



24 April 2018

Agenda Item: 5

REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR – PLACE

GEDLING DISTRICT REF. NO.: 7/2017/1292NCC

PROPOSAL: CONSTRUCTION OF NEW 2 STOREY 420 PLACE PRIMARY (2 PHASES) AND 39 PLACE NURSERY SCHOOL WITH ASSOCIATED PLAYING FIELDS, CAR PARKING, HARD SURFACED OUTDOOR PLAY, FOOTPATHS AND CAMPUS ACCESS ROAD. ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING AND COVERED AREAS TO NURSERY/RECEPTION CLASSES, FENCED BIN STORE, AND 2.4M HIGH SECURITY FENCING AND GATES. OFF CAMPUS DRAINAGE WORKS. CONSTRUCTION OF ACCESS ROAD, FOOTWAY AND ASSOCIATED WORKS FROM KEEPER'S CLOSE

LOCATION: BESTWOOD HAWTHORNE PRIMARY SCHOOL, KEEPER'S CLOSE, BESTWOOD VILLAGE

APPLICANT: NCC CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND CULTURAL SERVICES

Purpose of Report

1. To consider a planning application for the erection of a 420 place Primary School in two phases, along with a 39 place nursery on land to the north of Keeper's Close and east of The Spinney, Bestwood Village. The key issues relate to proposed development in the Green Belt, access to the school and timing of planned development in the area, the routeing of construction traffic, and operational traffic and amenity impacts.
2. Given the location of the site in the Green Belt the application has been treated as a 'departure' from the Development Plan. The recommendation is to grant planning permission subject to referral to the Secretary of State and subject to the conditions set out in Appendix 2.

The Site and Surroundings

3. This application relates to a site of 6.9ha on the northern edge of built development in Bestwood Village, a former mining village to the east of Moor Road (B683) (Plan 1). The B683 is the administrative boundary between Gedling Borough Council and Ashfield District Council.

4. The existing 210 place Bestwood Hawthorne Primary School is located in the centre of the village within a conservation area at the northern edge of the historic core. The school operates on two separate sites. The original Victorian school, which is a non-designated heritage asset, fronts School Walk and is separate from a later CLASP school on a site with playing field to the north-east by St Mark's Church (non-designated heritage asset) and a public footpath.
5. The red line of the application site is larger than the site to be developed and additional land has been incorporated to facilitate project delivery, and so that necessary planning conditions can be imposed. It is proposed to build on 2.2ha of land within the larger red-line application site, bounded by residential development on The Spinney to the west, with residential development on Keeper's Close and Broad Valley Drive to the south (Plan 2). Arable farmland lies to the east and north.
6. The proposed school would be erected on a broadly rectangular site approximately 154m x 130m-144m. There is a fall in levels of 14m from east to west along the southern boundary of the site, a gradient of 9% (1 in 11), with the lowest level in the south-west corner of the proposed school site (Photo 7). The level in the north-east corner is approximately 2m below the south-east corner near Keeper's Close, while levels northwards along the western boundary with The Spinney rise by 0.5m (Plan 3). A field hedge with some gaps is established along the southern boundary of the site. The hedge, which returns along the western boundary with The Spinney is sparse in places and has in part been replaced by a fence (Photo 1).



Photo 1: From FP1 at Keeper's Close looking north-west. Properties at The Spinney (left)

7. There is a network of public footpaths in the area (Plan 3). Bestwood St Albans Footpath (FP)1 between Hucknall and Bestwood Country Park runs outside but parallel to the southern boundary of the proposed school site (Photo 2) and connects through to The Spinney. There are pedestrian links to FP1 from the end of the culs-de-sac on Keeper's Close, Yeoman Avenue and Leen Close. The links are not part of the public footpath network, although the link to FP1 from Yeoman Avenue is adopted highway.
8. FP7 runs southward from its junction with FP1 at the south-west corner of the proposed school site (Photo 3), connecting to Hill Road. FP8 connects Hill Road and School Walk. Public footpaths FP1, FP7 and FP8 are all lit.



Photo 2: FP1 rising towards Keeper's Close Photo 3: FP7 looking towards FP1 junction

9. FP7 and part of FP1 connecting the south-west corner of the proposed school site and The Spinney are included within the red line of the planning application offering options if required for the connection of site drainage.
10. A footpath (adopted highway) links the turning head at the eastern end of Coronation Road and Hill Road. Grassed areas where Coronation Road and Hill Road meet Moor Road are adopted highway.
11. FP3 runs within, and adjacent to, the red line northern boundary of the larger planning application site, along a vehicular access serving the former Westhouse Farm. The farm access road has been included in the planning application site as it is proposed to be used as the construction access for the proposed development.
12. Land to the east of Moor Road to the north of The Spinney and south of FP3 is included in the application site to allow conditions to be imposed on a grant of planning permission related to future development (see Background) and offers a further option if required for the connection of site drainage.
13. Land comprising the existing footpath link and grassed margins to either side between 15 and 16 Keeper's Close, crossing FP1 and extending to adjoin the adopted highway of the turning head at the end of Keeper's Close, is included in the application site (Photo 4).



Photo 4: Link Keeper's Close and FP1



Photo 5: Keeper's Close looking north

14. Keeper's Close (Photo 5), a cul-de-sac of bungalows all with off-street parking which has a carriageway approximately 5.8m in width with 2.0m wide footways to either side, is accessed from Broad Valley Drive. Broad Valley Drive in turn is accessed from Park Road, which runs from Moor Road past the former colliery pit-head which is now part of Bestwood Country Park. A car park on the eastern side of Park Road offers easy access to the Country Park, Bestwood Winding Engine (Grade II* listed building and Scheduled Ancient Monument) and Dynamo House (Grade II listed building).
15. Residential development on Broad Valley Drive, Leen Close, Yeoman Avenue and Keeper's Close dates from the 1970s, and more recent residential development has taken place as a cul-de-sac extension at the western end of Broad Valley Drive. There are no pedestrian routes connecting Broad Valley Drive with the older areas of the village other than along FP1 or Park Road (Plan 3).
16. The Spinney to the west of the proposed school site is accessed from Moor Road. An area of grassed open space at the end of the cul-de-sac has a 4.1m wide carriageway running around its perimeter and a 1.7m wide footway on one side of the road. Houses on The Spinney have off-street parking. There is low incidence of on-street parking on the carriageway around the area of open space. The restricted carriageway width does not allow vehicles to pass (Photo 6).



Photo 6: The Spinney



Photo 7: South-west site corner looking east

17. More recent residential development has taken place on High Main Drive which lies south of Park Road and the historic village core and to the east of Bestwood Business Park.
18. Key travel distances along the public highway and public footpath network to the south-west corner of the proposed school site are shown on Plan 4.
19. Land within the application site is subject of different policy designations in the Gedling Borough Replacement Local Plan (2005) (GRLP). The land on which the school would be developed lies within Green Belt while land within the red line between Moor Road and the proposed school is *Safeguarded Land* (land outside the existing settlement excluded from the Green Belt that is to be safeguarded from inappropriate development until a future Local Development Document is adopted that proposes it for development).

20. The existing school is single-form entry with a Published Admission Number (PAN) of 30 (210 place school) and at November 2017 had 201 children on roll and in addition a 20 place nursery. A full-time equivalent of 26 staff are employed. The existing school site has 15 car parking spaces and 10 cycle parking spaces. The school operates staggered start and finish times of either 08:40 – 15:15 hours or 08:50 – 15:20 hours.

Background

21. Bestwood Hawthorne Primary School currently operates on a split school site. The school hall is too small to accommodate all children comfortably and classrooms are typically smaller than required to deliver the Primary curriculum. Buildings set at different levels present challenges for disabled access and circulation. The existing school cannot be feasibly extended whilst keeping the school operational. There are outstanding site maintenance issues and the applicant states that the erection of a replacement school offers the best-value option to serve educational need within the community.
22. Approved and proposed residential development in the area will increase the demand for pupil places at first admission. Outline planning permission has been granted for the erection of up to 220 houses on the Bestwood Business Park site (application reference 2014/0214) which, applying a formula, will generate a demand for 46 primary school places.
23. Gedling Borough Council has resolved to approve an outline application for 101 dwellings (application reference 2014/0238) on the *Safeguarded Land* identified in Gedling Borough Replacement Local Plan 2005, subject to entry into a S106 Agreement related to the payment of developer contributions. Gedling Borough Council has advised that the agent has contested the viability of the scheme. A viability assessment is currently being processed by the District Valuer's office prior to the application being remitted to Planning Committee. The development would generate demand for an additional 21 primary school places. Only the point of access on to Moor Road would be approved by the grant of permission. Details of the access road and housing site layout would be considered through a further application to be submitted to Gedling Borough Council.
24. Gedling Borough Council emerging Local Plan to 2028 (Publication Draft 2016) has identified a potential 525 new homes (2 Policy LPD 63 Housing Distribution) in Bestwood Village with 455 houses to be provided on three sites in the village (4 Policy LPD 65 Bestwood Village), including the Bestwood Business Park site, development of the currently *Safeguarded Land*, and land currently in the Green Belt (Plan 5). The supporting statement for the Westhouse Farm allocation (H12) explains that a new Primary School facility is required which should be located in a central position within the allocation and adjoin the existing settlement of Bestwood.
25. A Gedling Borough Council masterplan prepared for Bestwood recommends that the area to the north of proposed allocation H12 to the west of Main Road is the preferred option for future growth. In order to provide for possible longer term development needs beyond the plan period and due to the need to define the boundaries of the Green Belt using defensible boundaries, the area

immediately north of the housing allocation and adjacent to Moor Road is proposed to be removed from the Green Belt and designated as *Safeguarded Land* (Plan 5).

26. School place provision needs to be increased to meet planned demand and initially a 315 place school is required. Alternative sites within and adjoining Bestwood Village have been considered by the applicant particularly in regard to the sensitivity of the proposed school site being within the Green Belt.
27. Whilst there is no immediate demand to expand the school further, a 2.0ha school site is required. The County Council need assurance that a 420 place school can be built on a single site to meet demand for new school places generated by future residential development on the Safeguarded Land identified in the emerging Gedling Local Plan.
28. The Local Plan Inspector did not raise concerns related to the proposed allocations at Bestwood Village in the Examination Report of the emerging Gedling Local Plan, although other matters not material to this planning application were raised. Modifications to the Local Plan have been advertised with the consultation period ending on 26 March 2018. None of the proposed changes should affect the Local Planning Document planning policies or housing allocations at Bestwood Village. An Inspector's report is expected in April/May 2018 and if favourable it is expected that the Local Plan will move to adoption in summer 2018, at which point the land on which the school is proposed to be built would no longer be in the Green Belt.
29. Gedling Borough Council received an outline application from the adjacent housebuilder for a single storey school (application reference 2014/1343) generally on the site proposed for the school subject of this planning application, but is being held in abeyance while the applicant and County Council are negotiating the provision of a new school.

Proposed Development

30. Planning permission is sought to erect a two-storey 420 place Primary School in two phases and a 39 place nursery. The school start and finish times would be staggered for different Key Stages. Core school teaching times would be either 08:40 – 15:15 hours or 08:50 – 15:20 hours. In Phase 1, 22 full-time and 20 part-time staff would be employed (32 FTE), increasing to 25 full-time staff (35 FTE) in Phase 2.

