SOUTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Planning Committee

3 October 2024

S24/1200

Proposal:	Change of use from dwellinghouses (C3) to educational use (F1) in connection with Kirkstone House School
Location:	22 And 24 School Lane, Baston, PE6 9PD
Applicant:	Mr Mike Sibthorp
Agent:	Mr G Wyman – Kirkstone House School
Application Type:	Full Planning Application
Reason for Referral to Committee:	Councillor call-in due to loss of housing
Key Issues:	• Principle of Development • Impact on character appearance of the area • Impact on neighbours' residential amenities • Impact on highway safety

Report Author

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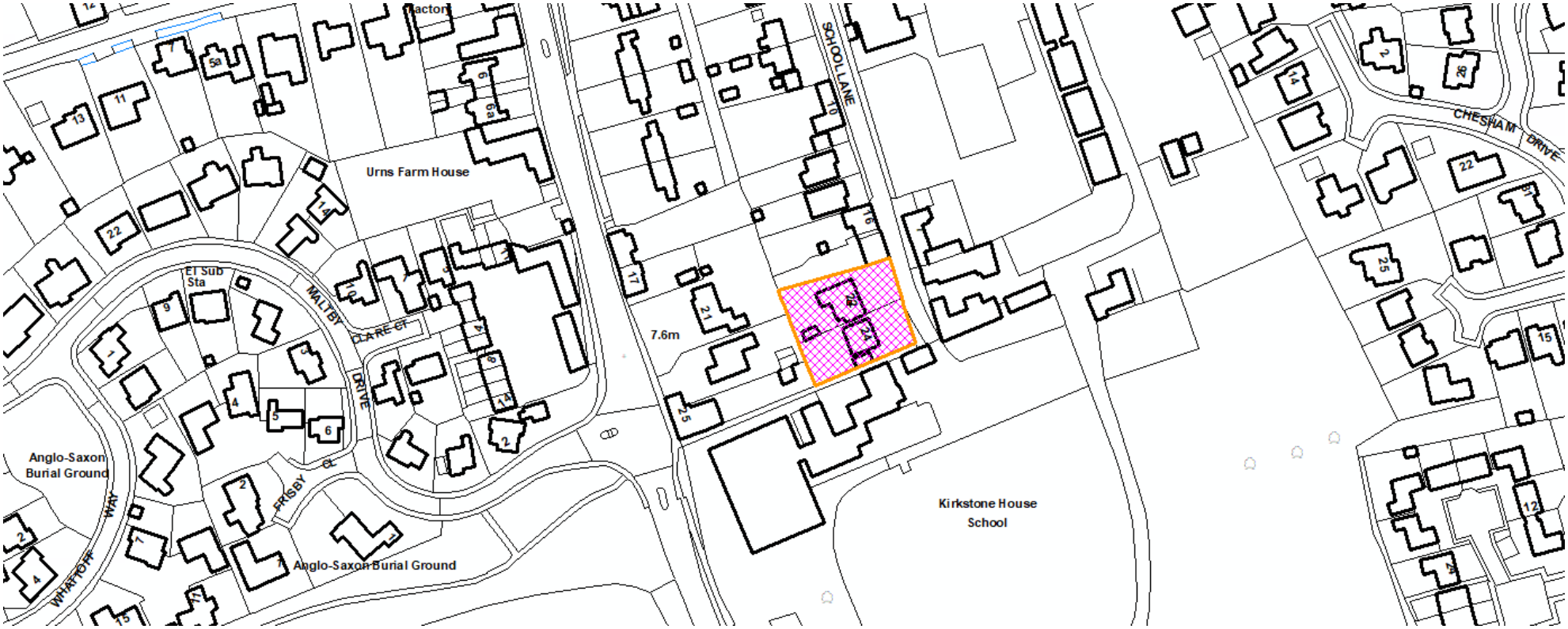
Corporate Priority:	Decision type:	Wards:
Growth	**Regulatory**	**Casewick**

Reviewed by:	Adam Murray – Principal Development Management Planner	23 September 2024

Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s)

To authorise the Assistant Director Planning & Growth to GRANT planning permission subject to conditions



Key

Application Boundary

N

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1 Description of Site

1.1 The application site is located at the end of School Lane in the village of Baston, adjacent the existing Kirkstone House School site. The application site comprises of two semi-detached bungalows set back from the lane, Nos. 22 and 24 School Lane. Other than the further school site buildings, School Lane is predominantly residential.

2 Description of Proposal

2.1 The proposal relates to a change of use of the bungalows from C3 residential use to F1 educational use. The proposed educational use would be in connection with the existing Kirkstone House School, with the buildings set to form part of their wider campus and range of buildings. The operational details submitted with the application explain that the building would be utilised for a variety of educational purposes, including small teaching groups, teaching resource storage, extra-curricular activities such as cooking, cleaning and household budgeting.

3 Relevant History

4 No relevant planning history

5 Relevant Planning Policies & Documents

SKDC Local Plan 2011 – 2036

- Policy SP6 - Community Services and Facilities
- Policy DE1 - Promoting Good Quality Design

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places
- Section 9 - Promoting sustainable transport

6 Representations Received

6.1 **Crime Prevention Design Advisor**

6.2 Lincolnshire Police do not have any objections to this application.

6.3 **Education and Cultural Services (LCC)**

6.4 LCC Education has no comments on the application in relation to education

6.5 **Lincolnshire Fieldpaths Association**

6.6 No comments

6.7 **South Kesteven District Council Footpaths Officer**

6.8 No comments

6.9 **The Ramblers Association**

6.10 No comments

6.11 **LCC Highways and SuDS Support**

6.12 No Objection - This proposal is for the change of use from dwellinghouses (C3) to educational use (F1) in connection with Kirkstone House School. The vehicular accesses meet the visibility guidelines set out in Manual for Streets, the widening / addition drive, will

require a S184 agreement, details listed below in informative 3. Therefore, it is considered that this proposal would not result in an unacceptable impact upon highway safety

6.13 **Parish Council**

Inaccuracies and misleading statements in the submission.

General points of objection.

- Number 22 and 24 School Lane are both bungalow style residential properties in a reasonable state of repair.
- They are situated at the end of a cul-de-sac that is wholly residential.
- Bungalows because of the nature of their design are in short supply in the general housing market even though there is high demand for this style of property especially for elderly and disabled residents.
- In the proposed Lincolnshire Plan under the section of proposed residential building proposals for the county given the housing shortfall Baston has been proposed for a potential build of 83 new properties which given the size of the village will be a considerable % rise in houses.
- We there would question as to why 2 perfectly good residential properties would be allowed to convert from residential use to educational use.
- There is a serious shortage of affordable houses in Baston and because of their size and design if put on the open market these would help to reduce that shortage.
- As previously stated within the ground of KHS there are several former residential buildings that could be utilised for this purpose.
- These properties site outside of the curtilage of KHS. As with many schools to ensure child safety and safeguarding KHS entire site is enclosed within a steel fencing boarder approximately 8 feet high.

7 Representations as a Result of Publicity

7.1 This application has been advertised in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement and 3 letters of representation have been received. The points raised can be summarised as follows:

1. The proposed use of these properties would provide much-needed facilities

2. Proposal would have a negative impact on the street scene

3. Proposal would lead to a loss of privacy to neighbouring properties and parking spaces

4. The front driveways and gardens would be used as recreational space for staff causing disturbance

5. Loss of residential use

6. Existing school properties not maintained and concerns this would be the case for the resulting buildings

8 Evaluation

8.1 The proposal relates to the change of use of two residential dwellings into educational use in connection with the adjacent existing school premises, Kirkstone House School, bringing the buildings into community facility use. Therefore, Policy SP6 of the SKDC Local Plan is applicable. Policy SP6 states:

Proposals for new community facilities will be supported, and should wherever feasible:

e. Prioritise and promote access by walking, cycling and public transport Community facilities may have a local or wider catchment area, and their accessibility should be considered proportionately relative to their purpose, scale and catchment area and;

f. Be physically accessible to all members of society;

g. Be designed so that they are adaptable and can be easily altered to respond to future demands if necessary; and

h. Where applicable be operated without detriment to local residents.

