

SOUTH AND WEST PLANS PANEL

THURSDAY, 27TH OCTOBER, 2022

PRESENT: Councillor E Taylor in the Chair

Councillors B Anderson, C Campbell,
S Hamilton, D Ragan, T Smith, J Bowden,
J Garvani and N Walshaw

SITE VISITS

Councillors B Anderson, C Campbell, S Hamilton, T Smith, and E Taylor attended the site visit earlier in the day.

49 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals against the refusal of inspection of documents.

50 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There were no exempt items.

51 Late Items

There were no formal late items.

52 Declarations of Interests

Members did not declare any interests at the meeting.

53 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors J Heselwood and R Finnigan.

54 Minutes - 29 September 22

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held Thursday, 29th September 2020 be approved as an accurate record.

55 22/04149/FU - Guiseley School, Fieldhead Road, Guiseley

The report of the Chief Planning Officer presented an application for a proposed 2.4m high perimeter fencing to existing school playing fields and five gates for access and maintenance, Guiseley School, Fieldhead Road, Guiseley.

Reference was made to a further representation submitted on behalf of Councillors Alderson and Wadsworth expressing their views that the proposed site is an open area of land utilised by the community for activities such as

walking and jogging. They raised concerns regarding advertisement methods and given that there are two applications on this site relating to proposed development on Guiseley School playing fields, many of the concerns expressed towards this application are linked to amenity, car parking, light pollution and noise nuisance are also relevant. A request was made that the application be deferred until the application for the 3G pitch is ready for determination. However, should the application before Panel members go ahead, it was requested that a condition be implemented that the gates remain open on evenings and weekends for public use.

It was confirmed that there is a pending application for use of a 3G pitch with floodlighting, however, this is a separate application to be determined on its own planning merits.

Photographs and slides were shown throughout the presentation, and the officer in attendance provided Panel members with the following information:

- The applicant has cited safeguarding as well as health and safety reasons as their justification to enclose these playing pitches. There has also been an increase in SEND pupils attending the school.
- The application site is located north-west of the main school campus. To the north, the site is adjacent to Green Meadows Academy and to the east, the site adjoins the rear of the residential properties fronting Aldersyde Road. A designated footpath separates the wider school site which runs along its south-eastern boundary with Fieldhead Drive to the south-west and Bradford Road to the west with housing beyond.
- The boundary treatment proposed is a green weld mesh solution which is common for schools and its height and design is typical of the DfE's standard requirement for such works.
- The footpath from Fieldhead is unaffected by the proposals.
- In relation to the western boundary, which runs parallel with Bradford Road and where the site is adjacent to part of the Tranmere Park Conservation Area, the school field is markedly lower than the adjacent public highway and the stone wall; the change in land levels the fence will be partly visible from human level when viewed from Bradford Road.
- The proposed fence would be positioned a considerable distance away from the nearest dwellings and in any event is separated by either trees or vegetation and on the western part of the site.
- The site is allocated as greenspace in the Site Allocations Plan (SAP) with a typology of outdoor sports and designated as protective playing pitches.
- The fence will be set back by 2-3m, presenting an opportunity to introduce tree planting which will provide further screening. Additionally, the fence is set back by 6m from the nearest residential properties, which is considered sufficient distance away to protect visual amenity.
- There is an existing Community Use Agreement on site which has been in place since 2019 and this will be unaffected by the proposals and the site will remain accessible to the community but in a more structured way.

The objector in attendance at the meeting raised his concerns regarding the impact on climate change and flood mitigation on the proposed site. The objector believed that the application before Panel members is interrelated with the separate application for the proposed 3G pitch. The objector was not satisfied with how the Council have dealt with community contributions on the proposed application and was of the opinion that the proposals are detrimental to peoples wellbeing, by restricting use of the community for outdoor activities.

Supporters in attendance at the meeting reiterated that the proposed height for the fencing meets DfE standards, and no vegetation is proposed to be lost, as well as there being an opportunity for additional landscaping. It was confirmed that Guiseley School privately own the playing fields and the school want to improve safeguarding measures during PE lessons and extra curriculum activities. The works will help reduce anti-social activities, disturbance, litter and prevent dog fouling. There have also been 3 instances of an intruder in the last 2 years, and the works will help mitigate further issues. Due to resource implications, it has become more difficult for the school and its staff to mitigate the risks associated with the issues the school have been faced with because of not having a secure boundary.

In response to questions from Panel members, the following was confirmed:

- It is not possible to reduce the space inside the permitter fencing as these spaces are required to provide run off space for pupils when partaking in activities on the pitches.
- The school has consulted with the community in line with the Councils Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) as well as leaflet dropping and holding discussions with school governors regarding plans for the proposals.
- The fence conforms with DfE standards. The school didn't consider alternative treatment measures such as enlarging hedges / retaining walls as these suggested alternatives do not comply with DfE standards.

In response to questions from Panel members, officers confirmed the following:

- There are no forthcoming applications associated with the site that affect the proposals before Panel members. It was confirmed that the determination of the application before Panel members is not connected to any other application, and the decision will not impact upon future considerations for other applications. In addition to this, it was confirmed that the application is should be determined by Panel members without any further delay. The application is to be considered on its own planning merits and there are safeguarding issues currently and any delays may add to those risks.
- The school require a secure perimeter boundary, and the 2.4m fence is a standard recommendation by DfE and is often found in greenbelt areas and conservation areas. It was of the opinion of officers that a

hedge will not achieve a high level of security required for the schools pupils.

- There are 2 access points to the school.
- The existing Community Use Agreement cannot be amended, only through further permissions and a variation to the planning agreement. It was confirmed that the agreement is legally controlled and can be enforced. Officers explained that it would be unnecessary to re-condition the agreement through this application for a perimeter fence.

The officer recommendation as set out in the submitted report, was moved by Councillor N Walshaw, and then seconded by Councillor D Ragan. Members continued to comment on the proposals before them highlighting that:

- A number of members believed that the playing fields should remain open on evenings and weekends. However, some members were of the opinion that the gates should remain shut for safeguarding issues.
- A suggestion was put forward that bins are placed around the application site as this may mitigate littering issues.
- Concern that alternative treatments will not keep pupils with special educational needs and disabilities safe.
- It was acknowledged that there hasn't previously been a need for the school to use the Community Use Agreement as the school is still currently under construction but once the fence is erected, the community can access the site but in a more structured manner.

Councillor C Campbell put forward a suggestion to amend the original motion put forward by Councillor Walshaw, and in doing so suggested that the officer recommendation be tweaked so that in relation to the western boundary of the proposed site, a more appropriate treatment be considered, as well as improvements to the hedge line. The amendment to the motion was seconded by Councillor B Anderson.

Councillor N Walshaw (original motion mover) did not agree with the amended proposal to his motion as he believed this did not provide a sufficient barrier for the proposed site.

The Panel proceeded to vote on the amended motion proposed by Cllr Campbell, and this was not supported. A vote was then taken on the original motion moved by Cllr Walshaw as originally proposed to support the officer recommendation. It was then **RESOLVED** – To grant permission.

56 Date and time of the next meeting

The date and time of the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 24th November 2022 at 13:30.

The meeting concluded at 14:55.