

Delegated Officer Report

Planning Ref: 26/00155/FUL and 26/00161/LBC

Applicant: Mr M Frost

Ward: Ambien



Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

Site: The Dixie Grammar Junior School Temple Hall Farm Bosworth Road

Proposals:

26/0155/FUL: Partial change of use from F1(a) education to Class E (f) day nursery. To include formation of new doorways to side and rear elevation

26/00161/LBC: Formation of new doorways to side and rear elevation

1. Recommendations

1.1. Grant planning permission and listed building consent subject to:

- Planning conditions outlined at the end of this report

2. Planning application description

- 2.1. The application seeks to change the use of the ground floor of the Temple Hall building from Use Class F1(a) education to a Use Class E(f) day nursery associated with the existing Dixie Grammar Junior School which operates on the site. An existing nursery class (ages 3+) operates from the site within the wider educational facility; the proposal seeks to extend the age range of specific nursery care provided. A total of 50 nursery spaces are proposed.
- 2.2. No extensions are proposed to the floorspace of the building. Physical changes to the listed building comprise the formation of two external doors, one to the side and the other to the rear elevation, the replacement of internal doors and the erection of a demountable veranda.

3. Description of the site and surrounding area

- 3.1. The application site forms part of the wider Dixie Grammar Junior School which has operated from Temple Hall Farm site since 2000. The site was a former farm and the school operates from a number of converted farm buildings, alongside some purpose built educational buildings.
- 3.2. The site is accessed from Bosworth Road where there is a designated school entrance with school bus stop and pull in area. Parking is located to the front/south east of the site and to the rear/north.
- 3.3. The site is within the countryside, with agricultural land surrounding the site except for a mixed use commercial area to the immediate north west of the site and some sporadic housing to the west.
- 3.4. The area to be converted is the ground floor of Temple Hall which is a grade II listed building. The building is a late C18 farmhouse, it is a 3 storey, brick built building with 3 bays. The Farmhouse has been altered internally over time and most recently for the educational function as part of the Dixie Grammar School. The special interest and heritage significance of the listed building is derived from its history and the inherent built form of the original historic building which largely remains in the traditional character and appearance and materiality of its external elevations.

4. Relevant planning history

There have been many planning and/or listed building consent applications relating to the site and its use as a school, only the most relevant applications are listed below:

00/00221/FUL

- Conversion of farmhouse and outbuildings to provide accommodation for educational establishment, temporary buildings for additional classrooms and use of land for playing fields
- PER
- 16.08.2000

02/00116/FUL

- Creation of additional car parking and revised access arrangements
- REFUSED
- 18.07.2002

02/01309/FUL

- Creation of additional car parking and revised access arrangements (amended scheme) and erection of railings to the front of the building
- PER
- 24.04.2003

19/01314/FUL

- Erection of a single storey detached timber out-building to be used as an additional teaching classroom.
- PER
- 03.02.2020

5. Publicity

5.1. The application has been publicised by sending out letters to local residents. A site notice was also posted within the vicinity of the site and a notice was displayed in the local press.

5.2. No comments have been received

6. Consultation

6.1. Consultation responses have been received from:

HBBC Conservation Officer

No objections- The comments have been incorporated into the body of the report

Sheepy Parish Council

Neutral- The proposal appears to be in line with the Sheepy neighbourhood Plan, specifically Policy S17- Rural Economy. Nevertheless, the Parish Council raises concerns that if a change of use results in an increase of vehicular movements to and from the site, this may possibly become a road safety issue. The Parish Council refer to HBBC's knowledge in determining the LBC application.

Historic England (LBC Application)

Refers to the views of HBBCs specialist conservation and archaeological advisers.

7. Policy

7.1. Core Strategy (2009)

7.2. Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD (2016)

- Policy DM1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- Policy DM4: Safeguarding the Countryside and Settlement Separation
- Policy DM10: Development and Design
- Policy DM11: Protecting and Enhancing the Historic Environment
- Policy DM12: Heritage Assets
- Policy DM17: Highways and Transportation
- Policy DM18: Vehicle Parking Standards
- Policy DM25: Community Facilities

7.3. Sheepy Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2026

- Policy S1: Countryside
- Policy S7: Local Heritage Assets
- Policy S8: Design
- Policy S17: Rural Economy

7.4. National Planning Policies and Guidance

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024)
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

7.5. Other relevant guidance

- Good Design Guide (2020)
- National Design Guide (2019)

8. Appraisal

8.1. Key Issues

- Principle of Development
- Design and impact upon the character of the area and impact on heritage assets
- Impact upon neighbouring residential amenity
- Impact upon highway safety

Principle of Development

8.2 The site is located within the designated open countryside and is an existing education facility. The policies most relevant to the principle of development are therefore Policy DM4, DM17 and Policy DM25 of the SADMP and Policy S1 and S18 of the Sheepy Neighbourhood Plan (NP).

8.3 Development within the countryside is carefully controlled to ensure that, amongst other matters, the intrinsic character of the countryside is protected and that development is directed to sustainable locations. In this case the proposal is for the change of use of an existing building which complies in principle with Policy DM4 of the SADMP and Policies S1 and S17 of the Sheepy NP with the latter policy specifically supportive of small-scale business development through the conversion of existing buildings.

- 8.4 Policy DM25 seeks to resist the loss of community facilities. Whilst the proposal would result in the loss of some educational floorspace this would be absorbed elsewhere on the school site. Furthermore, it would be replaced with nursery provision within an educational setting. The application confirms that the nursery would be ancillary to the existing Dixie Grammar School ensuring that the educational setting and facilities are retained in compliance with the intent of Policy DM25.
- 8.5 Policy DM25 supports the provision of community facilities across the borough, however, to reduce reliance on the private car, where new facilities are to be established it should be demonstrated that they are accessible to the community. Similarly, Policy DM17 seeks to ensure development is located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised. The application site is not in a sustainable location, and sustainable transport options are very limited. Furthermore, owing to the nature of the proposal it is likely that future users will be heavily reliant on private vehicles to access the site as is the case for the existing education facility.
- 8.6 Notwithstanding this, the existing use of the site is a key material consideration. Throughout the course of the application, it has been confirmed that the existing nursery class operates at a capacity of between 32 to 34 children. This aligns with the original planning consent in 2000. The proposal would therefore see an increase of between 16-18 children to reach a maximum capacity of 50 places. In terms of staff, the application form states there are 4 existing nursery class staff members. The proposal would generate an additional 6 new full-time employees. The applicant has stated that: "While the school are proposing new nursery staff, the school's overall staff numbers have actually decreased recently due to wider demographic and sector shifts (lower birth rates and the impact of VAT on independent school fees) and have seen a reduction of 3 teaching positions at the site. Furthermore, 4 admin staff who were previously based at the Junior School have relocated permanently to the Senior School site in Market Bosworth. This reduction offsets the new nursery staff..."
- 8.7 Whilst the additional number of staff travelling to the site would be negligible compared to the existing scenario the proposal would see an increase in vehicle movements through the increased capacity in nursery spaces. However, this is not judged to be significant in comparison to the existing scenario, nor in the context of the existing established school on site when also considering the likelihood of shared trips. Therefore, whilst the proposal does not strictly accord with Policy DM17, the site-specific circumstances mitigate this harm to an acceptable degree.
- 8.8 There is a need to ensure that the nursery remains ancillary to the Dixie Grammar Junior School to ensure that it does not prejudice the ongoing use of the educational facilities and that some linked movements are maintained. A condition is recommended to this effect. Furthermore, this application has been assessed based on a maximum capacity of 50 nursery places, which has been judged to be acceptable in sustainability terms. An increase in nursery places could have a greater impact and may not be acceptable in principle, therefore a condition is also recommended limiting the nursery spaces to 50.