The principle of this use would be acceptable, consideration is given to the site specific criteria below.

8.2 **Impact on the character and appearance of the area**

8.2.1 Externally, there would be no alterations to the dwelling that would detract from the street scene. The appearance would largely retain as that of the previous use as dwellings and therefore other than movements to and from the buildings and alterations to the front boundary wall to widen the access, there would be no greater increase in impact to the character and appearance of the area.

8.2.2 The use of the buildings for educational purposes in connection with the existing neighbouring school premises would be achievable without increasing the impact to the extent that would result in harm to the street scene. This is due to the proximity of the application site to the neighbouring site and the two dwellings the application relates to being set back from the main building line, out of view when entering School Lane from Main Street.

8.2.3 The supporting statement confirms that the converted buildings would be physically accessible offering level access from the street to the school's staff and pupils. Whilst there are no alterations proposed at present, the buildings are adaptable and can be easily altered to respond to future demands if necessary.

8.2.4 By virtue of the nature of the proposed use, the proposal being an expansion of the adjacent land use, and the buildings would retain their overall existing appearance, the proposal would be in keeping with street scene and surrounding context in accordance with the NPPF Section 12, and Policy DE1 of the Local Plan.

8.3 **Impact on the neighbours' residential amenities**

8.4 Criteria (h) of Policy SP6 states where applicable new community uses or facilities should be operated without detriment to local residents.

8.5 The concerns raised by neighbours in relation to increased noise impact are noted. It is possible dependant on the level of children present in the buildings at any one time there may be an increased level of noise generated from the properties than that of a residential dwelling, however this is not to such an extent that would be deemed to result in an

unacceptable noise impact on the adjacent properties. This is further supported by the relationship between the existing school site and neighbouring properties, with the proposed relationship not being dissimilar.

8.6 Taking into account the nature of the proposal it is considered that there would be no unacceptable adverse impact on the residential amenities of the occupiers of adjacent properties in accordance with the NPPF Section 12, and Policies DE1 and SP6 of the Local Plan.

8.7 **Highway issues**

8.8 Paragraph 115 of the NPPF advises that development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.

8.9 Lincolnshire County Council as the Highways Authority advised the vehicular accesses meet the visibility guidelines set out in Manual for Streets, with the widening of the drive requiring a S184 agreement which would be undertaken directly with LCC. An informative detailing this has been attached. LCC have raised no objections to the proposal.

8.10 Concerns have been raised over the change of use potentially exacerbating on street parking and congestion along School Lane. The proposal does not include any alterations to the existing schools parking arrangements, with this scheme providing additional off-road spaces of 4 spaces to the front of No.24 School Lane and 2 spaces to the front of No. 22 School Lane.

8.11 Criteria (e) of Policy SP6 advises new proposals should promote and prioritise access by walking, cycling and public transport. With the building set to form part of the wider school campus, the location of the buildings would be easily accessible via sustainable transport methods to the residents of Baston and to the existing users of the wider school. The proposal would result in adequate access, parking and turning facilities and would not have an unacceptable adverse impact on highway safety in accordance with the NPPF Section 9.

8.12 **Loss of Housing**

8.13 The proposal would result in the loss of two market houses from the change of use. It is acknowledged that the loss of housing carries weight in the decision-making process. SKDC have an established housing land supply of 5.01 as of September 2023, which does mean that full weight can be given to the policies within the Local Plan. The concern of comments both in representation and from the Parish Council is that the loss of these houses would be harmful to the level of houses available within the village of Baston. Reference has been made to the proposed allocation within the draft local plan in Baston and therefore should we be considering removing 2 houses from residential use if there is a need for additional housing.

