DECISION DELEGATED TO HEAD OF PLANNING

Application No:	**H22-0313-24**	**Applicant:**	**Weston Parish Council**
Proposal:	Details of buildings, structures & play equipment (Condition 2 of H22-0179-07)		
Location:	Former School Playing Field St Johns Road Weston Hills		
Terminal Date:	31st May 2024		

Planning Policies

South East Lincolnshire Local Plan - Adopted: March 2019

02	Development Management
03	Design of New Development
29	The Historic Environment
32	Community, Health and Well-being

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework 2023

Section 2. Achieving sustainable development.
Section 8. Promoting healthy and safe communities.
Section 12. Achieving well designed and beautiful places.
Section 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Representations:

	Object	Support	No Obj.	Comments
PARISH COUNCIL	0	0	0	0
WARD MEMBER	0	0	0	0
HIGHWAYS & SUDS SUPPORT	0	0	0	1
SHDC INTERNAL	0	0	1	0

CASE OFFICER ASSESSMENT

Proposal

Permission was granted in 2007 for the change of use of a former school playing field to a public playing field (ref. H22-0179-07). The permission has been implemented and the playing field is in use.

Condition 2 of that permission requires that "Details of any buildings, structures and play equipment to be constructed or installed upon the site shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval prior to construction or installation."

Weston Parish Council have previously received consent for the installation of a basketball hoop, swings and a steel goal (ref. H22-1104-21). They are now seeking permission for the installation of a climbing frame, somersault bars, slide, springers and a 2m square ground mounted trampoline.

Site Description

The playing field is mainly grassed (eastern area tarmacked) and is accessed off St John's Road to the north-west via a car park and also via a footway off Broadgate.

Residential properties are located to the north off St John's Road and to the south off Carisbrooke Way. St John's Church (grade II listed) is situated to the east and a children's nursery beyond that fronting Broadgate. Weston Hills Primary School is situated to the north-west.

Relevant Planning History

H22-0179-07 - Full - Change of use to playing field - Approved 26 April 2007.

H22-1104-21 - Cond Comp - Details of structures & play equipment (Condition 2 of H22-0179-07) - Approved 21 December 2021.

Consultation Responses

LCC Highway and Lead Local Flood Authority

No objections.

Environmental Protection

No observations.

Public

Notwithstanding that this submission is a condition compliance application the application has nevertheless been advertised in accordance with the Development Procedure Order and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. In this instance, no representations have been received.

Key Planning Considerations

The main issues and considerations in this case are (but are not limited to):
- Impact on the character/appearance of the area and also heritage issues
- Impact upon the amenity of nearby residents
- Highway safety and parking

Evaluation

Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended, requires that the Local Planning Authority makes decisions in accordance with the adopted Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

In this case, the adopted South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (SELLP), adopted March 2019, forms the development plan for the District, and is the basis for decision making in South Holland. The relevant development plan policies are detailed within the report above.

The policies and provisions set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023) are also a material consideration in the determination of planning applications, alongside adopted Supplementary Planning Documents.

Furthermore, where a Neighbourhood Plan has been adopted, this alongside the adopted Local Plan, forms part of the Development Plan for the District, and must be considered when assessing development proposals. In this instance, no relevant neighbourhood plans have been adopted.

Character/Heritage

Policy 32 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (SELLP), 2019 promotes environments which encourage community use and are accessible to all sections of the community. Section 8 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023) states that decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which promote social interaction and enable and support healthy lifestyles.

Policy 2 of the SELLP states that sustainable development considerations should be met in relation to such matters as quality of design, size, scale, layout density and impact on the character and appearance of an area and the relationship to existing development. Policy 3 indicates that development proposals should be high quality and be appropriate to the character and appearance of an area.

Policy 29 of the SELLP states amongst other matters that the distinctive elements of the South East Lincolnshire historic environment will be conserved and, where appropriate, enhanced, in keeping with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework. Development proposals will be expected to conserve and enhance the character and appearance of designated and non-designated heritage assets, including historic buildings and their settings through high-quality sensitive design.

These policies accord with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023) and require that design which is inappropriate to the local area, or which fails to maximise opportunities for improving the character and quality of an area or setting of listed buildings will not be acceptable. Paragraph 207 indicates that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

The proposed play equipment is typical of that found on playing fields such as this and is tucked in between existing development and would not be readily visible from the public highway. It is considered that the proposal would not materially harm the character or appearance of the locality.

There is a degree of separation between it and the rear of St Johns Church to the east, separated by a tarmacked area used for basketball/cycling proficiency. Although the equipment may have some impact upon the setting of the Church, it would be less than substantial and would be outweighed by the community/public benefits.

Impact upon Neighbouring Residents

Policies 2 and 3 of the SELLP set out that residential amenity and the relationship to existing development and land uses is a main consideration when making planning decisions. Paragraph 135 of the Framework states that development should 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; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

The higher pieces of equipment, including climbing frame and slide, would be positioned within the centre of the field away from neighbouring residential property. There is presently a high closeboarded fence along the southern boundary adjoining dwellings off Carisbrooke Way. Properties off St John's Road to the north generally have long rear gardens.

Whilst it is accepted that the proposal has the potential for an increase in use of the playing field by members of the public accessing the site, the increase in noise and disturbance would not be such as to justify refusal given the separation distances and/or existing screening and also the community benefits of the scheme.

If any anti-social behaviour were to arise it would be a matter for the Police and/or relevant Council department.

Highway safety/parking

Policy 2 details that proposals requiring planning permission for development will be permitted provided that sustainable development considerations are met, specifically in relation to access and vehicle generation. Policy 3 details that development proposals will demonstrate how accessibility by a choice of travel modes including the provision of public transport, public rights of way and cycle ways will be secured, where they are relevant to the proposal.

Further, Policy 36, to be read in conjunction with Appendix 6 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, sets out minimum vehicle parking standards.

Section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023) specifically relates to 'Promoting sustainable transport'. Paragraph 115 of the Framework advises that "development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe".

Car parking is available off St John's Road within a gravelled area to the north-west and also off Broadgate. LCC Highways has raised no objections on highway safety/parking grounds.

The proposal satisfactorily complies with Policies 2, 3 and 36 on highway safety/parking grounds.

Planning Balance

Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended, requires that the Local Planning Authority makes decisions in accordance with the adopted Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The proposal is in accordance with the Local Plan's provisions and national guidance in regard to community facilities. Whilst it would create a degree of harm in terms of it's affect upon the character of the area and setting of the nearby St John's Church (grade II listed) it would be less than substantial and would be outweighed by the community benefits of the scheme. Likewise, there is not sufficient reason to refuse the application on amenity grounds given the separation distances involved, existing boundary screening and the community benefits of the scheme.

The are no objections on highway safety/parking grounds.

In this instance, there are no material considerations of such weight as to justify refusal given the community/public benefits of the scheme.

Conclusion

The proposal accords with Policy 32 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (SELLP), 2029. Although there is some conflict with Policies 2, 3 and 29 of the SELLP they do not outweigh the considerations in favour of the proposal and the policies referred to within the development plan as a whole.

Recommendation

Based on the assessment detailed above, it is recommended that the application should be approved under Delegated Authority.