

NCC RESPONSE - OBJECTION TO APPLICATION 2023/0468

The letter received from the ward member (dated 24/07/23) is objecting to the County Council's decision not to commission a new primary school on the Chase Farm Development. It does not object to the proposal to vary the Section 106 Agreement to enable the primary education contribution - which would otherwise remain unused - to be spent on secondary school provision. The County Council has concluded that there is no justification for building a new school in this location and is under no obligation under the S106 Agreement to commission the delivery of a new school.

A decision to refuse the application to modify the S106 Agreement would not result in a new primary school being delivered. If an alternative use for the education contribution cannot be agreed, then it is likely that the funding would have to be returned to the housing developer and the additional places required at secondary level could not be delivered. This would result in a development that is not appropriately mitigated because secondary school pupils who are resident at Chase Farm would need to travel further than their catchment school to obtain a place.

It is acknowledged that the catchment primary schools for the site are currently Lambley Primary School and All Hallows Church of England Primary School. The County Council's School Admissions Team is currently reviewing the catchment area for Chase Farm and will be working with maintained schools, within walking distance from the development, with a view to consulting on amendments to catchment areas later this year. Any proposed changes will form part of the statutory consultation for the 2025-2026 admission year. Admissions arrangements (including catchment areas) of academies are the responsibility of the Multi Academy Trust. The County Council will consult with local academies throughout the review.

As set out in the planning statement, there is a forecast sufficiency of primary school places at schools within a one mile walk of Chase Farm. Current admissions data shows that pupils who are already living on the Chase Farm development have applied for and been offered places at numerous schools and academies in the local area.

The concerns regarding the accessibility of these nearest schools are noted, but no evidence is available to suggest that the walking routes would be unsafe. As outlined in the planning statement, existing residents would have safe passage across Arnold Lane using the signalised pedestrian crossing close to Waldrom Road. The approved plans for the second phase of the development (ref. 2021/1294) includes a pedestrian connection to Arnold Lane, slightly offset from the entrance to Linsdale Gardens. It is proposed that an additional pedestrian crossing is installed in this location to provide connectivity to the established footpath on the opposite side of Arnold Lane, to assist residents travelling to Stanhope Primary School. Please see plan overleaf.

Residents travelling to Phoenix Infant School and Haddon Primary School would travel via Basecar Avenue which is a traffic calmed street due to the presence of speed bumps. There is an operational school crossing patrol on Westdale Lane and, on the approach to Haddon Close, there is a footway build-out to aid pedestrians accessing Haddon Primary School. Although this crossing is not controlled with signals, there have been no reported collisions at this location in the last 23 year period.

The County Council contends that the development is connected to existing primary schools via direct and safe walking routes, which are within the statutory walking distance required by its Home to School Transport Policy. Therefore, it is not considered that the proposal would contravene Policy LPD 35 of the Gedling Local Plan - Safe, Accessible and Inclusive Development. The expansion of Carlton Academy would ensure there is a sufficiency of secondary school places within a reasonable walking distance of the development, which are accessible via direct and safe walking routes, thereby supporting the principles of Policy LPD 35.

Proposed location for additional signalised crossing to serve phase two:

