

**Reg. 3 Application: WVC Witchford Village College
Cambridgeshire County Council
Job No. 305133**

Planning, Design and Access Statement

Author: LS
Date: November 2023
Status: Final



architecture
building surveying
building services
planning
interior design
sustainability
civil and structural
quantity surveying
project management
CDM and H&S services

Vision, form and function



CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction..... 3
2.0 Site Context 4
3.0 The Proposal..... 6
4.0 Design and Access Statement..... 7
5.0 Statement of Sustainable Design and Construction..... 8
6.0 Planning Policy Considerations..... 9
7.0 Planning Analysis 11
8.0 Conclusions..... 13

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Ingleton Wood LLP on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council, in support of a Full Planning Application for the erection of an extension at the rear of the existing gym hall. This application will be determined by Cambridgeshire County Council under Regulation 3 (Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992).
- 1.2 This Statement sets out the detail of the proposed development, establishes the relevant planning policy framework against which the application is to be determined, and assesses the acceptability of the proposal in the context of that framework and other material planning considerations.
- 1.3 This Statement should be read in conjunction with the following supporting documents, which are submitted as part of the application:
- 305133-IWD-XX-XX-DR-A-1000 Site Location Plan;
 - 305133-IWD-XX-XX-DR-A-1005 Site Context Photographs;
 - 305133-IWD-XX-XX-DR-A-1010 Existing Site Plan;
 - 305133-IWD-XX-XX-DR-A-1011 Existing Elevations;
 - 305133-IWD-XX-XX-DR-A-2010 Proposed Site Plan;
 - 305133-IWD-XX-XX-DR-A-2011 Proposed Elevations; and
 - Reg 3 Letter dated 22-09-2023.

2.0 Site Context

2.1 The application site is located north east of Witchford. The extent of the application works is indicated in red on the image below.

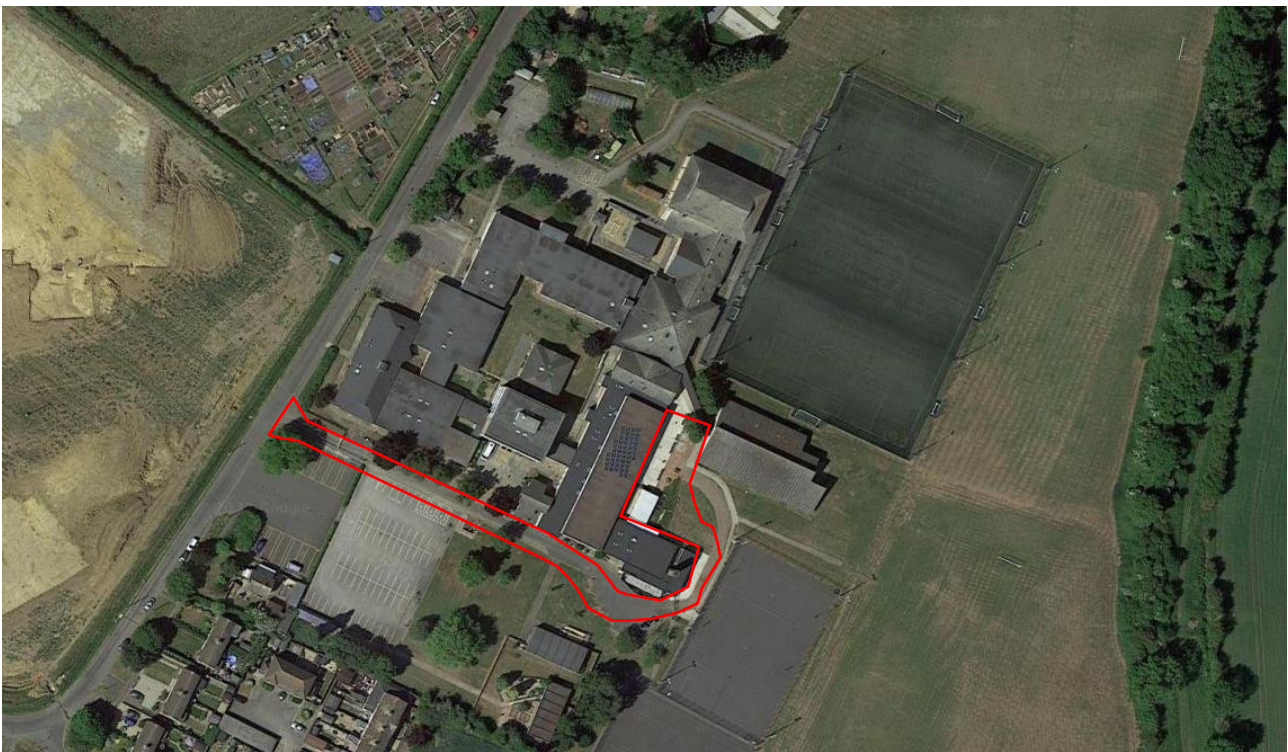


Figure 1: Site Location

- 2.2 Witchford Village College is a secondary school, with approximately 820 pupils from ages 11 to 16. The proposal is located to the rear of the site, forming an extension from the existing gym hall.
- 2.4 There are a number of trees within the site, however none of these are protected by virtue of a Tree Preservation Order (TPO).
- 2.5 There are no Listed Buildings within the site or surrounding the site.
- 2.6 In terms of ecological designations, the application site is not located within close proximity to any statutorily designated ecological sites.
- 2.7 The site falls within an area of Flood Zone 1 where there is a low probability of flooding.
- 2.8 A search of Cambridge County Council's online portal the following recent planning history relevant to the application site.



