and pick-up point.
- There is no other means of achieving the schools hard play formal PE requirements on site without the introduction of a MUGA. It will also provide space for informal hard play.
- This is the smallest MUGA that meets school use criteria for formal sports.

Scale

- 5.5 In terms of scale, the MUGA will be 18m x 33m and will cover an area of 594m². As noted in BB104, a games area of this size allows games such as Netball, Basketball and Football to be played.

Appearance

- 5.6 The MUGA will be secured by a 3m high anti-climb sports fencing multi-mesh rebound panel which will be made up of a combination of two panel types. The first 1.2m of the fence will utilise a rebound panel which is reinforced with multiple wires whilst the remainder of the fence height will utilise a sports pallas mesh panel.
- 5.7 The fencing will be supported by RHS posts suitable for a 3m high fence and will be set at nominal centres of 2.5m. Both the fencing and the posts will be finished in the following RAL colour; 6005 Moss Green.
- 5.8 The surface of the MUGA will be Open Textured Macadam with thermoplastic line markings for the variety of sports to be played.
- 5.9 In terms of access onto the MUGA, 2 single leaf gates for pedestrian access and 1 double leaf gate suitable for vehicular access are proposed.
- 5.10 It should be noted that no additional flood lighting is proposed, however in order to allow for the introduction of the MUGA, based on the topographical survey undertaken 3 of the existing flood lights will need to be relocated. This has been highlighted on the proposed site plan.
- 5.11 Please refer to the architectural drawings submitted as part of this application which includes a location plan, site plans as well as plans and elevations of the proposal.

6.0 SITE ACCESSIBILITY

- 6.1 The site access has not been altered by this proposal and both the existing vehicular and main pedestrian access routes will be retained.

- 6.2 A transport feasibility study has been carried out by Opus International Consultants (August 2017) which has examined the highways and transportation issues associated with the redevelopment of the South Holland Post 16 Centre.
- 6.3 Within this study, the site's accessibility has been examined where it has been concluded that the site is considered to be in a sustainable location given its proximity to the existing sustainable transport provision in the area, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists. It is noted that the school is located within close proximity of existing PROW routes and existing routes for cyclists in Spalding. In addition, a frequent service is provided at school opening and closing times on the It1 and It2 bus services.
- 6.4 Please refer to Section 4 of the Feasibility Transport Survey, August 2017 (Appendix C) for more detailed information in relation to the accessibility of the site by other modes of transport.

7.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 7.1 The planning history of the proposed development site includes the following:
H16-1314-06 – Spalding Gleed Girls School – Construction of sixth form / adult learning facilities. County Council Reg. 3 Application – 28 November 2006.

8.0 PLANNING POLICY

- 8.1 This section provides a summary of the relevant planning policy documents as advised by South Holland District Council within the letter of comfort received, please see Appendix A.
- 8.2 The adopted Development Plan for the site is XX and YY South Holland Local Plan, 2006 and the Draft South East Lincolnshire Local Plan.
- 8.3 The site is identified in the South Holland Local Plan / Unitary Development Plan 2006 as:
Open space – This was prior to development of the South Holland Post 16 Centre.
- 8.4 In addition to this, South Holland Local Plan / Unitary Development Plan 2006, sets out the following policies specific to the nature of the proposed use of the site:
- SG14 – Design and Layout of New Development
 - SG17 – Protection of Residential Amenity

9.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 This section of the statement considers the acceptability of the proposal against the relevant planning policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as well as the adopted Development Plan.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 9.2 The NPPF supports the provision of new school places to meet the educational needs of communities. Paragraph 72 within Section 8: Promoting healthy communities states:

“The Government attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. They should:

- Give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools; and*
- Work with schools promoters to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.”*

- 9.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) also supports the accessibility to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation. Paragraph 73 within Section 8: Promoting healthy communities states:

“Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. The assessments should identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of open space, sports and recreational facilities in the local area. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sports and recreational provision is required.”

- 9.4 With regards to transport, Paragraph 32 of the NPPF advises that plans and decisions should take account of the following and whether:

- “The opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up depending on the nature and location of the site, to reduce the need for major transport infrastructure;*
- Safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people; and*
- Improvements can be undertaken within the transport network that cost effectively limit the significant impacts of the development. Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.”*

South Holland Local Plan, Adopted July 2006

- 9.5 As advised by South Holland District Council, the South Holland Local Plan, Adopted July 2006, sets out the following policies specific to the nature of the proposed use of the site.