8.14 The draft local plan currently holds no weight in the decision-making process, and the current situation should be accounted for. The comments note that these bungalows are much needed affordable housing, however the existing dwellings are not affordable homes they are market housing. In this instance, these specific homes have been vacant for almost 10 years and the proposed change of use would bring these buildings back into use as part of an established school and allow for the provision of more specialised teaching such as smaller teaching groups and extra-curricular learning.

8.15 Overall, the loss of two market housing properties is not considered to be unacceptable to the overall supply of housing in the district, particularly given the properties have not been occupied for a substantial length of time. The reuse of the buildings as community facilities is considered to be a benefit that would outweigh the material consideration of the loss of housing in this instance.

8.16 Therefore, it is considered that the proposed change of use and resulting loss of housing would not warrant refusal of the application in this instance.

8.17 **Other Matters**

8.18 The comments raised by the Parish Council in relation to the existing condition of the front gardens of the property is not a material consideration. The section of the Parish Councils comments in relation to the proposed educational services to be offered to the students are noted, however all of these functions fall under the same educational use and, there is no reason to suggest that the provisions such as smaller teaching groups, life skill teaching and other educational resources would not be provided as part of the proposed use as this is what has been specified. On the point on the specifics of the use, concerns were raised in relation to the potential required boundary treatments which can be required around schools for safety purposes. Based on the details submitted on how the proposal would operate, it is not anticipated large groups of children being within the premises at one time and there to be constant supervision, the existing boundary treatment arrangements are considered to be acceptable.

8.19 Questions have been raised over how the change of use would impact the need for paying Council Tax, as the properties would no longer be domestic properties, business rates would be payable. However, this is not a material planning consideration.

8.20 **Crime and Disorder**

8.21 It is considered that the proposal would not result in any significant crime and disorder implications.

8.22 **Human Rights Implications**

8.23 Articles 6 (Rights to fair decision making) and Article 8 (Right to private family life and home) of the Human Rights Act have been taken into account in making this recommendation. It is considered that no relevant Article of that act will be breached.

8.24 **Conclusion**

8.25 Taking the above into account, it is considered that the proposal is appropriate for its context and is in accordance with the NPPF (Sections 9 and 12) and Policies DE1 and SP6 of the South Kesteven Local Plan. Whilst the proposed development would result in the loss of housing, this adverse impact is deemed to be outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal. As such, it is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to conditions.

9 Recommendation

To authorise the Assistant Director Planning & Growth to GRANT planning permission subject to conditions.

Time Limit for Commencement

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

Reason: In order that the development is commenced in a timely manner, as set out in Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

Approved Plans

2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following list of approved plans:
i. Site Location Plan received 29 July 2024
ii. Proposed Floor Plans received 31 July 2024
Unless otherwise required by another condition of this permission.

Reason: To define the permission and for the avoidance of doubt.

Ongoing Conditions

3 The conversion hereby approved shall only be used for purposes which are ancillary to the educational use of Kirkstone House School, Baston. The buildings shall not be let, leased, sold, split in title, or otherwise occupied such as to constitute the formation of an independent educational facility.
Reason: The establishment of an independent educational facility on this site would give rise to conditions detrimental to the amenities and privacy of both the adjacent residential properties.

Location Plan

NATIONAL MAP CENTRE

MIKE SIBTHORP PLANNING
LOGAN HOUSE, LIME GROVE, GRANTHAM, NG31 9JD
TEL: 014765 569065 MOB: 07983 470950

N

Metres
0 5 10 20 30 40 50
Scale: 1:1250

Ordnance Survey
Licensed Data

Supplied by: National Map Centre
License number: AC0000814278
Produced: 28/06/2024
Serial number: 356642

Site Location Plan
22 & 24 School Lane, Baston
Proposed change of use to educational use (F1)
Kirkstone House School
Plan Ref: MSP.2080/001A

Proposed Floor Plans

FLOOR PLAN 24 SCHOOL LANE

FLOOR PLAN 22 SCHOOL LANE

Existing Floor and Block Plan