Phase 1

31. A 315 place Primary School (although initially retaining a PAN of 30) and 39 place nursery would be built in Phase 1, sited 27m from the western site boundary and at its closest 47m from the rear of the closest residential property (21 The Spinney) (Plan 6 and Plan 16). The building would have an 'L'-shaped footprint, except in the south-west corner which for the southernmost 14.2m would be set back by 8m from the western elevation (Plan 7). The principal elevation of the building, 46.5m in length and for the most part 21.5m in width,

would be on a north-south axis with a school hall and kitchen provided in an eastward projecting wing (24.7m x 13.5m) (Plan 8).

32. The nursery and reception classrooms would be provided on the western side of a central corridor and would have adjacent areas of outdoor hard and soft play. Soft landscaping would be provided in the recessed 'L' at the southern end of the building.
33. Three Key Stage (KS) 1 classrooms would be provided on the eastern side of the building with direct access from the classrooms to the adjacent KS1 and KS2 outdoor hard play area. The main entrance to the school and associated offices would be provided at the northern end of the building.
34. Six KS2 classrooms, one food/design technology classroom and a staffroom would be provided to either side of a central first floor corridor. With the exception of one classroom with windows on the north elevation, windows would be formed in the east and west facing elevations. The first floor would be accessed by stairs in the east and south elevations and a lift would be provided in a central location on the corridor (Plan 9).
35. The building would have a shallow pitch single-ply membrane roof concealed behind a low parapet and would be faced with a combination of brick and cream coloured render. A man-safe system would be mounted on the roof perimeter set back 2.25m from the roof edge. The principal building would be 7.65m in height while the eastward projecting hall wing would be 6.7m in height with kitchens 5.0m in height. Door frames, window frames and window louvres would be coloured grey (RAL 7030). External light fittings would be provided above entrance doors and CCTV cameras would be installed on corners of the building. A grey coloured canopy (RAL 7030) 8.0m x 6.0m and 3.2m in height would be provided outside the entrance doors to the reception and nursery classrooms. A canopy coloured Patina Green (RAL 6000) 5.0m long, projecting forward of the building by up to 1.2m and 3.4m in height would be provided outside the main school entrance door (Plan 10).
36. A bin store and sprinkler tank enclosed by 3.6m high timber fencing would be sited to the east of the school kitchen.

Building Level

37. The site would be subject to cut and fill to create level plateaux for construction. The western edge of the building would be approximately 0.75m above existing levels with the western edge of the adjacent area of reception and nursery outdoor play approximately 1.5m above current levels.

Access

38. Vehicular access to the school would be formed from the end of the turning head on Keeper's Close. Use of the access would be controlled by gates operated through a video/intercom link to the school office (Plan 11). The access road would cross Public Footpath FP1. The public footpath would be

raised relative to the road (speed cushion) giving precedence to footpath users. Barriers would be installed on the public footpath forming a chicane for pedestrians approaching the crossing. A 2.0m wide footpath would be provided between the turning head at the end of Keeper's close and Public Footpath FP1.

39. A single width access road with waiting areas at either end would be constructed along the southern school boundary inside the site, parallel to Public Footpath FP1. The road would turn north to run parallel to the rear boundary of 21-25 The Spinney generally at current site levels, before rising at 1:21 gradient to a level 1.5m above existing at the entrance to a 34 space car park, including two disability spaces (Plan 12). The car park, the western edge of which would be between 0.5m – 1.5m above existing site levels, would be provided to the north of the new school building. The vehicular access would be used by staff, service vehicles and site visitors.
40. Pedestrian access to the school would be approached along the public footpath network from the east (Keeper's Close, Yeoman Avenue, Leen Close), south (Hill Road) and west (The Spinney), with the point of pedestrian access at the south-west corner of the school site. The access gate would be 3.0m in width and suitable for pedestrians and cycles. The pedestrian route within the school site would cross the internal vehicular access road before rising at a 1:21 gradient after passing within the secure school line, leading to areas of outdoor hard play (Plan 12). The gate in the school secure line would be open at school start and finish times.
41. A lit pedestrian route separated by bollards would be provided at the side of the access road running within the site parallel to the rear of properties at 21-25 The Spinney, and would be used to access the nursery or the main school entrance.
42. Covered cycle shelters for 33 cycles and 46 scooters would be provided within the secure line at the end of the pedestrian access path. A further 10 covered cycle parking spaces would be provided within the car park in proximity to the main school building entrance.
43. The school currently generates 49 parental trips by car and a proportionate increase as the school expands to 1.5 form-entry would add an additional 24 car trips (73 total). The Transport Assessment has identified areas suitable for on-street parking (Plan 13) and the capacity for on-street parking making the assumption that cars park on one side of the road only. The applicant proposes a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO), which would be subject to separate procedure and public consultation, to introduce no-parking, time-limited parking restrictions and no parking junction protection (Plan 14). School *Keep Clear* zig-zag highway markings would be provided on Keeper's Close and The Spinney. An addendum to the suggested Traffic Regulation Order also proposes time-limited parking restrictions at the eastern end of Hill Road (Plan 15). The Transport Assessment identifies the approximate on-street car parking capacity of the highway near the school, as detailed in the table below.

Parking area	Approximate overall length (m)	Length of parking restrictions/driveways (m)	On-street parking capacity (no. cars)
Area 1 - The Spinney	196	39	26
Area 2 - Coronation Road/Hill Road	360	80	46
Area 3 - School Walk/Church Road	232	30	34
Area 4 - Broad Valley Drive/Keepers Close/ Yeoman Avenue	470	96	62

Table 6.4 - Approximate on-street parking capacity

Areas referenced in column 1 are shown on Plan 13.

44. The application is supported by an Interim Travel Plan which has identified school travel issues and sets out travel initiatives. Measures include: publication of the Travel Plan and details of the Travel Plan Co-ordinator; a parent induction pack including details of suitable and unsuitable areas for on-street parking; encouraging responsible parking; promoting cycling by staff and children; encouraging car sharing and travel by bus; encouraging walking by providing safety alarms, reflective clothing, maps of walking routes and park and stride (parking away from the school and walking the remaining distance); and circulation of travel up-dates to staff and parents every 3-6 months.

Playing Field and Landscape

45. A level grassed area capable of accommodating a 43m x 33m playing pitch would be provided in the south-west corner of the site. Levels would be approximately 2.0m above existing at the south-west corner of the pitch. Shrub planting 2.5m in height would be provided on the bank formed at the edge of the pitch. A 1.8m high fence would be erected between the playing pitch and proposed shrub planting to provide a visual screen while planting becomes established (Plan 6 and Plan 16).
46. A playing field would be provided on a larger plateau on higher ground at the east of the site where site levels would be raised above existing by up to 3.0m in the vicinity of 66 Broad Valley Drive. Dense shrub planting 2.5m in height would be provided on the bank formed at the south-west corner of the pitch and a 1.8m high fence would be erected between the playing pitch and proposed shrub planting to provide a visual screen while planting becomes established (Plan 16).
47. The KS1 and KS2 outdoor play area would be 8.75m below the level of the eastern playing field and would be connected by steps rising up a re-graded 1:3 grass embankment.
48. A 1.35m acoustic timber fence would be erected along the secure fence line at the western edge of the KS1/KS2 outdoor hard play area, which would reduce to 1.0m in height adjacent to the area of Nursery/Foundation outdoor play.
49. A row of trees would be planted along a bank formed to the east of the new access road at the rear of The Spinney and the school path within the secure fence line. Planting is proposed within the site adjacent to the rear boundary of

properties on The Spinney, while gaps in the hedge in the south-west corner of the site and southern boundary would be reinforced through additional planting.

50. The school site would be secured by the erection of 2.4m perimeter fencing, with the access road from Keeper's Close and to the rear of The Spinney outside the safeguarding area. Fencing within the school would segregate different areas of outdoor hard play and fencing would control access from the school car park to other areas of the site.

Construction

51. Construction access would be from Moor Road only along the farm access to the now vacant Westhouse Farm. The access would need to be modified at its eastern end to create a suitable access for construction vehicle loads (Plan 1). The modified haul road would remain following the construction pending redevelopment of residential development accessed from Moor Road. The applicant has indicated that other than for the installation of services there would be no need to carry out construction on Keeper's Close until the end of the Phase 1, and that the development can be built only using the construction access from Moor Road.

Phase 1A

52. The vehicular access to the school from Keeper's Close has been presented by the applicant as an interim arrangement until such time as a suitable access is provided to the new school as part of residential development accessed from Moor Road. The land that would form the new school site and the adjacent land for future residential development are in the same ownership. The applicant is seeking a connection of the proposed Phase 1A vehicular and pedestrian access points on the northern school boundary as part of the land transfer, and would be provided (by others) as part of future residential development to the east of Moor Road and north of the proposed school site. A co-ordinated approach to development will be required to ensure that a satisfactory connection to the future highway network is achieved, and can be delivered by Gedling Borough Council through the granting of planning permission for residential development.
53. A vehicular access and separate pedestrian route into the school would be formed in the northern boundary, providing access from a spine road of future residential development accessed from Moor Road, subject to a grant of planning permission by Gedling Borough Council (Plan 17). Once a suitably constructed and surfaced road and footways from Moor Road have been provided, the school site layout would be modified so that vehicular access would only be gained from the north. The vehicular access from Keeper's Close would be used only as an access for grounds and playing field maintenance.
54. The Phase 1 gate, which would control access to the car park from the access road running adjacent to The Spinney, would be replaced by fencing and vehicular access gates would be provided in the northern fenced school boundary.

55. The access road running adjacent to The Spinney would be used by cyclists and pedestrians. Bollards, used in Phase 1 to segregate cars from pedestrians, would be retained to separate cyclists and pedestrians. A lit 3m wide footpath/cycle route would be extended northwards (beyond the Phase 1 entrance to the car park) to link to a new housing footpath network. The route would be formed on ground up to 1.0m above existing levels. Dense planting growing up to 2.5m in height would be provided between the existing hedgerow on the western site boundary and the path. The new route, connecting the existing village and new northward residential expansion of the village would be used as the pedestrian access to the school. The pedestrian access gate in the south-west corner of the school site in proximity to FP1 and FP7 would remain.
56. The security fencing, which in Phase 1 would be positioned for the purpose of safeguarding on the northern site of the service road running along the southern boundary, would be relocated to the southern side of the service road adjacent to the hedge running parallel with FP1. The gates at the western end of the service road and at the vehicular entrance at Keeper's Close would be retained. The electronic access controls on the approach to the gate would be removed and removable bollards would be installed at the end of the turning head of Keeper's Close (Plan 17).

Phase 2

57. In Phase 2 the school would expand to a 420 place 2-form entry school with a PAN of 60. The 420 place school would not be required until there is sufficient demand for pupil places, likely to be generated by additional housing to the north of the site on the Safeguarded Land in the emerging Gedling Local Plan (Paragraph 25).
58. The car park would be extended to 38 spaces, including two disability parking spaces close to the main school entrance, to reflect the additional three full-time staff that would be employed.
59. The 'L'-shaped recess at the south-west corner of the building would be infilled at ground and first floor level by a 14.2m x 8.0m extension (Plan 18). The extended building would at closest be 27m from the site boundary and 45m from the rear of the nearest residential property (conservatory rear of 21 The Spinney). An extended reception and additional classroom would be provided on the ground floor with two additional KS2 classrooms provided at first floor. The extension would be built using materials and finishes to match the Phase 1 development. Windows to both first floor classrooms would be formed in the west elevation facing The Spinney.

Existing School Site

60. Following decant to the new school the existing school buildings would be surplus to the requirements of NCC Children Families and Cultural Services. Following internal processes all departments would be consulted to establish whether there would be a County Council use for the site, and if so the site would be retained. In the event that the County Council does not have a

requirement for the site or buildings, and having regard to The Localism Act, it may consider consulting with other public sector organisations, charities or local groups to see whether the property could meet a local need thus protecting the future of the building.

61. Prior to marketing the site and buildings, should the County Council not be able to identify a suitable occupier, the County Council would consult with Gedling Borough Council's planning officers and stakeholders in order to identify potential uses for the historic school buildings seeking to retain them in their present form. Having identified potential suitable uses, the County Council would prepare a strategy for marketing the property.

Consultations

62. **Gedling Borough Council** – Support the requirement for a new school in this location and welcome the Transport Assessment undertaken and the Traffic Regulation Order proposed in order to control the adverse impacts from the increased activity particularly at drop off and pick up times. *Should the County Council be minded to approve the application it should be satisfied that the access from Keeper's Close would be suitable as a main access to the school for a longer period of time and that the amenity of nearby residents would not be adversely affected in this eventuality.*
63. *The main considerations in the determination of this application are the impact of the development on the Green Belt by way of the development's inappropriateness and the impact on openness, the impact of the temporary access to the main school site from Keeper's Close, and the most appropriate access for the longer term.*
64. *The application site is currently located within the Nottinghamshire Green Belt and does not form part of the safeguarded land on which the outline planning permission 2014/1343 was considered. Therefore, when referring to NPPF Paragraphs 79–90, very special circumstances would need to be demonstrated in order to support a development of this nature. An identified need for new primary places within the catchment area for the school; that the expansion of the existing school has been thoroughly investigated with no potential for further development of the school buildings; and that an extensive site selection exercise has been undertaken to establish the most suitable site is noted. Should the County Council consider that there are no suitable alternative locations for a 2 hectare school site then the site selection process and established need for school places could be afforded significant weight in the planning balance and could form part of the very special circumstances required to support a development of this nature provided that the County Council is satisfied that the very special circumstances outweigh any other harm identified in the process.*
65. *Weight can be given to emerging policies depending on a number of factors (stage of preparation, extent to which there are unresolved objections and degree of consistency with the NPPF). Where LPD policies meet the requirements set out in Paragraph 216 (i.e. they have no substantive objections) they are afforded "moderate" weight. Where the LPD policies have outstanding*

objections, they are afforded “limited” weight. The Local Plan Part 2 is currently under examination and can be afforded ‘moderate’ weight in the planning balance. It is noted that Green Belt release should only occur through the Local Plan Process. Under the Local Plan Part 2, I can confirm that the whole of the application site has been allocated for future housing and therefore should adoption of the Local Plan come forward the application site’s Green Belt classification would be replaced with a housing allocation.

66. *The proposed temporary vehicle access in Phase 1 would be from a narrow residential cul-de-sac (Keeper’s Close) currently characterised with small detached bungalows which rises steeply from Broad Valley Drive. It is also noted that the route to Keeper’s Close along Broad Valley Drive and Park Road is not a through route with the nearest public transport linkage (bus stop 500m from Keeper’s Close) sited at Bestwood Country Park. Pedestrian access would be at the south-west corner of the site at the point where the public footpaths converge.*
67. *The plans submitted indicate that the Phase 1 [vehicular] access for the proposed site would be from the end of Keeper’s Close and would then circumnavigate the rear garden areas of properties on Broad Valley Drive and The Spinney. These rear boundaries are currently defined by mature hedgerows. Indicative layouts show that the main access to the proposed school site, on completion of the housing development, would be from Moor Road.*
68. *A temporary access from Keeper’s Close could result in a number of adverse impacts to existing residents adjoining the proposed access. It is noted that this is intended as a temporary solution and that a Traffic Regulation Order is proposed in order to control undue car parking and waiting during school drop off and pick up times.*
69. **Ashfield District Council** – No objection.
70. **Bestwood St Albans Parish Council** – Objection. *The development should be delayed until the highway to serve residential development to the north is provided, removing the need for vehicular access from Keeper’s Close.*
71. *A minimum of 60 car parking spaces are required. Traffic management proposals should be implemented before the school opens to alleviate the impact of additional school traffic on the access points to the school. The Parish has subsequently been notified and does not object to the suggested Traffic Regulation Order.*
72. *If the school opens before the residential estate highway from Moor Road is provided, temporary car parking should be provided on the existing school playing field and/or the turning area at the end of Coronation Road and Hill Road.*
73. *The Parish appreciate the applicant having responded to the views of residents. It is accepted that there is no solution that will please everyone.*

74. **NCC Highways Development Control** – No objection subject to conditions to require submission of the details of the new vehicular access at Keeper's Close to NCC Highways approved specification; the provision of vehicle access, parking, turning, servicing areas and cycle parking including retention for the life of the development; provision of a school zone with parking restrictions; and a post-occupation traffic survey within 3 months of the school opening and implementation of further required measures.
75. *A Transport Assessment has been submitted which takes into account the issues associated with the closure of the existing school, and the associated walking/driving to access the new site. It also looks at the proposed phasing of the new school.*
76. *Pupil and staff travel surveys on trips to the current school have been carried out. 48% of respondents walk to the existing school. Department for Transport National Travel Survey statistics indicate that average pupil occupancy level for education trips is 1.6 children per car. Accounting for this car share factor, the number of two-way pupil vehicle trips that will be generated by the site during peak hour periods will be 73.*
77. *When considering the expanded capacity to 420 pupils, the Transport Assessment anticipates that the site would generate in the region of 95 car trips by school and nursery pupils, with an additional 30 staff vehicle trips. Taking into account the new location of the school, it is unlikely that the travel patterns and percentages will alter significantly.*
78. *With regards to on-street parking for parents dropping off and picking up their children, the Transport Assessment determines that the surrounding roads have adequate capacity to accommodate the additional demand for short stay parking. From visiting the site, and assessing the submitted data, the Highway Authority is satisfied with the assessment of the surrounding road network, and with the predicted impacts of the proposal on the roads in the vicinity of the site.*
79. *The Highway Authority recognises that on-street parent parking at school opening and closing times is going to be a concern to the residents in the vicinity of the school, especially on Keeper's Close and The Spinney, however the time period over which this occurs is very brief. Commonly, the pm peak is worse than the am peak with vehicles beginning to park 15-20 minutes before closing time. But generally the roads are back to normal by about 15 minutes after the school closes. Keeper's Close is wide enough to accommodate appropriate on-street parking and still allow access to the school.*
80. *Currently the lower school teaching day for Reception, Year 1, 2 and 3 pupils begins at 08:40 and finishes at 15:10. Year 4, 5 and 6 pupils begin at 08:50 and finish at 15:20, with extended hours care available for all age groups through a variety of extracurricular activities until 18:00. This arrangement helps to spread peak arrival and departure times and subsequently minimise congestion on the surrounding highway network. It is anticipated that this arrangement will continue.*

81. *Increases in short term on-street parking and associated vehicle generation is not a unique problem and is prevalent at most schools throughout the county in local neighbourhoods. However, this problem only occurs for a brief time period and invariably results from indiscriminate parking by parents in positions that can cause irritation to nearby residents. Notwithstanding this, considerate on-street parking on the public highway is acceptable if carried out appropriately in accordance with any traffic regulation orders that already exist. To assist with the issue of inconsiderate parking outside schools and parents ignoring Traffic Regulation Orders, the County Council has recently activated a dedicated CCTV car to monitor and issue Penalty Charge Notices for motorist contraventions in restricted areas subject to Traffic Regulation Orders.*
82. *The Transport Assessment proposes the implementation of a Traffic Regulation Order and school keep clear markings in sensitive areas. The works include single and double yellow line restrictions along The Spinney (including the turnaround loop) and Keeper's Close, alongside double yellow line restrictions around key junctions. The applicant has subsequently submitted an additional plan which proposes the implementation of a Traffic Regulation Order at the end of Hill Road. The Highway Authority considers that the proposals are satisfactory, and would help minimise the likelihood of indiscriminate parking occurring in the vicinity of the site. It should be noted that the Traffic Regulation Order is a separate legal process, and would require consultation separate to the planning application. A condition requiring the provision of a school zone with parking restrictions in place generally in accordance with the details shown on the submitted plan is recommended.*
83. *An additional parking survey and traffic assessment to be carried out three months after completion and occupation of the school is proposed. This will provide an opportunity to review the conclusions of this Transport Assessment, assess the suitability and compliance of the Traffic Regulation Orders and address any issues that may arise as a result of the school development, including any impacts associated with potential parental on-street parking. The results of this monitoring process will then be used to determine the suitability of any additional mitigation measures, if necessary.*
84. *The Highway Authority considers proposals for off-street parking for staff and visitors to be satisfactory, and should accommodate the expected increases in staff numbers as a result of the development. These will help minimise the likelihood of staff/visitors having to park on-street. Off-street parking provision is well in excess of that serving the existing school. Further to this, the car park layout will also provide satisfactory access and turning facilities for refuse and service vehicles, and is an improvement in comparison to the existing school. In addition, cycle/scooter stands are proposed to be provided which further improves the school in terms of travel to and from the site by sustainable means.*
85. **NCC Highway Improvements Team** – With reference to the representation from Bestwood Village Vision (Paragraph 119) it is advised that extensive 'no stopping' restrictions are not appropriate in suggested locations as they prevent loading and parking by disabled drivers which can be considered unreasonable,

particularly in relation to NCC's duties under the Equalities Act 2010. The 'no stopping' clearway restriction (School-Keep-Clear zig-zag) is appropriate and specified for use by the Department for Transport for the point where the direct footpath to the school emerges [on to The Spinney] and has been included on the plan. Long distances of 'no stopping' restrictions are implemented infrequently, and on urban clearways for primary road networks. Generally they are mostly used in very urban areas and on the strategic road network.

86. With reference to the representation reported at Paragraph 123 o) NCC Highway Improvements Team has confirmed that potential double-yellow lines at the junction of The Spinney and Moor Road are correctly sized and at least 10m in length measured from the prolongation of the two kerb lines and in compliance with the regulations.
87. **NCC Road Safety** – A school crossing patrol would not be required unless significant development takes place on the west side of Moor Road.
88. **NCC Design Review** – No objection subject to approval of facing material sample panels. The site is well served by existing and new pedestrian footpaths, and is made secure with green Heras fencing and lighting with controlled gate access. These footpaths link the new [future] residential development to Bestwood village.
89. The site has steep gradients and has informed the building location and massing, being set at the lowest and level point of the site. The building siting has addressed the location of the existing residential properties and potential overlooking sight line issues. Working and remodelling existing ground levels has sought to reduce the visual mass of the building in the context of site contours.
90. Phase 2 has been designed to complete the rectangle of the plan form with impact being mitigated at the early stage of the design process. Play areas are integrated into the natural landscape and linked to the classrooms offering pupil interaction and external movement.
91. Soft landscaping has incorporated natural screening of the neighbouring properties, visually softening hard boundaries. Landscape will need to mature once planted. Consideration should be given to species that will require minimal future maintenance, ease of growth and spread and contribute to a visual and acoustic barrier.
92. The mixture of solid dark brick panels and render is an identifiable elevational treatment coupled with a varied mix of materials to the overall façade. Roof lights have been incorporated to gain more light into adjacent spaces, and internal glazed screens allow light from stairwells to reach corridors. The front entrance canopy provides emphasis and greater impact to the school entrance. All paths accessing the school are less than 1:20 gradient and a fully accessible pitch would be provided on the lower part of the school.
93. The Keeper's Close access should be managed effectively so it does not conflict with residential neighbours at peak drop-off and pick-up times. An

understanding of the timescale for the residential access road to the north would inform residences on Keeper's Close.

94. **Sport England** – No objection. *Facilities should be designed in accordance with Sport England, or the relevant National Governing Body, design guidance notes.*
95. *Consideration should also be given to how any new development will provide opportunities for people to lead healthy lifestyles and create healthy communities. Sport England's Active Design guidance can be used to help with this when developing or assessing a proposal. Active Design provides ten principles to help ensure the design and layout of development encourages and promotes participation in sport and physical activity.*
96. **NCC Landscape** – No objection subject to a recommendation that a hedge is planted on the school boundary. *A mixed native hedge would provide additional security for the school as well as providing shelter and biodiversity interest. The provision of additional planting [on revised plans] is welcome.*
97. **NCC Nature Conservation** – No objection subject to conditions to protect hedgerows during construction; safeguarding of mammals during construction; control of vegetation clearance during the bird nesting season; provision of integrated bird and bat boxes in the fabric of the building (target species house sparrow, starling and swift) [Comment: - satisfactory details are now included on revised plans]; a landscaping scheme incorporating species appropriate to the local area and other species of wildlife value; and bat sensitive lighting.
98. *The site is generally of low ecological value. Boundary hedgerows with scattered trees provide increased ecological interest. The site is likely to support a limited number of common and widespread farmland bird species, and the field boundaries are likely to provide opportunities for foraging and commuting bats.*
99. **NCC Archaeology** – No objection subject to a condition for a programme of archaeological monitoring of groundworks. *Should complex archaeological remains be located, there may be a need to undertake an area of set piece archaeological excavation and contingency for this needs to be built into the programme of work.*
100. *The [construction] site access crosses the historic parish boundary (Moor Road), which is also the boundary of the Medieval Hunting park. An isolated set of presumably farm buildings are shown on the 1835 map of the area, in an area which on the early 14th century map of the area is shown as 'Beskewood (Bestwood) Head'. The area of the buildings on Sanderson's 1835 map may represent a continuity of occupation from the Medieval or early post Medieval period.*
101. **NCC Built Heritage** - No objection subject to a condition for a planning brief to be prepared for the vacated school building, to ensure that the submitted statement considering the issue of redundancy of the existing school building is followed. *The statement provided to address the future reuse and disposal of the existing school is quite comprehensive and is hoped would be adequate to*

mitigate against the risk of the site becoming empty for a prolonged length of time.

102. *There is potential for harm to occur to the conservation area arising from the loss of function of the present school building. This building was built to accommodate the elementary education needs of the mining village and is part of the interest and character of the village. The level of harm caused by the cessation of school use is 'less than substantial' so long as the school buildings themselves are retained and put to a suitable new use that conserves their architectural character.*
103. *There is no harmful impact arising from the proposed school on the setting of any listed buildings.*
104. *The proposal site falls within the boundary of the Medieval parkland and includes the site of a farm marked on old maps. It is not considered that the proposals will impact on any above ground heritage assets of the farm (as these are no longer extant in the development area) but archaeological considerations must be accounted for with regard to the park boundary where physical remains may be visible (such as a park pale). The character of the non-designated historic parkland has changed very considerably since the Victorian development of the mining village and associated colliery and ironworks. The present character of this part of the Medieval parkland is agricultural and this will change, as will the fields to the north where housing allocations are under consideration. Collectively these changes from agrarian to a residential character will cause a degree of harm to the non-designated historic landscape. This harm would be less than substantial.*
105. **NCC Countryside Access** - No objection. *Public Footpaths are not to be affected or obstructed in any way by the proposed development at this location unless subject to appropriate diversion or closure orders. In view of the anticipated increase in usage of the paths, proposals for surface improvement or additional funding that may be available for this work would be welcome.*
106. *NCC Countryside Access Team should be contacted about any required path closure or diversion application.*
107. **NCC Project Engineer (Noise)** – No objection subject to conditions to control construction noise; specification of proposed acoustic fencing; control of operational noise outside normal school hours; and control of noise from plant and machinery.
108. *The noise assessment does not consider the noise impact from activity noise associated with outdoor activities such as during break times and outdoor teaching activities such as PE. There has been no previous use as a school site and proposed playground levels elevated above the neighbouring garden levels by 2-3m will provide a direct line of sight between the playground areas and neighbouring properties. Proposed noise mitigation through acoustic fencing would provide a barrier to the direct transmission path of noise from children playing in outdoor play areas and neighbouring properties that are located at a lower level. While noise will still be audible during periods of*

outdoor activity, noise from children playing is not usually one that provokes a strong reaction from neighbouring residents. People are generally less annoyed by noise from children playing and the noise is usually for restricted periods during the school day, with extensive periods of respite outside of school hours and term time.

109. *Whilst not acoustic grade fencing, the proposed overlap timber fencing in the south-western corners of the two grassed pitches to the south of the school should provide sufficient noise screening given the less intensive use and soft ground in these areas.*
110. *The proposed noise mitigation strategy to minimise activity noise impacts on neighbouring properties is satisfactory and the applicant has taken all reasonable steps to minimise noise impacts from the development.*
111. *The submitted noise assessment has considered the potential noise impact from fixed plant on the nearest residential receptors on The Spinney, located approximately 20m west of the new school building and recommends plant noise levels do not exceed a Rating Level of 25dB (5dB below measured night time background) for night time plant noise and 31dB (5dB below measured day time background) for day time plant noise. To avoid unacceptable noise levels at the school building façade, the report recommends that the plant is designed to ensure a maximum Rating Noise Level of 48dB(A) outside any teaching window. Assuming these levels are complied with, it is unlikely that complaints will occur from residential properties due to plant noise.*
112. *Specific measures to be employed by the contractor during the construction phase to minimise the impacts of noise should include, but not be limited to: hours of operation of noisy activities; compound location and traffic routes to minimise noise impacts; community engagement; site contact and complaints procedure; and management of deliveries to site. The noise management plan should make reference to BS5228-1:2009 Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites.*
113. **NCC Reclamation Team** – No objection subject to a condition for a watching brief for contamination.
114. **NCC Flood Risk Management** – No objection subject to the submission of a detailed surface water design and management plan.
115. **Cadent (Gas)** – Apparatus is identified in proximity to the proposed development.
116. **Police Force Architectural Liaison Officer, Severn Trent Water Limited and Western Power Distribution** – No response received.

Publicity

117. The application has been publicised by means of site notices, press notice and neighbour notification letters sent to the nearest occupiers in accordance with the County Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement Review.
118. A 239 signature petition from residents of Bestwood village has been submitted objecting to multiple proposed access points which will cause disruption to residents. The proposed access to the school should be amended in consultation with local residents, with full consultation to be undertaken with local residents on any future proposals. [Comment: The application has been revised and neighbours previously notified of the application, other persons that have submitted representations, and the lead petitioner have been notified.]
119. The Chair of Bestwood Village Vision (a local community group) has written, with further representations submitted following consultation on the receipt of revised plans including a draft Traffic Regulation Order:
- a) There should be a co-ordinated approach to development including the adjacent house builder and Gedling Borough Council to ensure the timely provision of an access road from Moor Road to serve the new school (2), avoiding the need for access to be formed from Keeper's Close. If the school cannot be accessed in time from Moor Road the school should be delayed.
 - b) The highway network is inadequate. Vehicular access to Keeper's Close via Park Road and Broad Valley Drive is already busy with traffic and parked cars. The school would be accessed at the top of a hill and roads are not gritted in winter.
 - c) There should be no access from Keeper's Close either during construction or the operation of the school. It is suggested that an internal track road is constructed along the northern site boundary to access the playing field (2), overcoming the need for access from Keeper's Close. Access from Keeper's Close will change the character of the residential cul-de-sac and detract from amenity.
 - d) Draft Traffic Regulation Order School Zone parking restrictions are welcome, but should be extended to include 'no stopping' on both sides of The Spinney circulation area allowing vehicles to turn around safely. There should also be 'no stopping' permitted at the eastern end of Hill Road where parked vehicles would make turning difficult. [Comment: This suggestion has been incorporated in an addendum to the suggested Traffic Regulation Order.]
 - e) Expense. The provision of short-term access from Keeper's Close is wasteful when it is not required once access is provided from Moor Road. [Comment – the cost of development is not a material planning consideration].
120. 54 letters of representation have been received from 40 households in three areas of the village:

121. Church Road/High Main Drive

Three letters of support have been received from two residents:

- a) The provision of school places in the village is welcomed.
- b) The Keeper's Close access is adequate.
- c) Parking on The Spinney will be less than currently on Church Road/School Walk as multiple access paths will be available. Vehicle drop-off points will be on Hill Road, Coronation Road, The Spinney and Keeper's Close.
- d) The proposed pedestrian route will not require roads to be crossed depending on where parents drop-off/pick-up. Safety concerns are eliminated by the access gate and use of public footpaths. Reduced risk to children.
- e) Proper arrangements will be put in place to deal with drainage.

122. Keeper's Close/Broad Valley Drive/Yeoman Avenue/Leen Close/Beeston Close/
Park Road (26 letters from 20 households)

Qualified Support

- a) Five residents raise no objection in principle to the building of a school. One resident is happy that construction traffic will not travel through the village/along Keeper's Close. However, objections are raised in the same correspondence and are included in the following summary of responses:

Construction Access

- b) There should be no vehicular access from Keeper's Close/Broad Valley Drive during construction (12). Loss of amenity/noise from construction traffic (5). Roads are unsuitable for construction traffic (2). Pollution from construction traffic (2). Vibration/dust from construction traffic.

School Access/Traffic

- c) There should be no vehicular access from Keeper's Close to the operational school (8). Keeper's Close is unsuitable for through traffic (3). Poor Keeper's Close/Broad Valley Drive junction visibility. The highway approach to the school is convoluted/unsuitable (7). Impact of traffic on Keeper's Close/Broad Valley Drive. Approach roads are not gritted/difficult when icy (2).
- d) Prospect that Keeper's Close will be used as the school/service access for several years (2). The longer term use of Keeper's Close should be reconsidered.
- e) Traffic congestion on the internal school access road.

- f) Access to the school should be from Moor Road (17). A co-ordinated approach to wider development is needed. Access should only be from Moor Road to alleviate parking on The Spinney. The only pedestrian access should be from Moor Road. A service road through Keeper's Close is not needed. Not building the Keeper's Close access/accessing from Moor Road would save money/be cost effective (2).
- g) Loss of amenity from traffic (4). Use of Keeper's Close for drop-off/pick-up (3). Limited on-street parking/congestion on Keeper's Close (4). How can drop-off/pick-up be policed?
- h) Congestion on the highway approach. Roads next to the existing school are congested. Pollution impact of traffic (3). Traffic noise (2), vibration and litter.
- i) Traffic will restrict emergency access/health care visits (3) at school start/finish times.
- j) Worsening highway safety/increased traffic (4). The Spinney, Hill Road, Keeper's Close and Broad Valley Drive are not appropriate for 'park and stride' due to congestion.
- k) A lack of accidents does not make development acceptable. Traffic calming (2) on Park Road would reduce vehicle speeds.
- l) Roads near the school should be for resident parking only.
- m) Part of the existing school site could be made available for 'park and stride'.
- n) The access road crossing the public footpath will be dangerous. The access will cross a popular footpath.
- o) Increased cycling should be encouraged to promote health and reduce pollution.

Amenity

- p) Loss of amenity from change in the character of the area (7). Impact on heritage of the village.
- q) Loss of amenity from school activities/noise (2).

Other matters

- r) Concern over the address of the school directing traffic to Keeper's Close (4). [Comment: The application site has to be identified and in Phase 1 is proposed to be accessed from Keeper's Close.]
- s) Poor/lack of engagement with residents (4) with too short a time to make comment. Revised plans should be subject of extended consultation. [Comment: All residents notified of the application by letter and other

objectors have been notified of revised proposals with opportunity to submit comments].

- t) Loss of value [Comment: Loss of value is not a material planning consideration.]

123. The Spinney/Hill Road/Coronation Road/Bowden Avenue/Langley Close/Moor Road (25 letters from 17 households)

Qualified Support

- a) Three residents raise no objection in principle to the building of a school. However, objections are raised in the same correspondence and are included in the following summary of responses:

Green Belt, Siting and Need

- b) Development would take place on Green Belt land (4) and is not consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework. The build relates to future housing on Green Belt land which has not been sought/approved.
- c) The school could be built on an alternative site (Bestwood Village Social Club). The school should be re-sited and accessed directly from Moor Road.
- d) The school is not needed unless new housing is built on Moor Road/further development locally (2). There is no pupil place demand for a 420 place school.

Construction Access

- e) There should be no vehicular access from Keeper's Close/Broad Valley Drive during construction.

Traffic

- f) Proposed access arrangements are premature in advance of access from Moor Road (9). The Keeper's Close entrance is not required. Not having an access point near The Spinney or from Keeper's Close would avoid the need for a Traffic Regulation Order. Access should be from Moor Road (7) with pedestrian access only from the path by The Spinney. The school internal service road can be re-routed (2) along north and east boundaries.
- g) A co-ordinated approach to development is needed to deliver access from Moor Road (5). A footway needs to be provided along Moor Road between The Spinney and the proposed Moor Road access.
- h) The use of the internal service road/crossing the road by pedestrians will present a risk to children. The access will cross a public footpath. An accident on the service road could impact on neighbouring property. The

access route can be re-routed. The cost of the Keeper's Close entrance can be avoided.

- i) Inadequate highway network on the approach to the Keeper's Close school entrance (3) for a school bus/coach. Narrow culs-de-sac are not suitable for school through-traffic. Inadequate highway capacity on The Spinney (2). Congestion if the Moor Road access is not available by the time the school opens.
- j) Increased travel distance to the new school site (3) encouraging parents to drive.
- k) Lack of parking provision at the school (7) for parents (6). Adequacy of provision for children and parents with disability (2). Parent drop-off/pick-up should be provided when the school is accessed from Moor Road (2). A car park would be an alternative to the cost of traffic enforcement. A car park would allow less restrictive traffic regulation. The suggested Traffic Regulation Order would not take account of school events outside normal hours.
- l) Increased traffic at drop-off points on The Spinney, Hill Road, Coronation Road, Keeper's Close, Broad Valley Drive. Parking on The Spinney will result in a change in character (2). Impact of parent parking on nearby residents (4) on Coronation Road and Hill Road. Measures should be introduced to ease parking at the end of Hill Road and Coronation Road. Loss of amenity from increased traffic.
- m) Parking problems at the existing school will be recreated when the school moves. The Spinney will be the closest point for school drop-off and pick-up. Inconsiderate (5) and dangerous parent parking with obstruction of driveways (3). Vehicles will be left parked for longer periods. Risk to children from traffic congestion (3). Traffic congestion on The Spinney (5). Obstruction to emergency services (5) and refuse collection.
- n) The suggested Traffic Regulation Order should be extended to cover more properties on The Spinney. The suggested Traffic Regulation Order will restrict parking by residents (2) and visitors and 'no parking' double-yellow line restrictions will apply outside of school times. The Spinney should be Resident-Only parking.
- o) Parking at the junction of The Spinney and Moor Road is already a problem (2). Traffic restrictions will need to be policed/lack of enforcement (3). The proposed double-yellow lines at the junction of The Spinney and Moor Road do not comply with regulations. The TRO double-yellow lines at the junction of Moor Road and The Spinney will stop parking for enjoyment of Mill Lakes Country Park.
- p) The existing school car park should be made available for parking until access is provided from Moor Road.
- q) Up to date traffic survey is required.

Amenity

- r) Noise, pollution, privacy and welfare impact of construction (2). Request for exemption from Council tax.
- s) The school building is too close to properties on The Spinney and could be re-sited (2).
- t) General loss of amenity and disruption. Loss of privacy from the new access (7) path to the rear of The Spinney (4). Loss of amenity from noise (4) and light pollution.
- u) Screen planting will not be adequate (3) and should be provided for all properties on The Spinney.
- v) Increased use of the public footpath from Hill Road. Lack of security (6) to rear gardens adjacent to the path. Lack of upkeep and inadequate footpath lighting.
- w) Littering/fly-tipping (5) on the path from Hill Road/rear of The Spinney.

Infrastructure

- x) Risk of flooding (2). Historic flooding issues (2). Drainage will not be in place while the school is being built. Improved site drainage is required.
- y) Inadequate sewerage capacity.

Other

- z) Lack of village facilities to support further development (2). No proposals are made for secondary school places. [Comment: The issues raised are not material to the application presented for determination.]
- aa) Lack of public engagement (4) on issues of traffic, access, staff and car parking, drainage. [Comment: All residents notified of the application by letter and other objectors have been notified of revised proposals with opportunity to submit comments].
- bb) Loss of value (3). [Comment: Loss of value is not a material planning consideration.]

124. Councillor Chris Barnfather and Councillor Ben Bradley have been notified of the application.

125. The issues raised are considered in the Observations Section of this report.

Observations

Site Selection and Suitability

126. There is a presumption that the determination of planning applications will be made in accordance with the provisions of the Development Plan having regard to any other material considerations. In selecting the site for a replacement school the applicant carried out a desk-based assessment. With the exception of two sites within the village, other potential sites lie on the fringe of the village in the Green Belt.
127. One site in the village that was considered is a 1.7ha playing field to the north of the planned Bestwood Business Park housing allocation (H13). In addition to the site being Protected Open Space the location would be away from the direction of growth in Bestwood Village, development of the site would require investigation and possible remediation having regard to historic activity and uses in the area. Potential highways issues at junctions were also identified. The site would be below the 2.0ha required for a 420 place primary school.
128. Consideration was given to the potential to redevelop the existing original school site in conjunction with land to the south at the village Community Centre (requiring the partial closure of School Walk). Development of the site would offer an opportunity to improve and regenerate the centre of the village and would have the potential to enhance the conservation area. However, the 1.6ha site would be smaller than the required 2.0ha. Playing field at the existing school annex could be used but would not offer a one-site school solution.
129. Two sites within the Green Belt, one of which is the subject of this application, were identified with potential for development. A site to the south of Bestwood Winding Engine would be in proximity to the Scheduled Ancient Monument and Listed Building in the Country Park which could present difficulties in demonstrating that a development would not adversely impact on heritage assets or their setting. The site was the former colliery pit-head and ground conditions and the adjacent spoil heap would require thorough investigation and mitigation with potential significant time and cost implications. The site is located at the most distant point from the direction of future village growth. A vehicular access on a bend on Park Road could give rise to highway issues. The potential opportunity to use the nearby Country Park car park could ease traffic issues around parent drop-off and pick-up.
130. The selected development site is on land anticipated to be taken out of Green Belt when the emerging Local Plan is adopted. The emerging Local Plan identifies the need for a school site (of 1.5ha for the Local Plan period up to 2028). The proposed 2.0ha school site would be of suitable size to accommodate an increase to 420 primary places when the Gedling Borough Part 2 Local Plan *Safeguarded Land* is developed. Following the direction of future growth a school on the proposed site would be in a good central location to serve the expanded village.

Strategic Education Provision

131. The proposed development would replace school buildings on the existing Bestwood Hawthorne Primary School site that are reaching the end of their design life and are no longer suitable for the delivery of a modern educational curriculum. The proposed capacity of 420 pupil places and enlarged 39 place nursery would accommodate the current school roll and meet demand for school places arising from planned development in the local area up to 2028 (315 places) and future development of *Safeguarded Land* in the emerging Gedling Borough Part 2 Local Plan.
132. Often additional school places are funded from developer contributions (S106) arising from new residential development that may lead to a new school being built. Early arrivals from the first houses occupied are frequently accommodated in an existing school. In this instance there is no capacity at the existing school and the proposal seeks to have school place capacity available to meet an imminent increase in demand as well as meeting the needs of existing pupils.
133. Great importance is attached in NPPF *Promoting Healthy Communities* (Paragraph 72) to ensuring that sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of new and existing communities. Great weight should be given to the need to create, expand or alter schools. In a letter to Chief Planning Officers, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government has stated that there should be a presumption in favour of the development of state-funded schools and the delivery of development that has a positive impact on the community (Appendix 1). The proposal would replace an existing facility that would meet the needs of the community and planned development.
134. The ability to enlarge the school in the future to serve the local community (Phase 2) helps illustrate the sustainability of the proposal. It is suggested in representations at Paragraph 123 k) that an enlarged car park should be provided now. However, the replacement school has been designed to meet current and, when expanded, future operational needs and is considered to be acceptable.
135. The proposal would replace an existing school site and is considered to be satisfactory, subject to other material considerations, in compliance with GRLP Saved Policy C1 *Community Services General Principles* which will allow the improvement of community facilities that are not detrimental to the amenity of adjoining and nearby property (considered later in this report) and are easily accessible to local residents.
136. In determining this application, consideration needs to be given to whether the impacts of the proposed development would give rise to significant harm that could not be addressed through modifications to the site layout, design, or otherwise mitigated through the imposition of conditions.

Development in the Green Belt

137. The proposed school site lies within the Nottingham-Derby Green Belt. Policy 3: The Green Belt of the Broxtowe Borough, Gedling Borough and Nottingham City

Aligned Core Strategies Part 1 Local Plan – 2014 (ACS) states that “*Part 2 Local Plans will review Green Belt boundaries to meet the other development land requirements of the Aligned Core Strategies, in particular in respect of the strategic locations and the Key Settlements named in Policy 2*”. ACS Policy 2 identifies Bestwood Village as a Key Settlement for growth to provide up to 560 homes and the *Key Settlement – Bestwood Village (Gedling) Indicative Plan (Plan 5)* shows the direction of growth which will encroach into the area currently designated as Green Belt.

138. Until such time as the emerging Gedling Borough Part 2 Local Plan is adopted proposed development should be considered against Saved Policies of the Gedling Borough Replacement Local Plan – 2005. It should be noted that GRLP Policy ENV26 *Control Over Development in the Green Belt* is not a saved policy and so cannot be considered.
139. NPPF Paragraph 80 identifies the five purposes of Green Belt:
 - a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas
 - b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another
 - c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment
 - d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns
 - e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
140. The NPPF states that the Local Authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate development, with exceptions, none of which would apply to the proposed development. Therefore, applying the criteria of The Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009, the application will need to be referred to the Secretary of State, if there is a resolution to grant planning permission.
141. NPPF Paragraph 87-88 explain that inappropriate development is by definition harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. “*When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. ‘Very special circumstances’ will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations*”.
142. In determining the application it is considered that significant weight should be given to the adopted Aligned Core Strategy which identifies the direction of future growth in Bestwood Village, and moderate weight to the emerging Part 2 Gedling Local Plan which would remove the application site from the Green Belt and which specifically identifies the need for a school within the area to be allocated for housing. Weight should also be given to no issues having been raised in respect of the proposed allocation in the Inspector’s Report following the Examination in Public.

143. The County Council has a statutory duty to provide school places for children in Nottinghamshire. Whilst the planned delivery of housing on the Bestwood Business Park is being delayed until 2022/23 with first pupil places likely to arise in 2023/24, there is no capacity at the existing school for school places that would arise from the development of the GRLP *Safeguarded Land* (application reference 2014/0238). Although the permission has not yet been issued pending the finalising of matters related to the S106 Agreement, the County Council has to forward-plan to ensure that school places will be available when required.
144. Alternative sites for a school have been considered and the selected site is considered to be the most appropriate, albeit currently in Green Belt, and would tie-in with the planned direction of growth in Bestwood Village. The building would be located on the lowest area of the site and in part cut into rising ground. Although the landscape character would change, the majority of the site would be set as playing field and remain open in character.
145. The school is likely to take 12 months to build once construction commences, and additional school places will need to be available by the time new housing development accessed from Moor Road is first occupied.
146. In meeting an imminent demand for pupil places and having considered alternative potential school sites, it is concluded that there are very special circumstances to allow development in the Green Belt, on a site which is expected to be allocated for housing when the Gedling Borough Part 2 Local Plan is adopted, anticipated in the summer of 2018. Planning considerations would be materially different if the applicant waited until the emerging Local Plan has been adopted and the site is no longer in the Green Belt. However, a delay to the project would be unlikely to allow adequate time to build a school before the anticipated increase in demand for school places from 2019/20 onwards.

Integration with Planned Development

147. The position of fencing following Phase 1A of the development, whilst securing the school, would allow unrestricted pedestrian and cycle movement in a north-south direction to link the existing village with planned residential development accessed from Moor Road. This element of the proposal is particularly welcome and reflects a co-ordinated approach to integrate future planned development in Bestwood Village.

Highway Impact - Traffic and Movement

148. GRLP Saved Policy ENV1 *Development Criteria* will allow development that includes adequate provision for safe and convenient access and circulation of pedestrians and vehicles, with attention paid to the needs of the disabled, cyclists, pedestrians and people with young children (amongst other criteria).

- Construction Access

149. The impact of construction traffic on the highway network along Broad Valley Drive and Keeper's Close has been raised in representations (Paragraph 119 c) and 122 b)). However, the applicant has confirmed that construction access would be from Moor Road. Some construction work will need to be undertaken on Keeper's Close to connect services to and from the access road and footpath link between the end of Keeper's Close and the new school entrance gate. The scale and nature of those works will be relatively minor and can be acceptably controlled through planning condition (Condition 18).

- Phase 1

150. The operational impact of the school on the highway network has also been raised. NCC Highways Development Control has not raised concern over the adequacy of the submitted Transport Statement, capacity of the highway to accommodate additional traffic which may be attracted to the site, impact on emergency access, or the capacity of the highway to accept on-street parking associated with the proposed development. No measures for traffic calming on Park Road reported in representations (Paragraph 122 k)) or similar have been recommended.

151. The physical characteristics of roads close to the new school have been suitably assessed in the Transport Assessment and are generally considered to be satisfactory with the exception of the circulation area at the eastern end of The Spinney where the carriageway is of restricted width and would not allow a second vehicle to pass if a car is parked. The suggested Traffic Regulation Order, which would be subject to separate consultation, would preclude parking on the circulation area at the eastern end of The Spinney and Hill Road at school drop-off and pick-up times. If observed and enforced it is considered that parking issues on that part of The Spinney should not arise. The suggested Traffic Regulation Order has also considered potential parking on bends on The Spinney and also proposes satisfactory measures to restrict parking at junctions. A scheme generally in accordance with details shown on the draft Traffic Regulation Order should be implemented before the school is first brought into use (Condition 29).

152. Bestwood Village Vision has made a suggestion as to how the Traffic Regulation Order could be revised (Paragraph 119 d)) which has been incorporated in revised proposals. Whilst NCC Highways Improvements Team has commented on the suggestion that areas where 'no stopping' is permitted can be extended, there will be further opportunity to comment through the formal consultation on a Traffic Regulation Order.

153. The school grounds would not be accessible for parent drop-off and pick-up other than by parents or children with a mobility disability who would be allowed access to the school car park. For other parents and children, the school would only be accessible along the public footpath network. The school pedestrian access gate would be at a point where public footpaths converge. Unlike at many schools where parents may drive to a point as close as possible to the school entrance, the additional distance that parents may have to walk after

parking and good location on the public footpath network is likely to influence parent behaviour and encourage modal shift in transport away from the car. The minimum walking distances from places where vehicles would be allowed to park are shown on Plan 4.

154. The layout of the village is such that where people live is likely to determine how they access the school (Plan 19). It is considered likely that relatively little traffic will be attracted to Keeper's Close given the distance that parents will need to drive and the subsequent walk down and up the relatively steep public footpath running along the southern boundary of the school site. The suggested Traffic Regulation Order would restrict parking to one side of Keeper's Close at school start and finish times and with a finite capacity on-street parking may extend on to Broad Valley Drive. Considering the relatively small catchment of properties and distance that will need to be walked after driving, this may discourage travel by car in the first instance and increase walking to school, which would be both sustainable and welcome.
155. Most traffic is likely to be attracted to The Spinney and Hill Road as both roads will allow vehicles to park closest to the school pedestrian entrance gate in Phase 1 of the development. The roads and to a lesser extent Coronation Road given the greater walking distance to the school, may have greater appeal for parent parking, particularly for those who may be travelling to or arriving from further afield via Moor Road as part of a daily commute. Residents living on those roads are considered unlikely to drive to park further along a cul-de-sac and then walk.
156. For parents living to the south of Bestwood Village and travelling by car it may be most convenient to park on School Walk which also offers easy access to Moor Road for onward travel after the school run.
157. Paragraph 32 of the NPPF advises that development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe. NCC Highways Development Control has not raised concern over the impact of school related traffic on highway capacity and there would be adequate opportunity for on-street car parking on the public highway close to the school, taking account of the parking restrictions proposed in the suggested Traffic Regulation Order. The suggested Traffic Regulation Order would also help ensure that obstructive car parking does not occur which could potentially impact on access by emergency services, a matter raised in representations.
158. The adequacy of proposed on-site parking is a matter raised in representations. It is considered that the proposed 34 place car park, including provision for disability car parking would be satisfactory for the operational needs of a 315 place school and 39 place nursery. Appropriate turning for service vehicles is made in the design. Disability parking would be provided close to the entrance to the school building and is appropriately located. Recommended Condition 28 requires the timely provision of car parking and servicing areas. The provision of an additional four parking spaces in proposed Phase 2 when the school would expand to 420 places would be proportionate to the increase in staff.

159. A lack of parking for parents on the site has been identified at Paragraph 123 k). The provision of on-site parent parking would be likely to intensify use of Keeper's Close and Broad Valley Drive at the start and end of the school day, and provision of a parking facility on the school site would be likely to encourage parents to drive to school, contrary to sustainable travel objectives. The school has not been designed to accommodate parent traffic and the access drive adjacent to the southern site boundary, which incorporates a waiting/passing place at each end, would not allow the simultaneous movement of two-way traffic.
160. Allowing parents to drive onto the site would potentially increase risk of conflict between pedestrians and vehicles. The provision of bollards along the access road adjacent to properties on The Spinney to separate vehicular traffic from pedestrian movement in Phase 1 and cyclists from pedestrians in Phase 1A and Phase 2 is welcomed. The proposed site layout and the proposed provision of 43 covered cycle parking spaces would encourage cycling as a mode of school travel. The proposed location of cycling parking is considered to be satisfactory for both children, staff and visitors. The need for additional covered cycle spaces is proposed as an objective of a School Travel Plan (Condition 14 I)).
161. It has been suggested by the Parish Council and in representations at Paragraph 122 m) and 123 p) that the existing school field or car park could be made available for 'park and stride'. However, for those parents choosing to drive to School Walk it is considered that there would be sufficient and more convenient on-street parking available closer to the footpath leading to Hill Road. Whilst the existing school site is in the control of the County Council it does not form part of the planning application site and a requirement to make the existing school available for car parking in the short term could not be made the subject of a planning condition. The provision of a car parking area at the junction of Hill Road/Coronation and Moor Road for parent parking would be remote from the school and more convenient on-street parking would be available nearer to the school entrance.
162. A lack of gritting on Broad Valley Drive and Keeper's Close has been raised in representations (Paragraphs 119 b) and 124 c)) and has been referred to NCC Highways. It is not County Council policy to grit school entrances. However, requests made to add roads to gritting routes would be assessed against criteria, and would need to comply with the relevant NCC Highways policy. Motorists would need to exercise the usual caution when driving on un-gritted roads.
163. The amenity impacts of traffic are considered at Paragraphs 169 – 174 of the report.
- Phase 1A
164. The applicant has explained that a key need for an enlarged school is to provide pupil places for early arrivals from new housing development locally, including that to be built accessed from Moor Road once planning issues related to S106 contributions are resolved and planning permission is granted. The emerging Gedling Local Plan proposes to allocate land immediately to the north of the

proposed school site for housing, and Phase 1A of the application proposes pedestrian and vehicular access to the north of the school once a satisfactory access from Moor Road is provided.

165. With children from new housing entering the school at any age group, the school will only see an exponential growth beyond the initial 210 places as new properties are occupied. The existing highway network has been assessed as having adequate capacity for a 315 place school without the need for access from Moor Road, but the applicant's expressed intention to provide access from the north as soon as satisfactory access can be achieved is welcome. Detailed proposals are presented in the plans for Phase 1A (Plan 17). The provision of segregated pedestrian and vehicular access points to the school are considered to be satisfactory. The applicant will need to work with Gedling Borough Council and a future house builder to ensure that proposed residential development accommodates the points of access to the school and will be able to reinforce that point when commenting on a future planning application for housing development submitted to Gedling Borough Council.
166. An approval of the proposals in Phase 1A through a grant of planning permission would be a material consideration for Gedling Borough Council to consider in determining a planning application for residential development. Phase 1A offers the opportunity to create a pedestrian through-route linking new development with the old village with the school well placed at the centre of an expanded settlement, and it is considered that achieving good connectivity in the village would be given significant weight.
167. Once the school can be accessed from the north, there may be a reduction in the number of vehicles parking on the existing highway network. A new residential estate road close to the school would allow more convenient access to the school involving shorter walking distances to the school entrance gate. While parents driving children to and from school is not to be encouraged the greater convenience offered through easier access may lead to a noticeable change in parking behaviour. It is considered that there will continue to be a need for the measures proposed in the suggested Traffic Regulation Order, but there will also be a need to introduce a School Zone on the highway near the new access points to the north of the school site (Condition 32).
168. The applicant has confirmed that once the school can be accessed from the north there would no longer be a need for the vehicular access to be used to access the school other than for playing field maintenance or emergency access. This intention is reinforced by recommended Condition 36.

Amenity Impact – Traffic and Movement

169. GRLP Saved Policy ENV1 *Development Criteria* will allow development that would not have a significant adverse effect on the amenities of adjoining occupiers or the locality in general by reason of the level of traffic generated (amongst other criteria). The proposed development would provide a community use compatible in a residential area. However, the development will attract cars to the highway network near the school, which is acknowledged through the draft proposals for a Traffic Regulation Order.

170. The impacts of on-street parking are likely to be dispersed over the wider residential area. On-street parking may become an inconvenience to residents but it is considered that the parking of cars on the public highway for relatively short periods on weekdays during school terms at the beginning and end of the school day in accordance with any relevant parking restriction in force would not cause significant detriment to residential amenity such that permission should be refused. It is considered that the related highway impacts would not unacceptably alter the character of area although the impact of on-street parking may extend further afield.
171. An Interim School Travel Plan has been submitted which is considered to satisfactorily identify relevant sustainable school travel issues. Implementation of a School Travel Plan can deliver sustainable benefits and also reduce the impact of a school on the amenity of residents living close by, for example by encouraging parents to be considerate when parking. Recommended Conditions 12-15 would require the submission of a completed Travel Plan within three months of the school first being brought into use, and within 12 months, to submit an annual report with a further report to be submitted for a minimum period of five years and until Travel Plan targets have been met. Recommended Condition 14 includes a requirement to actively engage with local residents in promoting sustainable travel initiatives in the development of the School Travel Plan, annual review and any subsequent School Travel Plan Review (Note 1).
172. It is reported at Paragraph 123 k) that the suggested Traffic Regulation Order school start and finish time parking restrictions would not apply to school events outside normal school hours. Proactive work by the school will be able to minimise the worst impacts of school events and is included as a target of the School Travel Plan (Condition 14 g)).
173. Accessing the school from Moor Road will change the way in which the school is accessed and there will be a need to review the School Travel Plan. A further revision of the School Travel Plan will be required once the school expands to 420 pupil places in Phase 2 and is incorporated in recommended Conditions 12-15.
174. Members will need to consider whether the proposed phased development and changes to the character of the local area that may occur would give rise to such harm as to outweigh the presumption that school development should be supported, as expressed in the NPPF and the letter from the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (Appendix 1).

Public Footpaths

175. Public footpaths on the approach to the school are lit and provide good links to the proposed Phase 1 pedestrian entrance. Through further discussion with NCC Rights of Way Team it has been confirmed that footpath improvements would be desirable rather than essential to the acceptability of the proposal, and to require the improvement of footpaths as a planning condition would not meet the tests for conditions in NPPF Paragraph 206. There may be an opportunity

for NCC Rights of Way Team to pursue the feasibility of enhancing the footpath network in the village through the Local Transport Plan.

176. Works to provide the vehicular access to the school in Phase 1 would cross FP1 and the construction haul route from Moor Road would be along the route of FP3. Whilst concern is raised in representations about works crossing a public footpath (Paragraph 122 n) and 123 h)), the works can be managed safely in accordance with appropriate Highway Orders. The applicant is advised to liaise with NCC Rights of Way Team over the temporary closure or diversion of public footpaths which may be required (Note 2 and Note 6).
177. Although safety concerns have been raised in representations, the point at which paths would cross routes used by vehicles the paths would be raised to give priority to pedestrian users, and is considered to be acceptable. The crossing points would be designed in accordance with details to be submitted in compliance with recommended Condition 26.
178. Concern is raised that the school will lead to increased littering (Paragraph 123 w)). Whilst littering would not necessarily occur as a direct consequence of the development, increased incidence of littering is a matter that may best be addressed by child and parental education through the school newsletter. There is no link between the proposed development and fly-tipping, and should be given little weight in the determination of the application.

Heritage Impact

179. Designated and non-designated heritage assets have been satisfactorily identified in compliance with NPPF Paragraph 128. The proposed development would not impact on views to and from, and the setting of Bestwood Village Conservation Area or the Scheduled Ancient Monument and Listed Buildings at Bestwood Country Park. There is some archaeological potential on the site and it is recommended that work is carried out in accordance with a programme of archaeological monitoring of groundworks (Condition 16).
180. The existing Bestwood Hawthorne Primary School would be vacated as a consequence of the development. Consideration needs to be given to the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation. It is considered that the applicant has provided suitable evidence to demonstrate why the existing school would no longer be viable to serve the needs of an expanding community. There is a risk that the vacated school may become redundant. NPPF Paragraph 134 advises 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, including securing its optimum viable use*. It is considered that the application demonstrates clear public benefits to balance against the potential harm which may arise from vacating the site. However, a robust mechanism needs to be put in place to safeguard the future of the heritage asset. If an alternative NCC user cannot be identified, a satisfactory disposal strategy for the existing school sites which would include the preparation of a planning brief in consultation with Gedling Borough Council is recommended (Condition 43), and would be

consistent with the strategy proposed by the applicant in the Heritage statement supporting the application.

Landscape Impact and Built Development

181. The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment supporting the application identifies that significant 'Major' and 'Moderate' effects will be experienced by only a limited number of receptors such as users of public footpaths within 400m and residents directly adjoining the site. Footpath users will experience a change in view along only a portion of FP1 with views filtered by the topography and vegetation along the adjacent field boundary.
182. In considering the proposal on its own, planting along the western and northern boundaries has the potential to significantly filter and soften views of the development so as not to appear incongruous when viewed against the backdrop of the existing settlement. In the context of development planned on the allocated land (H12) of the emerging Part 2 Local Plan, housing development to the north will comprehensively change the character and views of the development as the school will stand in a residential setting. In the longer term it is concluded that the proposed Primary School would not be out of character with a new urban setting.
183. ACS Policy 10 *Design and Enhancing Local Identity* (amongst other criteria) requires development to make a positive contribution to the public realm; create an attractive, safe, inclusive and healthy environment; be adaptable to changing needs; and reflect the need to reduce the dominance of motor vehicles. Development should be assessed in terms of massing, scale and proportion; materials, style and detailing, impact on neighbouring occupiers; reducing opportunities for crime; and the potential impact on important views and the setting heritage assets. GRLP Saved Policy ENV1 *Development Criteria* will allow development that is of a high standard of design and does not adversely affect the area by reason of its scale, bulk, form, layout or materials; and would not have a significant adverse effect on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers by reason of the level (amongst other criteria).
184. Although the proposed school would be of two storey construction the development would be sited at a lower level within the site, on a plateau in part cut into rising ground. The scale, siting and massing of the building is considered to be acceptable with views from The Spinney filtered by the retained hedge and proposed trees and areas of dense planting. Having regard to the elevated position of the building the man-safe system set back from the roof edge would not be visually prominent. However the roof would be visible when viewed from higher ground at Keeper's Close, but at a distance of 120m any installations on the roof would not significantly detract from residential amenity.
185. The predominant use of facing brick and render panels on external elevations is considered to be appropriate. A condition is recommended to require samples of facing and other materials to be submitted for approval (Condition 10).
186. It is suggested in representations (Paragraph 123 s)) that the building could be sited in an alternative location further from properties on The Spinney. Whilst the

building could be re-sited it would be to higher ground. Siting the building on the lowest part of the site closest, but at an acceptable distance from existing development, minimises its visual impact on open land to the north and east.

187. The applicant has submitted sections that illustrate a satisfactory relationship between the school and properties on The Spinney with views from upper floor classrooms filtered by trees. At a distance of approximately 45m between the closest facing windows and the planting mitigation proposed, it is considered that the use of first floor rooms would not give rise to unacceptable loss of privacy from overlooking.
188. The provision of defined paths and hard play areas, along with grassed areas and the proposed playing field would be consistent with school design and setting. A specification for proposed tree planting and general landscaping of the site, including a programme of maintenance, is the subject of recommended Condition 24 and Condition 35. The proposed development is considered to accord with ACS Policy 10 *Design and Enhancing Local Identity* and GRLP Saved Policy ENV1 *Development Criteria* in terms of scale, density, massing, height, and layout in relation to neighbouring buildings and planned development in the area.

Outdoor Sports Provision and Privacy

189. Suitable provision would be made for outdoor sport for a school of up to 420 places. Having regard to the significant falls across the site two plateaux would be formed, cut into rising ground with the excavated material used to raise site levels. Ground levels in the south-west corners of each pitch would be either 2.0m or 3.0m above existing ground level which raises the potential for activities on that part of each playing field to give rise to loss of privacy from overlooking properties. The provision of strategic dense planting will over time filter and screen views while fencing would screen against potential overlooking while planting becomes established. The submission of a specification for timber fencing is the subject of recommended Condition 22 b).
190. Playing pitches will need to be constructed at suitable gradients as well as drained, and the submission of a construction specification is recommended (Condition 25).
191. As the level of the path leading to the school once inside the school gate would rise relative to existing ground level, there is potential for loss of privacy to occupiers of 23-25 The Spinney (Section Y-Y Plan 6 and Plan 16), an issue raised in representations at Paragraph 123 t). In Phase 1 the path would be the main access route to the school, and could be used as an area for parent assembly at the end of the school day. The threat to privacy can be satisfactorily addressed in several ways, for example by fixing boarding to the inside of the school fence at eye-level to preclude views over neighbouring property. Detail of how this can be achieved has not been finalised, and would be a matter reserved by planning condition (Condition 30).

Noise

192. The outdoor play area for older year groups would be provided to the east and south of the new school building. Whilst the mass of the building structure will screen the nearest residential receptors on The Spinney from noise there is potential for noise nuisance to arise from activity to the south of the building. The nursery and reception outdoor play areas would be to the west of the building and may also be a source of noise nuisance. The outdoor play areas to the west and south of the building would be elevated relative to existing ground level. Whilst tree and other planting may filter views or obstruct line of sight, physical mitigation in the form of proposed fencing is considered to be acceptable in compliance with GRLP Saved Policy ENV1 *Development Criteria* which will allow development that would not have a significant impact on the amenities of adjoining occupiers by reason of the level of activities on the site. A specification to demonstrate the acoustic qualities of proposed fencing adjacent to areas of outdoor hard play will be required (Condition 22 b)). In addition, noise generated by site activities outside of school operational times should be controlled in the interest of residential amenity (Condition 40 and Condition 41).
193. Activity on grass pitches may also be a potential source of noise nuisance but is likely to be less frequent. It is considered that the proposed installation of fencing while adjacent planting becomes established would satisfactorily mitigate noise impact. Once planting is established and fencing is no longer required to address visual impact, following the monitoring of activity on the playing fields the impact of noise can be assessed to see if fencing needs to be retained. (Condition 31).
194. A condition is recommended to control noise generated by fixed plant (Condition 42).

Ecology and Lighting

195. NPPF Paragraph 109 advises that *the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment byminimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible*. Existing trees and hedgerows, other than where the hedgerow needs to be removed to accommodate access, would be retained and where required reinforced through additional planting. The application has been amended to propose bat boxes integrated into the fabric of the building, and bird boxes for identified target species in accordance with the recommendation of NCC Ecology and are considered to be acceptable.
196. Planning conditions are recommended to restrict vegetation clearance during the bird nesting season (Condition 4); and to require the submission of a detailed landscaping scheme (Condition 24 and Condition 35). Measures to safeguard against risk to mammals during construction are also required (Condition 8 f)).
197. Proposed external lighting will need to be designed with low level light spillage so as not to adversely impact on bats, and lighting proposals will need to be

designed to comply with Institute of Lighting Professionals *Guidance for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light* (environmental zone E2 – Rural) (Condition 11).

Drainage and Contamination

198. The inclusion of additional land within the red line application site beyond the proposed school boundary allows flexibility for the routeing and connection of off-site drainage. Subject to the approval of Severn Trent Water a foul drainage connection to Hill Road, the public footpath leading to The Spinney, or alternatively a connection to a new road which may be constructed from Moor Road would be acceptable in principle (Condition 20).
199. The potential for surface water flooding has been raised in representations (Paragraph 123 x)). The proposed discharge of surface water to ground via on-site attenuation is a sustainable means of surface water disposal. Should further investigations reveal that the use of soakaways is not practicable, subject to the approval of Severn Trent Water a connection to a surface water drainage system will be required. A detailed scheme of surface water drainage has not been finalised and will need to be designed to not cause increased flood risk. The timing of the construction of housing on the adjacent land accessed from Moor Road may allow a connection to be made to the surface water scheme serving that development. The submission of a detailed scheme of surface water drainage, which will need to safeguard against pollution of the underlying aquifer in compliance with GRLP Policy 42 *Aquifer Protection*, is the subject of recommended Condition 21.
200. There will be the potential for incidence of flooding during the period of construction before proposed site drainage is in place and is addressed by the proposed surface water drainage condition (Condition 21a)).
201. A precautionary approach towards unexpected contamination which may be encountered is the subject of recommended Condition 9.

Security

202. ACS Policy 10 *Design and Enhancing Local Identity* encourages development to reduce opportunities for crime and to promote safer living environments. GRLP Saved Policy ENV1 *Development Criteria* will allow development that (amongst other criteria) would incorporate crime prevention measures in terms of good levels of lighting and natural surveillance.
203. The school would be enclosed by security fencing, and outdoor teaching spaces for the nursery and reception classrooms would be fenced to provide enclosed play spaces. Existing pedestrian routes to the proposed school are lit and proposed CCTV would provide surveillance of entrances to the school building. A condition is recommended to require that CCTV does not allow surveillance of adjoining residential property (Condition 39).
204. Concern has been raised in representations (Paragraph 123 v)) that the rear of properties on The Spinney next to the new school will not be secure. The Phase

2 proposals would open a public access route linking the existing village and new residential development to the north which would be lit. It is considered that the existing boundary hedge, existing property fencing and supplementary planting would provide satisfactory security to adjacent properties.

205. With reference to the security of boundaries adjoining the existing public footpath raised in representations, whilst there would be more people using the footpath network increased usage by pedestrians would not erode the security of adjoining property.
206. Although the Police Crime Liaison Officer has not provided a consultation response, it is considered that the provision of site CCTV would be satisfactory and comply with ACS Policy 10 *Design and Enhancing Local Identity* and GRLP Saved Policy ENV1 *Development Criteria*.

Sustainability

207. The Sustainability statement accompanying the application explains that the school building would incorporate high levels of insulation, a heat recovery and passive ventilation strategy, and a heating system with temperature and time controls. The building has been designed to give even levels of daylight in rooms reducing the need for artificial lighting and reducing energy use. Low/zero carbon technologies are to be incorporated where required to meet the requirements of the Building Regulations and water consumption will be reduced through the use of PIR controlled taps and low flush toilets. In summary it is considered that the proposed building design satisfactorily demonstrates the sustainable characteristics of the proposed building.
208. Sustainability goes beyond the built structure, and the location of the school on the public footpath network is likely to encourage walking to school. At a strategic level, the school would sit centrally within an enlarged Bestwood Village community taking account of potential future housing development to the north of the village. Phase 2 of the application proposes an expansion of the school to 420 places and would offer a single site solution to primary school place provision for the expanded community.

Construction

209. The use of the existing farm access from Moor Road for construction would avoid the need for construction traffic to travel along Broad Valley Drive.
210. The formation of the short haul road between Westhouse Farm and the school site would be permitted development subject to the land being restored to its former condition once the construction works are complete. However, given the allocation of the land for housing proposed in the Part 2 Gedling Local Plan, it is considered reasonable to allow the haul road to be retained for a period of five years pending redevelopment of the site. The haul road would be unlikely to have a significant impact on the openness of the Green Belt, but the status of the land (which may be removed from the Green Belt as part of the emerging Gedling Local Plan), visual impact of any works undertaken and the prospect of

the land being developed as part of a residential scheme can be reviewed in considering the need for restoration of the site (Condition 17).

211. The provision of the vehicular access to the school from Keeper's Close would be able to be formed late in the construction programme, and the impact of traffic on residential amenity would be minimal. In the event that limited and reasonable construction access is required along Keeper's Close, it should be carried out in accordance with details that will have been previously agreed (Condition 18).
212. Construction work has the potential to generate significant levels of noise. Conditions are recommended to restrict hours of construction and to limit construction noise in the interest of the amenity of nearby occupiers. The submission of methods of working during the construction phase is the subject of recommended Condition 7 and Condition 8. Works for the construction of the road adjacent to the rear boundaries of 21-25 The Spinney may adversely impact on privacy and will need to be screened (Condition 8 e)). A mechanism for liaison with the community during construction is the subject of recommended Condition 8 g).
213. Construction works may require the temporary closure or diversion of affected public footpaths which would need to be carried out in consultation with NCC Rights of Way Team (Note 2 and Note 6).

Other Matters

214. It is suggested in representations that a footway should be provided on Moor Road between The Spinney and the access to residential development from Moor Road (Paragraph 123 g)). However, this would be a matter to be considered by Gedling Borough Council as part of a planning application for housing development.

Other Options Considered

215. The report relates to the determination of a planning application. Although the suitability of alternative sites for a school have been considered in the preparation of this planning application, and the timing/alternative means of access to the school has been raised in representations, the County Council is under a duty to consider the planning application as submitted.

Statutory and Policy Implications

216. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, the safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, and sustainability and the environment, and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate

consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Crime and Disorder Implications and Implications for Safeguarding of Children and Adults at Risk

217. The development would include perimeter security fencing, security lighting and CCTV. Fencing is proposed within the school perimeter to segregate areas and control access to areas used by the public and different school age groups.
218. Street lighting is already provided along public footpaths leading to the proposed school pedestrian entrance and offers a safer environment for travel to school.

Data Protection and Information Governance

219. All members of the public who have made representations on this application are informed that copies of their representations, including their names and addresses, are publically available and are retained for the period of the application and for a relevant period thereafter.

Financial Implications

220. The applicant has confirmed that the cost of off-site/highway works required in the making and implementation of a Traffic Regulation Order and provision of School Zones in Phase 1 and Phase 2 of development will be met by the project budget.

Human Rights Implications

221. Relevant issues arising out of consideration of the Human Rights Act have been assessed. Rights under Article 8 (Right to Respect for Private and Family Life), Article 1 of the First Protocol (Protection of Property) and Article 6.1 (Right to a Fair Trial) are those to be considered. The proposals have the potential to introduce impacts such as noise and disturbance from site activities and traffic on the nearby highway network. However, these potential impacts need to be balanced against the wider benefits the proposals would provide through the provision of school places to meet an identified imminent demand, and future school places that will arise from planned residential development. Members need to consider whether the benefits outweigh the potential impacts and reference should be made to the Observations section above in this consideration.

Implications for Sustainability and the Environment

222. These have been considered in the Observations section above.
223. There are no implications for Public Sector Equality, Human Resources or Service Users.

Statement of Positive and Proactive Engagement

224. In determining this application the County Planning Authority has worked positively and proactively with the applicant by entering into pre-application discussions; scoping of the application; assessing the proposals against relevant Development Plan policies; the National Planning Policy Framework, including the accompanying technical guidance and European Regulations. The County Planning Authority has identified all material considerations; forwarding consultation responses that may have been received in a timely manner; considering any valid representations received; liaising with consultees to resolve issues and progressing towards a timely determination of the application. Issues of concern have been raised with the applicant, such as impacts of access, traffic, drainage, noise, and potential threat to privacy which have been addressed through negotiation and acceptable amendments to the proposals. The applicant has been given advance sight of the draft planning conditions and the County Planning Authority has also engaged positively in publicising proposals suggested for a Traffic Regulation Order, albeit that the making of an Order would be subject to separate consultation and statutory procedure. This approach has been in accordance with the requirement set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

RECOMMENDATION

1. Subject to the application being referred to the Secretary of State in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009 and the Secretary of State deciding not to call in the application for his own determination, it is RECOMMENDED that planning permission is granted for the above development subject to the conditions set out in Appendix 2. Members need to consider the issues set out in the report and resolve accordingly.

ADRIAN SMITH

Corporate Director – Place

Constitutional Comments

Planning & Licensing Committee is the appropriate body to consider the contents of this report.

[RHC 05.04.2018]

Comments of the Service Director - Finance

The financial implications are set out in Paragraph 220 of the report.

[RWK 05.04.2018]

Background Papers Available for Inspection

The application file is available for public inspection by virtue of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985.

Electoral Divisions and Members Affected

Newstead Councillor Chris Barnfather

Hucknall North Councillor Ben Bradley

Report Author/Case Officer

David Marsh

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