- 9.6 Policy SG14 – Design and Layout of New Development:

“New development should be designed to ensure that it makes a positive contribution to the architectural and visual quality of its surroundings. It should normally respect the vernacular architecture of the area in which it is located although high quality contemporary design will be supported in appropriate contexts. In assessing the design and layout of new development the following matters will be taken into consideration:-

- 1) Local distinctiveness;*
- 2) The choice of material;*
- 3) The historic pattern of development in the locality*

- 4) *The relationship of the development to the character, form and scale of existing buildings nearby;*
- 5) *The scale, form and height of the proposed development;*
- 6) *Architectural detailing;*
- 7) *The effect of the development on the amenity of nearby residents in terms of noise, smell, general disturbance, overlooking and loss of light;*
- 8) *Planting and measures to promote biodiversity*
- 9) *The layout of vehicular access, parking and manoeuvring facilities and the provision of facilities for cyclists and pedestrians;*
- 10) *The needs of disabled persons;*
- 11) *The use of sustainable materials and methods of construction;*
- 12) *Measures to reduce the potential for crime and disorder.*

Development that would have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the locality, or which would prejudice the comprehensive development or redevelopment of an area, will not be permitted."

9.7 With regards to Policy SG14, it is felt the proposal is considered acceptable against this policy for the following reasons:

- There is no change to the character, form and scale of the existing building and therefore the development will not alter the relationship between this and the surrounding context.
- Whilst the proposed MUGA will be located at the front of the site, it is essentially replacing part of the existing car park. For that reason it is felt the visual impact to the surrounding context is limited.
- In addition to this there is an existing fence line that runs across the sites southern boundary. It is therefore felt that the introduction of a MUGA with a 3m high fence will again have little visual impact.
- Whilst a higher level of noise may be created to nearby residents whilst the MUGA is in use, this will be limited to the operating hours as mentioned previously.
- The existing pedestrian and vehicular access points will be retained meaning the layout of vehicular access from Matmore Gate remains the same.

9.8 Policy SG17 – Protection of Residential Amenity:

"Planning permission will be granted for development which would not cause material harm to residential amenity.

In considering proposals the following criteria will be taken into account:-

- 1) *The extent of any overlooking or loss of privacy;*
- 2) *The extent of any overbearing or overshadowing effect;*
- 3) *Potential noise nuisance including that associated with vehicular activity;*
- 4) *The levels of smell, emissions and pollutants."*

9.9 With regards to Policy SG17, it is felt the proposal is considered acceptable against this policy for the following reasons:

- It is not felt that the introduction of the MUGA will create any more issues or loss of privacy than that already exists.
- It is not felt that the introduction of the MUGA will create any more overbearing or overshadowing issues than that already exists.

- Vehicular access to the site will remain as is. Whilst the MUGA will be used as a drop-off and pick-up point, this will be limited to the operational hours as previously outlined.
- Whilst a higher level of noise may be created to nearby residents whilst the MUGA is in use, this will again be limited to the operating hours as mentioned previously.
- It is not felt that levels of smell, emissions and pollutants will increase as a result of the proposal.

10.0 CONCLUSION

- 10.1 It is proposed to use the existing South Holland Post 16 Centre for the Spalding, Springwell Academy which will provide 63 Alternative Provision spaces for Key Stages 1 to 4, and aged 5-16 yrs. These services will be provided by the Wellspring Academy Trust.
- 10.2 This planning application proposes the development of a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) to the south of the existing South Holland Post 16 Centre in Spalding and associated external works.
- 10.3 Whilst the introduction of the MUGA ultimately reduces the number of existing car park spaces, this is considered acceptable as a result of the reduction in pupil numbers. What is more the NPPF states:

“Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.”

The proposal retains both the existing pedestrian and vehicular access routes and therefore it is considered the impacts of the proposal are minimal in relation to transport and as such the proposal is acceptable.

- 10.4 A transport feasibility study has been carried out by Opus International Consultants within which the sites accessibility has been examined where it has been concluded that the site is considered to be in a sustainable location given its proximity to the existing sustainable transport provision in the area.
- 10.5 The policies specific to the nature of the proposed use of the site within the South Holland Local Plan, Adopted July 2006, as advised by South Holland District Council, have been assessed against the proposal. It is concluded the proposal is acceptable in terms of these policies for the reasons stated in Section 9; Planning Assessment of this statement.