Reference	Description	Status
CCC/22/010/NMW	Non-Material Amendment Application to change the description of Planning Permission E/3002/17/CC to retention of a 6-bay mobile classroom building with access ramp, LPG storage container and a paved pathway for a temporary period.	Approved, 11 April 2022
CCC/22/019/VAR	S73 application: Retention of a 6 bay mobile classroom building with access ramp, LPG storage container and a paved pathway for a temporary period.	Approved, 20 May 2022
E/3002/17/CC	Erection of 6 bay mobile classroom building with access ramp, LPG storage container and a paved pathway, for temporary period until 31st August 2022.	Approved, 29 August 2017
E/03008/11/CC	Variation of Condition 1 of planning permission E/03010/06/CC to allow retention of mobile classroom until 31 July 2014	Approved, 7 September 2011
E/03008/09/CC	Retention of six bay modular classroom (part-retrospective)	Approved, 28 October 2009
E/03010/06/CC	Erection of 1 x 3-bay mobile classroom for education purposes	Approved, 2 nd August 2006
E/03024/05/CC	Retention of a 1 x 6 bay mobile classroom for educational purposes	Approved, 20 th December 2005
E/03019/03/CC	Proposed single storey pitched roof extension to form a new fitness suite together with a proposed new dance studio	Approved, 6 th February 2004
E/03016/02/CC	Erection of 1 x 6 bay mobile classroom for educational purposes	Approved, 3 rd December 2002

3.0 The Proposal

- 3.1 The proposal involves a ground floor extension to the existing gym hall to provide a lobby which will allow for reconfiguration of the internal layout to better suit the school's requirements.
- 3.2 The extension consists of a modern design, at modest proportions at approximately 40sqm GEA. An increased canopy will provide shelter to the entrance and fire escape whilst also allowing for some covered outdoor seating which was encouraged.
- 3.3 The intention of the proposal is to provide an improved entrance area to the hall for pupils and visitors to aid performances, as well as community groups that wish to rent out the hall; which will be made possible due to this new secured entrance.
- 3.4 The proposal aims to use an existing palette of materials in keeping with those buildings within the setting of the courtyard – dark composite timber cladding, painted facades and vibrant artwork to provide a new structure that enhances the character and provides continuity across the façade. New high level glazed panels will provide additional natural light and interest to the façade. The proposed artwork will be a piece of community artwork, complementing the block opposite whilst enhancing the use of the performance space inside.
- 3.5 The proposal is for a flat roof, part forming a canopy structure with materials consisting of dark grey composite timber cladding and aluminium frames for windows and doors.
- 3.6 The proposal also includes the installation of a new external HVAC system to supply the new extension, which would be fitted to the existing flat roof of the main building.

4.0 Design and Access Statement

Use

- 4.1 The principal reason for the proposed development is to provide improved educational space for the existing school, whilst making the existing facilities more attractive and usable to visitors. The proposal would not result in any change to the capacity of the school.

Amount

- 4.2 The development is contained within a site area of 0.278 hectares, which also includes the route to the highway within the red line. The proposed extension is modest in size at approximately 33sqm of GIA, or up to 40sqm GEA.

Layout

- 4.3 The proposed extension is located to the south-east of the existing school, off a courtyard currently providing seating for break times. The proposal creates an improved secure lobby/entrance into the gym hall to improve use and functionality of the space. The proposal also involves internal alterations to improve the toilet and changing facilities.

Scale

- 4.4 The extension has an approximate height of 3.2m and extends single storey only with a flat roof. The proposal is modest within the courtyard and context of the existing school.

Landscaping

- 4.5 No landscaping is proposed as part of this application. The proposal is sited in an existing courtyard area where there are already elements of soft and hard landscaping.

Appearance

- 4.6 Elevational drawings have been submitted with this application. The proposed materials are predominately composite cladding with aluminium framed windows and doors.

Access

- 4.7 The development proposals would utilise the existing access from Manor Road, where a path extends to the south of the school buildings up to the proposal site.

5.0 Statement of Sustainable Design and Construction

- 5.1 The County Council declared a climate change emergency in May 2019 and is seeking through other committees to reduce the Council's carbon footprint in line with the Council's Climate Change and Environment Strategy, approved by Full Council in May 2020.
- 5.2 The proposal is of a small scale where there are limited options to improve the existing sustainability of the site, however given the proposed new build will comply with the latest building regulations; it can be assured that the lobby will be sustainably constructed.

Water conservation strategy

- 5.3 The proposed building includes 11 new cubicles within the existing changing room. However, there will be no net increase in water consumption as the proposal will not result in an increase of school capacity. All water outlets will meet the requirements of building regulations with regard to water consumption. The applicant will maintain the facilities so as to ensure that their water efficiency is not reduced.

6.0 Planning Policy Considerations

6.1 This Section identifies the planning framework within which the proposed development is to be assessed, and further identifies other material considerations relevant to the proposal. In identifying the planning framework, consideration has been given to Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which states that:

“If regard is to be had to the Development Plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Act, the determination must be made in accordance with the Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.”

Adopted Development Plan

6.2 In accordance with Section 38 (6), consideration is given below to the Adopted Development Plan for the site, which comprises:

- East Cambridgeshire Adopted Local Plan 2015
- Adopted Policy Map

6.3 The application site does not fall within any designations or allocations on the adopted policy map.. The application site is also not affected by the Minerals and Waste Local Plan Core Strategy.

6.4 East Cambridgeshire District 2015 Local Plan contains the following relevant policies which are considered in the context of the Planning Analysis chapter in Section 7.0 of this Statement:

- Policy GROWTH 6: Community-led development
- Policy ENV 1: Landscape and settlement character
- Policy ENV 2: Design
- Policy ENV 4: Energy and water efficiency and renewable energy in construction
- Policy ENV 7: Biodiversity and geology
- Policy ENV 8: Flood risk
- Policy ENV 9: Pollution
- Policy ENV 10: Green Belt
- Policy COM 4: New community facilities
- Policy COM 7: Transport impact
- Policy COM 8: Parking provision
- Spatial Policy for Witchford

Material Considerations

6.5 In addition to the adopted Development Plan, there are Material Considerations that are relevant to the proposed development and, therefore, form part of the planning framework within which the development is to be assessed. This includes the following Material Considerations:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2021

- 6.6 The NPPF requires policies to set out an overall strategy to make sufficient provision for community facilities including educational.
- 6.7 Paragraph 95 states that it is important 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:
- a) give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools through the preparation of plans and decisions on applications; and
 - b) work with school promoters, delivery partners and statutory bodies to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.
- 6.8 The NPPF also sets out national requirements in terms of design, heritage and the environment.

7.0 Planning Analysis

Principle of development

- 7.1 Witchford is defined as a large village in the spatial strategy of the Local Plan. The proposal site sits outside but adjacent to the development envelope. The spatial strategy states that proposals for new community development that benefits the village will be supported in principle, subject to Policy COM 4.
- 7.2 There are no development management policies in the Local Plan which relate specifically to extensions and improvement of educational facilities, however policy COM 4 states that improved community facilities should be located within the settlement boundary where possible, and should be; well located, of appropriate scale, design and be adaptable. Although the proposal site is outside of the defined settlement boundary, it is within an established school site. The proposal is of a small scale and will result in improved facilities both for the school and for the local community through the provision of facilities for lettings.
- 7.3 The NPPF states that strategic policies should set out an overall strategy to ensure sufficient provision of community facilities including education. The proposed extension represents an opportunity to provide facilities of a high quality design and accessibility, which in turn will improve the quality of educational provision.
- 7.4 The policies of the Local Plan and the NPPF demonstrate that the principle of development for the proposed is acceptable.

Design

- 7.5 Policy ENV 2 sets out a number of criteria that new developments must accord with as to make a positive contribution to its local and wider context. Paragraphs 127 and 130 of the NPPF seek to secure visually attractive development which improves the overall quality of an area and is sympathetic to local character and history.
- 7.6 The location of the extension would be central to the site, where views from the road would be minimal. The proposal is of an appropriate scale and height as to appear unobtrusive within the setting of the existing other larger scale buildings within the site which serve the school. The proposal does however represent an improvement and attractive focal point to members of public visiting the facilities. There are no immediate resident properties, and therefore no impact on residential amenity.

Transport considerations

- 7.7 This proposal maintains the capacity of the school at the same level, with no change to pupil or staff numbers. This proposal will therefore not lead to any changes to travel patterns or volumes and there will be no impact on the transport network or on the parking required. There are also no changes to the existing access arrangements.
- 7.8 The letting of the school building to external groups is not considered to result in such an increase in vehicle users as to warrant additional provision of parking. Additionally, the public element of the lettings is likely to be outside of school hours.

Flood risk

- 7.8 The site falls within flood zone 1, where there is a low risk from flooding. The surface water and foul drainage will connect to the existing systems on site.

8.0 Conclusions

- 8.1 This proposal involves the erection of an extension at the rear of the existing gym hall. The NPPF is clear in its support for provision of sufficient education provision.
- 8.2 Consideration has been given to the design and siting of the proposal, as to not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area or the environment. The design, layout and siting are considered appropriate.
- 8.3 The proposed development is consistent with the adopted Development Plan and underpinned by the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework. On this basis, it is therefore respectfully requested that the application is approved.