

**Land south and east
of Adastral Park**
Suffolk

Education Statement

March 2017



Land south and east of Adastral Park

Outline application for up to 2,000 dwellings, an employment area of c0.6ha (use Class B1), primary local centre (comprising use Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, C3, D1 and D2), secondary centre (comprising possible use Classes A1, A3, A5 and D2), a school, green infrastructure (including Suitable Accessible Natural Green Space (SANGS)), outdoor play areas, sports ground and allotments/community orchards), public footpaths and cycleways, vehicle accesses and associated infrastructure

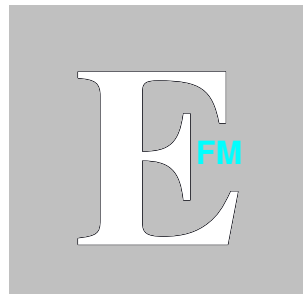
Education Strategy Report

for

Carlyle Land Ltd and CEG

Version 1 – March 2017

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 EFM has been appointed by Carlyle Land Ltd and CEG (the Applicant) to advise on education (school place planning) matters arising from its proposals for development on land south and east of Adastral Park. Suffolk Coastal District Council (“the Council”) is the local planning authority, while Suffolk County Council (“the County”) has responsibility as local education authority for ensuring a sufficiency of school places for residents of its area.
- 1.2 This report explains the proposals for education provision to support the proposed development. Pre-application discussions have taken place, and these have informed the proposals. However, it is recognised that changes may need to be made to the education proposals during consideration of the application, and this report can be updated as appropriate.
- 1.3 New housing development creates demand for school places in the sense that it enables more families to live in a particular area, thus adding to demand on local schools. Where those demands cannot be met through existing or already planned provision, it is generally expected that development should help provide for those unmet needs. In recent years the usual mechanism for this has been through financial contributions or direct provision secured through planning obligations. More recently, the introduction of CIL provides an alternative approach to funding infrastructure on a broader basis.
- 1.4 The Council has adopted CIL charging, and in doing so has included the proposed development on the application site as a zero charge rate area. Provision of education facilities (and other facilities and infrastructure) that are necessary to meet the needs arising as a result of the proposed development will therefore be secured through planning obligations.
- 1.5 Any development of the scale proposed for the site is likely to require primary school provision to be made on site. Requirements for secondary education are generally unlikely to be met on site for developments of less than 5,000 dwellings. Local plan policy SP 20 states that the development’s infrastructure priorities should include “education facilities to meet identified pre-school, primary and secondary needs within the development area”.
- 1.6 It is expected that the County will undertake a comprehensive review of secondary school requirements within the Eastern Ipswich Area. The Applicant’s approach is that 5.5ha of land be safeguarded for education use and, as appropriate, provision for primary and secondary education provided on site – currently envisaged as an “all through school” with an associated early years facility, creating an education campus.
- 1.7 From currently available information, there is some capacity in existing schools to meet primary education demands, and thus defer the time at which additional provision is needed. Secondary schools look set to

experience increasing demand and it appears additional provision will need to be provided within the next few years, irrespective of the proposed development.

2 Primary Education Including Early Years

- 2.1 Based on the County's figures, there is some availability of primary school capacity within the local group of seven nearby primary schools at present. This includes the schools within whose catchments the site is located (Martlesham Primary Academy and Bucklesham Primary School) which together had 54 spare places in January 2016. However, some schools within the group have admitted more pupils than their formal capacities indicate.
- 2.2 For the future, the County's current pupil forecasts (which are understood to include little or no allowance for new housing) indicate fewer pupils in this group of schools, and demand is forecast to drop over the next four years. This is expected to increase the overall surplus of places in the seven schools, from 73 in January 2016, to 177. On this basis there is likely to be some capacity available to accommodate the initial demand from the proposed development.
- 2.3 In addition to primary and secondary school provision, the County also has responsibility for ensuring early years (nursery) provision is adequate to meet needs. It is understood that the County now seeks to provide early years provision alongside new primary schools – as do many authorities. The early years facilities would probably be run by a provider other than the school, but could be run by the school. In design terms the facility is likely to be within the primary school site but with an independent access. For the purposes of this note references to a new primary school include commensurate early years provision.
- 2.4 Based on 2,000 dwellings and the County's adopted standard assumptions for pupil yields, the development would be expected to be home to 200 pre-school children and 500 primary age children. These figures are likely to be reduced once any reduction in dwelling numbers and/or the inclusion of flats in the proposed development is taken into account. The reduction is likely to be marginal but may be important in terms of decisions about education provision.
- 2.5 Not all pre-school children will be expected to need a place in the early years provision associated with a new primary school, and there are likely to be a variety of providers that meet all the pre-school needs. Based on experience elsewhere and subject to confirmation from the County, provision for 52 early years places would be appropriate alongside a two form entry (420 place)

school. In addition, a freestanding facility is likely to be considered desirable and could be accommodated in the primary local centre. These arrangements would provide a diversity of provision alongside other forms of childcare (including childminders).

