

Case study

Attleborough – Rosecroft Primary School, New Primary School for expanding market town

Key details

Client – Norfolk County Council

Date – July 2014 to October 2017

Construction value - £8 million

NPS services

Planning Consultancy

Compulsory Purchase

Architectural Design

Project Management



Project overview

Norfolk County Council's Children's Services identified in December 2015 the need to re-organise educational provision in Attleborough, an expanding market town in Breckland District to meet future pupil placement demands.

The NPS Planning Consultancy Team identified and secured sites for a new primary school to serve the southern part of the town (to replace an existing smaller infant school). In addition, scope was identified to extend the existing junior school in Attleborough to become a second primary school.

Following a site search appraisal

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undertaken by NPS for the new primary school to the south of Attleborough, employment land owned by Taylor Wimpey was identified as the most suitable location for the new school.

Challenges / issues

Despite the proposed school use being contrary to development plan policy, NPS overcame the substantive issues surrounding the loss of employment land by identifying and securing planning consent for 5.5 hectares of replacement employment land on nearby County Farms land. At the same time, planning permission for the school was sought.

To help fund the construction, NPS also secured planning permission for housing on land to the front of the new primary school site which was not required for the school.

Approach

Planning applications for the new school, residential and commercial developments were submitted concurrently to the determining planning authorities and were successfully delivered through their Planning Committees within the statutory 13 weeks.

Despite planning consent being contrary

to development plan policy, NPS, working closely with the client, District and County Planning Authorities, delivered a well-designed new school in an accessible location and overcame the substantive issues surrounding the loss of employment land.

Outcomes / added value

The key aspiration for the client, Norfolk County Council, was to deliver a new Primary School in the southern part of the town. This was completed and opened in January 2018.

The most suitable site for the school was larger than required for education purposes so to offset costs, planning permission for housing was secured on the remaining land.

Furthermore, client owned land was identified to provide replacement employment land for the town and planning permission secured to significantly enhance the value from its previous agricultural use.

Therefore, a truly mixed-use development has been delivered despite the policy obstacles. This would not have happened without a co-ordinated approach, utilising the skills and expertise of our Planning Consultancy Team.

“Achieving ‘Excellence in Education’ has been a key aim of Norfolk County Council Children’s Services and we are proud of these school projects which will help provide a ‘21st Century’ learning environment for ‘all’ pupils within Attleborough and the surrounding area.”

We have worked in effective partnership with NPS to reorganise school provision, ensuring the most accessible, inclusive and sustainable sites have been identified for new schools, planning policy obstacles were overcome and best practice was adopted with regard to school design, layout, and energy efficiency.”

Isabel Horner, Capital Programme Manager, Children Services, NCC



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