



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL
Planning Committee

PLANNING COMMITTEE:	14 th June 2016
DIRECTORATE:	Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
DIRECTOR:	Steven Boyes
APPLICATION REF:	N/2016/0545
LOCATION:	Wootton Hall Police Headquarters Wootton Hall Park, Mereway
DESCRIPTION:	Erection of temporary modular units and associated alterations for educational use for a temporary period of three years
WARD:	East Hunsbury Ward
APPLICANT:	Education Funding Agency
AGENT:	Jones Lang LaSalle
REFERRED BY:	Director of Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
REASON:	Development is of local interest
DEPARTURE:	No

CONSULTATION BY NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL:

1. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 That Northampton Borough Council raise **NO OBJECTIONS** to the proposed development, subject to the issues outlined below being addressed by Northamptonshire County Council:
- no objections being received from the Highway Authority in respect of the impact on the local road network;
 - conditions to ensure that the land is restored to Open Space in a timely manner;
 - provision made for adequate tree protection measures and replacement tree planting to mitigate for the tree loss necessitated by this development;
 - suitable drainage of the site to be provided;
 - the concerns of East Hunsbury Parish Council being addressed.

2. THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 This is an application for the erection of temporary modular units (some two storey) and associated external alterations for educational use (Use Class D1) for a temporary period of three years (September 2016 – August 2019) on part of the sports ground at Wootton Hall Park. Access to the school would be from Mereway, via the existing driveway through the site.
- 2.2 This development would temporarily accommodate 540 pupils, to allow for the phased relocation of the Police from Wootton Hall, and for the development of 'Wootton Hall Park School' (separate application), which would be an 'all-through' school, comprising a 2 form entry Primary school and a 4 form entry Secondary school, with 1,290 students at full capacity.

3. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 3.1 The site is 1.84 hectares and is located on the south west quadrant of the Wootton Hall Park sports ground. Wootton Hall is currently used as the Police Headquarters, Fire and Ambulance Services, Records Office, and community uses, with surrounding residential development. A Tree Preservation Order extends along both sides of the driveway.

4. PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 None relevant.

5. PLANNING POLICY

5.1 Statutory Duty

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 West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2014), and the Northampton Local Plan (1997) saved policies.

5.2 National Policies

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the current aims and objectives for the planning system and how these should be applied. In delivering sustainable development, decisions should have regard to the mutually dependent social, economic and environmental roles of the planning system. The NPPF should be read as one complete document. However, the following sections are of particular relevance to this application:

Paragraph 72: 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 Authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that widens the choice in education.

5.3 West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2014)

The West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) provides an up to date evidence base and considers the current Government requirements for plan making as it has been prepared in full conformity with the NPPF. Policies of particular relevance are:

RC2 – Community Needs: the loss of existing open space areas will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that the proposal will bring about community benefits that outweigh the loss of the facility.

5.4 Northampton Local Plan 1997 (Saved Policies)

Due to the age of the plan, the amount of weight that can be attributed to the aims and objectives of this document are diminished, however, the following policies are material to this application:

E9 – Locally Important Landscape Areas: special importance will be attached to the effect of new development upon the character of such areas.

5.5 Supplementary Planning Documents

Northamptonshire County Parking Standards SPG 2003

6. CONSULTATIONS/ REPRESENTATIONS

Comments received are summarised as follows:

- 6.1 **NBC Planning Policy** – The proposed temporary structure does not appear to result in the permanent loss of open space and no loss at all of sporting provision. Raise no objections to the application providing it is conditional on the applicant that the open space and sporting provision will be re-provided upon on the relinquishment of the modular buildings following the completion and transfer into the new school build.
- 6.2 **NBC Arboricultural Officer** – the tree removal for the access is regrettable but necessary. The drawings appended to the report show an area for staff car parking and pupil drop-off that covers the root protection areas of a number of trees, but there is no detail of ground protection measures or construction methods that would prevent soil compaction and the likely subsequent decline in tree health and condition. That an Arboricultural Method Statement will be required as a condition of any planning consent.
- 6.3 **East Hunsbury Parish Council** – comments as follows:
- there is only one entrance to the proposed site which is also used by various emergency services. The volume of traffic during school drop-off and pick-up times is likely to increase significantly, particularly as parents dropping off for Abbeyfields School are now likely to use Wootton Hall Park Road to drop off so that they can turn right at the roundabout, and not have to go the length of Mereway.
 - Question whether the Construction Management Plan make restrictions on deliveries of materials, etc. that protect the wellbeing of the local residents surrounding the site.
 - Question whether there will be encroachment on the cricket pitch during construction, to allow the Sports and Social Club to rent out the facilities as usual.