- 2.6 Schools are usually built to accommodate whole forms of entry. One form of entry is 30 pupils per year group, for the seven years of primary education. Thus a one form entry school accommodates 210 pupils, and a two form entry school 420 pupils. The County has a wide range of sizes of schools, including many small rural schools admitting fewer than 15 pupils per year and much larger primary schools up to three forms of entry (including Heath Primary at Kesgrave).
- 2.7 In view of the expected number of resident pupils, provision of one, two form entry school with potential to expand to three forms of entry, is appropriate. The development demand, based on all dwellings being houses rather than flats and no specialist (e.g. elderly) provision, would equate to roughly two and a half forms of entry. So this allows for all provision to be made on site.
- 2.8 The development will provide both land and buildings for the two form entry school at no cost to the County. The terms on which the expansion of the school would take place, and the provision of the land for that expansion, would depend on the circumstances of it being required and will be agreed with the County. Providing flexibility for expansion, by safeguarding sufficient land for the school to expand potentially to three forms of entry provides a sustainable solution for primary education.
- 2.9 Based on recommendations in Building Bulletin 103, the land take for a freestanding two form entry primary school together with associated early years (nursery) provision on the school site would be approximately 1.84ha, and the safeguarded expansion land would need to be a further 0.8ha, making a total of 2.64ha and allowing for a building design and site layout to be developed that would enable expansion of the school to three forms of entry if necessary. The site area requirement is affected by the suggestion that an all through school be established, as is explained in the following section of this report.
- 2.10 Consideration will need to be given to the timing of the school, and this is a matter of ongoing discussion with the County.
- 2.11 It is usually the case that local education authorities do not want schools to open too early – that is, before a “critical mass” exists so that the school will be supported by the development. Opening too early can undermine the viability of existing schools and foster unsustainable transport patterns, if out of area pupils are attracted into the new school. Opening the primary school at around 350 dwelling occupations is fairly typical timing in normal circumstances, and is proposed as a starting point for discussion in this case.

3 Secondary Education and Sixth Form Provision

- 3.1 There is a group of six secondary schools which the County has identified as relevant to the proposed development. Based on the County's figures, four of the secondary schools are operating at or over their theoretical capacities, and Northgate High has 5% surplus places. Ipswich Academy, however, had 474 surplus places in January 2016. Overall, within the six schools, there were 434 places (4.5%) surplus in January 2016. The application site is within the catchment area of Kesgrave High School, which in January 2016 had 1,850 pupils on roll and an assessed theoretical capacity of 1,753 pupil places, so was operating above its theoretical capacity.
- 3.2 The County's current pupil forecasts show overall demand increasing rapidly with demand for over 432 additional places over the next four years to September 2020 – taking up all the overall surplus (although this will not happen if schools continue to operate over their assessed theoretical capacities). Longer term forecasts to September 2025 indicate further increases in demand.
- 3.3 It is understood that there are limited opportunities for expansions of the existing schools, and it appears that irrespective of new housing additional secondary school capacity will need to be developed over the next few years. The County maintains a dialogue with schools, and will have discussions with schools about how to respond to the need to provide additional capacity.
- 3.4 Based on 2,000 dwellings and the County's adopted standard assumptions for pupil yields, the development would be expected to be home to 360 secondary pupils (school Years 7 to 11) - and also 80 post-16 pupils (who are likely to attend sixth form provision). This demand equates to 2.4 forms of entry, and is subject to potential reductions to take account of lower dwelling numbers and/or inclusion of flats in the proposed development.
- 3.5 Secondary schools are normally established with a minimum size of about 6 forms of entry, which would be consistent with developments of at least 5,000 dwellings. However, in recent years there has been an increased diversity of provision with some smaller schools and different secondary education models. There are ongoing discussions with the County, to establish its views on the most appropriate means of providing additional secondary education provision to meet the needs of the proposed development.
- 3.6 Policy SP20 of the Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan, Core Strategy and Development Management Policies, July 2013 states that,
“Infrastructure needs to be accorded priority include:

... (e) Education facilities to meet identified pre-school; primary and secondary needs within the development area:"

- 3.7 It is unlikely that a standalone secondary school for two to three forms of entry would be considered viable. However, an “all through school” providing both primary and secondary education may well be considered an appropriate solution and forms the basis of the proposals put forward in the application. There are a number of examples of similar schools – one such being Heyford Park Free School, which opened in September 2013 and is growing from its initial intake of pupils to its primary phase Reception Class and secondary phase Year 7 class. The school does not have a nursery class at present, but is planning one for next year. The school reports being oversubscribed, and it achieved a positive OFSTED report from its first inspection in April 2015 – being rated “Good” for overall effectiveness and for most individual areas.
- 3.8 It is expected that the County will undertake a comprehensive review of secondary school requirements within the Eastern Ipswich Area. The Applicant’s preference/suggestion is that an all through school located on the site would be an appropriate and practicable proposition that will also meet the SP20 policy requirement. The proposal allows for up to four forms of entry (600 pupil places) for the secondary phase, to ensure viability – although a smaller secondary phase might be also viable.
- 3.9 Based on recommendations in Building Bulletin 103, and 600 secondary pupil places, a site area of approximately 4.39ha would be required. However, provision of an all through school provides the opportunity to share playing field space and make more efficient use of land.
- 3.10 The addition of the 2.64ha allowance for primary education (stated at paragraph 2.9 above) and 4.39ha for secondary would give an overall site area requirement of approximately 7.03ha, without considering opportunities for sharing facilities. These are mid-point recommendations within a range, and the overall minimum would be approximately 6.24ha. The principle item that can be shared to reduce site area requirements is formal playing fields – which for a three form entry primary school would amount to 1.26ha. Deducting 1.26ha from the overall figures above indicates to a range of 4.98ha (minimum) to 5.77ha (mid point) for education provision with shared playing fields. Based on this range, an overall allowance of 5.5ha for education provision is considered reasonable and has been adopted for masterplanning purposes.
- 3.11 The suggestion of a new, freestanding all through school providing primary and secondary education, together with pre-school facilities on site forms the basis of the proposal and is consistent with planning policy. It is envisaged that sixth form provision will be off site, as it is considered difficult to provide sufficient breadth of subjects and specialist facilities in small sixth forms.

- 3.12 Notwithstanding the assumptions explained above, it is recognised that other options may arise through discussions with the County and engagement with the existing schools in the area (most likely through the County's meetings with them).
- 3.13 In addition to the physical provision of buildings, there will need to be a process under education legislation. A new school would be an academy, or a free school. Most probably the process would involve an awareness raising exercise by the County and expressions of interest being put forward by potential sponsors for decision by the Regional Schools Commissioner for East of England and North-East London. However, an alternative to a new school would be that an existing school seeks to expand with the new facilities operating as an annex to the existing school.

4 Delivery of Education Facilities

- 4.1 As indicated above there will be a process for establishing the proposed new school, in addition to the physical delivery of buildings and facilities. The physical delivery could be undertaken in a number of ways, including direct provision as part of the development (developer procurement) or the provision of land and financial contributions to the County.
- 4.2 As the local education authority the County will have an ongoing role and interest in the provision, establishment and success of the school, although the nature of that role will depend on the decisions taken on the nature of the provision and the means of procurement. Discussions will continue with the Council and County with the intention of agreeing all aspects of education provision that need to be made and secured through planning obligation arrangements.

5 Summary

- 5.1 The proposed development makes provision for education in line with local plan policy, through the identification and safeguarding of 5.5ha for an education campus on which it is suggested that an all through school can be established. It is expected that the school would cater for primary and secondary pupils up to age 16, and there would also be early years facilities within the site included – which may or may not be operated by the school sponsor. In addition a further freestanding early years (pre-school) facility is likely to be considered desirable and could be accommodated in the primary local centre.
- 5.2 The proposal is based on a freestanding all thorough school, although the possibility of another solution is not precluded at this stage.

- 5.3 Discussions with the Council as local planning authority and the County as local education authority are ongoing and will continue. This strategy can be updated as appropriate to reflect those discussions, the views of other stakeholders (especially local schools) and decisions that are made about the most appropriate means of ensuring good education is available to residents of the proposed development.

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