Design and impact upon the character of the area and heritage assets

- 8.9 External works to facilitate the development would consist of replacing an existing timber framed casement window on the rear elevation with a double door and inserting a new single door within the side elevation. These works would result in the loss of a very limited amount of brick masonry to create new or extended openings and the loss of one historic window. The new doors are a traditional oak material and have a character and architectural detailing (including a segmental header for the

new door) that matches the fenestration across the wider building. The impact from this aspect of the proposal is considered to be negligible with the significance of the listed building being preserved and would not have a negative impact on the character of the wider area.

- 8.10 It is also proposed to erect a rectangular plan veranda positioned off the side elevation of the original Farmhouse and fronting a later (likely 19th century) single storey extension. The veranda is proposed to provide a covered amenity area to serve the function of the ground floor, which could be accessed via an existing door in the extension and the proposed new door in the side elevation. The veranda would consist of a powder coated aluminium framed structure, finished in anthracite grey, with a toughened clear glass roof of a shallow pitch. The veranda would be of a modest scale and footprint, set well back from the front building line of the original Farmhouse and side elevation of the extension, and set below the projecting brick course on the side elevation of the original Farmhouse which marks the transition between ground and first floors. The frame for the veranda is predominantly a lightweight structure proposed to abut up to the Farmhouse and extension with a small amount of mechanical fixings into the masonry only, ensuring physical impacts are very limited. It would also be open to its sides allowing for the historic elevations of the Farmhouse and extension to remain visible and their associated significance to remain discernible and not compromised by the proposed structure. The veranda is considered to be of an appropriate scale, layout, form and materials as to ensure its impact is negligible and that the significance of the listed building being preserved. Owing to its siting and appropriate design this element would also respect the character of the wider area.
- 8.11 Internal works to facilitate the change would be limited to replacing the doors throughout the ground floor. The current doors are a solid oak material with a six panelled design and painted various colours. They most likely date from the mid-20th century and whilst are of a character appropriate to the building they are of limited heritage interest in their own right. It is proposed to replace these doors with vertical planked solid and stable style oak doors, which are fire rated to protect the new function within the rooms. The replacement doors would be of a traditional material and of a style that generally reflects the rural character and historic use of the building. The impact from this aspect of the proposal is considered to be neutral with the significance of the listed building being preserved.
- 8.12 Therefore, overall, and for the above reasons it is considered that the proposed works, comprising of formation of new external doorways, replacement internal doors, and the erection of a veranda, would be compatible with and preserve the significance of the grade II listed building Temple Hall and respect the character of the surrounding area. Consequently, the proposal would comply with Policies DM10, DM11 and DM12 of the SADMP, Policies S7 and DM8 of the Sheepy NP, section 16 of the NPPF and the statutory duties of sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Impact upon neighbouring residential amenity

- 8.13 Owing to the existing nature of the site, the scale of the proposal and the sites distance from residential properties, the proposed development would not lead to adverse residential amenity impacts and would accord with policy DM10 of the SADMP.

Impact upon highway safety

- 8.14 The proposed development would seek to utilise the existing access arrangements off Bosworth Road. The LHA have not been consulted as part of this application and additional information with regards to the potential intensification of the use of the site and parking areas has been sought and submitted during the application.
- 8.15 Paragraph 8.6 of this report sets out the likely increase in children and staff numbers. The LPA are satisfied that owing to the modest increase the development would not significantly intensify the use of the access compared to existing use.
- 8.16 Following a request for additional information the applicant's agent has provided a parking plan and further information regarding onsite parking. This confirms that that the staff parking location will change from the front of the site to the rear. The existing staff/visitor parking area to the front of the site will be utilised as a car park for reception and nursery parents and visitors.
- 8.17 The agent has stated *"Turning to the staggered parent drop-off and pick-up windows, the main school peak drop-off and pick-up times are 08:30 and 15:30 / 16:30 (depending on After School Clubs). Conversely, nursery parents will heavily utilise the extended day offering between 07:30 to 18:00. As such, nursery drop-offs will predominantly occur between 07:30 and 08:30 (before school peak) and pick-ups will mostly happen after 16:30 (after school peak) and this naturally dilutes overall traffic movements and flows. To ensure there is zero overspill onto the public highway, there is existing overflow parking available on the school field, as per the attached illustrative parking plan"*.
- 8.18 The proposal would result in additional parking demand, however, following receipt of the additional information and parking plan officers are satisfied that there is sufficient parking across the school site as a whole. The submitted information and assessment further reinforces the need for a condition limiting the number of nursery spaces and requiring that the nursery remains ancillary to the school to ensure that the fluid and sufficient parking arrangements are available for the nursery.
- 8.19 Subject to conditions requiring compliance with the parking plan, limiting the number of nursery spaces to 50 and that it remains ancillary to the school the development is considered to accord with Policies DM17 and DM18 of the SADMP and the relevant provisions of the NPPF.

9. Equality implications

- 9.1 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 created the public sector equality duty. Section 149 states:-
- (1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
 - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 9.2 Officers have taken this into account and given due regard to this statutory duty in the consideration of this application. The Committee must also ensure the same when determining this planning application.

9.3 There are no known equality implications arising directly from this development.

10. Conclusion

10.1. As outlined within the report, subject to the imposition of conditions and despite the unsustainable location of the site, the proposals are judged to accord with policies DM4, DM10, DM11, DM12, DM17, DM18 and DM25 of the SADMP, policies S1, S7, S8 and S17 of the Sheepy Neighbourhood Plan and the NPPF 2024.

11. Conditions and Reasons

Full Application:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the submitted application details:

- Site Location Plan
- New External Door Detail Drg. No. 01
- Proposed Door Schedule for Replacement Internal Doors Drg. No. DS/1
- Replacement External Door Specification
- Proposed Ground Floor Plan Drg. No. 03 Rev A
- Proposed Elevations Drg. No. 04 Rev A
- Illustrative Parking Plan

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory form of development in accordance with Policies DM1, DM10, DM11 and DM12 of the adopted Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2016), Policies S7 and S8 of the Sheepy Neighbourhood Plan (2022) and the overall principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

3. The development shall be used for a day nursery only and for no other purpose, including any other purpose in Class E of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking or reenacting that Order with or without modification.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development is compatible with the existing development in the locality in accordance with Policy DM4, DM10 and DM25 of the adopted Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2016), Policy S1 of the Sheepy Neighbourhood Plan (2022) and the overall principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

4. The nursery shall provide no more than 50 places for children and shall remain ancillary to The Dixie Grammar Junior School and shall not be sold or let indecently from The Dixie Grammar Junior School as a day nursery.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety, to ensure that the development is compatible with the existing educational facility and surrounding countryside and that it does not give rise to unacceptable vehicular movements in an unsustainable location in accordance with Policy DM4, DM17, DM18 and DM25 of the adopted Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2016) and the overall principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

Listed Building Consent Application:

1. The works to which this consent relates shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.

Reason: To conform with Section 18(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the submitted application details:

- Site Location Plan
- New External Door Detail Drg. No. 01
- Proposed Door Schedule for Replacement Internal Doors Drg. No. DS/1
- Replacement External Door Specification
- Proposed Ground Floor Plan Drg. No. 03 Rev A
- Proposed Elevations Drg. No. 04 Rev A

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory form of development in accordance with Policies DM1, DM10, DM11 and DM12 of the adopted Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2016), Policies S7 and S8 of the Sheepy Neighbourhood Plan (2022), the overall principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), and the statutory duty of Sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

11.1. Notes to applicant

- Building Regs