7. APPRAISAL

- 7.1 The subject area is designated as Greenspace and a Locally Important Landscape Area in the Northampton Local Plan. Relevant policies require that new development not affect the overall character of the area, and that community benefit should out-weigh the loss of open space areas.
- 7.2 There is an identified significant educational need in Northampton. It is considered that the community benefit of providing interim educational facilities sufficiently justifies the temporary loss of this area of open space until 2019. The overall character of the open space would be retained during that time, as much of the temporary site is for play areas.
- 7.3 Documentation provided with the application states that the new school will employ 25 full time staff in the first year, increasing to 63 full time staff for the final academic year 2018.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The use of the Open Space area for a school is acceptable for the temporary period as it will provide community benefit and is in accordance with Development Plan Policy. Accordingly, it is recommended that Northampton Borough Council raise no objections to the application, subject to the issues below being addressed by NCC:
- No objections being received from the Highway Authority in respect of the impact on the local road network;
 - conditions to ensure that the land is restored to Open Space in a timely manner;

- provision made for adequate tree protection measures and replacement tree planting to mitigate for the tree loss necessitated by this development;
- suitable drainage of the site to be provided;
- the concerns of East Hunsbury Parish Council being addressed.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

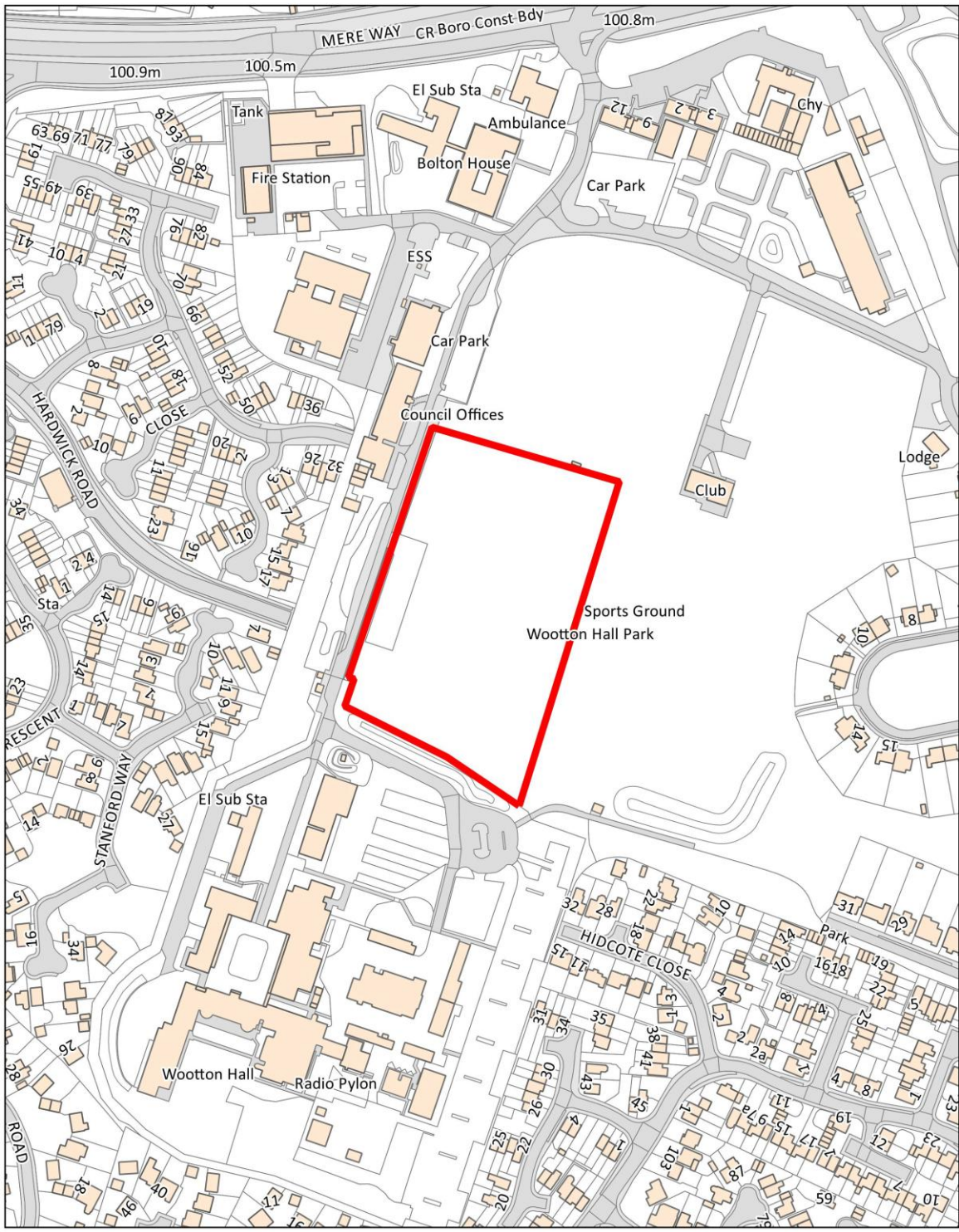
9.1 N/2016/0545.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 None.

11. SUMMARY AND LINKS TO CORPORATE PLAN

11.1 In reaching the attached recommendations regard has been given to securing the objectives, visions and priorities outlined in the Corporate Plan together with those of associated Frameworks and Strategies.



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Date: 03-06-2016

Scale: 1:2,500

Drawn by: