

**Reference:** 06/16/0125/F

**Parish:** Great Yarmouth

**Officer:** Mr G Clarke

**Expiry Date:** 05-05-2016

**Applicant:** Education Funding Agency

**Proposal:** Removal of conditions 2 and 12 of planning permission 06/85/313/F to allow the use of the site for Class D1 (education) use

**Site:** Former Perenco site  
Yarmouth Business Park  
Thamesfield Way  
Great Yarmouth

## REPORT

### 1 Background / History :-

1.1 The application site is to the south east of Pasteur Road close to the Garton Hall Roundabout, it is bounded by the A12 to the south west, Thamesfield Way to the north east and the police investigation unit and other industrial sites to the south east. There is a two storey office building and a warehouse along the Pasteur Road frontage, the rest of the site is used for open storage and parking, vehicular access is from Thamesfield Way.

1.2 The site was originally granted planning permission in 1985 for a pipe yard, warehousing and offices (ref:06/85/0313/F), since then there have been various applications for extensions and temporary buildings. The original planning permission includes the following two conditions (2 & 12) which restrict the use of the site:-

1.3 Condition 2 - The site shall be used only for open storage, offices, warehouse accommodation and ancillary car parking.

Reason – For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the site is used in the manner contemplated by the Local Planning Authority on the grant of this permission.

1.4 Condition 12 - The offices hereby approved shall only be used in connection with the use of the site and in connection with the occupier's offshore industrial activities or by other similar offshore related concerns.

Reason – The site is outside any area allocated for office purposes on the approved Development Plan.

- 1.5 This application is for the removal of these two conditions so that the site can be used for an alternative use as a school for one year, if there were no restrictive conditions such a use would be permitted development under Schedule 2, Part 4, Class C of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 and could be carried out without the need for planning permission.

## **2 Consultations :-**

- 2.1 Highways England – no objection.
- 2.2 County Highways – requests that further information is submitted and until such time as their concerns are addressed asks that their letter is treated as a Holding Highways Objection.
- 2.3 Environment Agency – objects on the grounds that the submitted Flood Risk Assessment does not comply with the requirements set out in the Planning Practice Guidance, Flood Risk and Coastal Change. The submitted FRA does not therefore provide a suitable basis for assessment to be made of the flood risk arising from the proposed development.
- 2.4 Environmental Health – former potentially contaminative uses have taken place on or adjacent to the site, where contamination exists this may pose a degree of risk to users of the site. Whilst this may have been dealt with to some extent with previous developments, these appear to mostly predate the contaminated land regime, and were for much less sensitive land uses, and so may have been dealt with differently than for a new school today.

We recommend that until contamination investigations are undertaken in support of a school re-development application, it may be prudent for the children not to play or exercise in the grassed/bare soil areas (on the basis that the concrete apron/yard elsewhere should break any contamination linkages between the soil and the site users), nor in any areas of obvious contamination, such as if there are any oil spillages.

- 2.5 Internal Drainage Board – no objections.
- 2.6 Strategic Planning – zoned as a ‘safeguarded employment site’ in the recently adopted Local Plan Core Strategy, Policies CS1, CS6, CS15 and CS16 apply. Gapton Hall roundabout is one of the most under pressure junctions in the borough, towards the northern end of the A12. The inter related issue of air pollution also needs careful consideration.

- 2.7 Economic Development Officer – although the conditions limit the use of the site I believe that the site should be retained for industrial use. There is a limited supply of large sites on prominent locations with good road access and close to existing industrial estates.
- 2.8 Public comments – one letter of support has been received and one letter of objection – copies of the letters are attached.

### **3 Policy :-**

#### **POLICY CS6 – SUPPORTING THE LOCAL ECONOMY**

The Borough of Great Yarmouth has a diverse local economy. It is the main service base in England for the offshore energy industry and has a thriving seasonal visitor economy. To ensure that the conditions are right for new and existing businesses to thrive and grow, there is a need to continue to strengthen the local economy and make it less seasonally dependent. This will be achieved by:

- a) encouraging the redevelopment and intensification of existing employment sites, particularly those sites with good access by a variety of transport modes
- b) Safeguarding existing local employment areas identified in Table 10 and future local employment areas allocated in other Local Plan Documents for employment use. Alternative uses will only be allowed where it can be demonstrated that:
  - There is a satisfactory relationship between the proposed use and any pre-existing neighbouring uses, without significant detriment to the continuation and amenity of existing or proposed uses
  - There is no commercial interest in the re-use of the site for employment, demonstrated by suitable marketing at an appropriate price for at least 18 months
  - A sequential viability test has been applied following the unsuccessful marketing of the site, based on the following sequence of testing: mixed use of the site that incorporates an employment-generating use, then non-employment use
- c) Allocating approximately 10-15 hectares of new employment land at Beacon Park Extension, South Bradwell, through Policy CS18
- d) Exploring the potential for up to 22 hectares of land reclamation to the north of the Outer Harbour at South Denes
- e) Supporting port-related development proposals relating to the Outer Harbour and existing river port, in particular encouraging cargo handling and other port-reliant activities

- f) Encouraging a greater presence of higher value technology and energy-based industries, including offshore renewable energy companies, in the borough
- g) Supporting the local visitor and retail economies in accordance with Policies CS7 and CS8
- h) Encouraging the development of small scale business units, including those that support the rural economy and rural diversification
- i) Supporting the provision of development essential to sustain a rural workforce, including agricultural workers' dwellings and rural community facilities
- j) Minimising the potential loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land by ensuring that development on such land is only permitted if it can be demonstrated that there is an overriding sustainability benefit from the development and there are no realistic opportunities for accommodating the development elsewhere
- k) Supporting the delivery of high speed broadband and communications technology to all parts of the borough
- l) Encouraging flexible working by:
  - Allowing home-working where there is no adverse impact on residential amenities
  - Allowing the development of live-work units on residential and mixed-use sites, subject to the retention of the employment element and safeguarding of residential amenity
  - Allowing the development of relevant ancillary facilities, such as childcare facilities and eateries, in local employment areas, where appropriate
- m) Improving workforce skills by:
  - Working with local education and skills agencies and local business organisations to establish training facilities to enhance workforce skills
  - Encouraging the provision of new training facilities on employment sites

#### **4 Assessment :-**

- 4.1 When permission was granted in 1985 the site was an isolated location at the end of Pasteur Road, Thamesfield Way and the retail units to the north east of it had not been built. There were older buildings used for various industrial and storage uses on what is now known as the Yarmouth Business Park to the south east, this area was accessed from Suffolk Road. The application was submitted by Wimpey Marine with the intention that the site was to be used in connection with their other activities within the town. The land was outside any area allocated for office purposes in the Development Plan then in operation

which is the reason for the wording of condition 12. Since then the site has been used by other companies involved in the offshore industry but is currently vacant.

- 4.2 The planning application is for the removal of two conditions attached to the original consent for the site which restrict the use of the buildings and land. The conditions restrict the use of the site to open storage, offices, warehouse and ancillary parking and also prevent the offices from being used separately to the open storage and only in connection with offshore related activities. Removal of the conditions will allow the site to be used by companies other than offshore businesses and for alternatives such as light industrial use, it will also allow the sub-division of the site to a number of smaller units. In addition to this, removal of the conditions will allow other changes, such as a school, which are normally permitted development under The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015. A temporary use of any building and land within its curtilage as a state-funded school for a single academic year is permitted development under Schedule 2, Part 4, Class C of the Order. Such a change of use is permitted subject to conditions including (a) the site must be approved by the relevant Minister and (e) the site reverts to its previous lawful use at the end of the academic year. It should be noted that the conditions do not include any requirement for a proposed user to submit details of transport and highways impact, contamination risks or flood risk.
- 4.3 County Highways and the Environment Agency have objected to the application on the grounds that there is insufficient information and the Environmental Health Officer has advised of potential contamination risks however this application is just for the removal of two conditions of the original planning permission and such information is not required for an application for removal of conditions. The applicant has indicated that if the conditions are removed the site will be used for a temporary period as a school using permitted development rights however, as mentioned above, if this is the case the General Permitted Development Order does not require the submission of such details as have been requested.
- 4.4 If the temporary school does go ahead it is only permitted development for one academic year and at the end of that time the site must revert to its previous use or planning approval must be sought for continued use. If continued use is applied for, details of transport and highways impact, contamination risks or flood risk will have to be submitted and considered as part of that application.
- 4.5 The Economic Development Officer is of the opinion that the site should be retained for industrial use, if the school use goes ahead this would be the case but it also has to be considered that removal of the conditions will allow the use of the site for uses other than offshore related activities and allow more flexible use including changes allowed under the General Permitted Development Order.

- 4.6 Taking the above into account it is considered that the proposed removal of the conditions complies with the aims of Policy CS6 of the Core Strategy in that it will allow a wider use of the site.

**5 RECOMMENDATION :-**

- 5.1 Approve – the proposal complies with Policy CS6 of the Great Yarmouth Local Plan: Core Strategy.



Planning Services Department  
Town Hall  
Great Yarmouth  
Norfolk  
NR30 2QF

**Email** neil.wells@cushwake.com  
**Direct** 020 3296 3108

06/16 / 0125 / F

25 February 2016

Dear Sir / Madam,

**FORMER PERENCO SITE, THAMESFIELD WAY, YARMOUTH BUSINESS PARK, GREAT YARMOUTH**

**REMOVAL OF CONDITON 2 & 12 (REF: 06/85/313/F) TO ALLOW THE USE OF THE FORMER PERENCO SITE, YARMOUTH BUSINESS PARK, FOR CLASS D1 (EDUCATION) USE**

The Education Funding Agency propose to secure planning permission at the former Perenco Site, Yarmouth Business Park, Great Yarmouth for education use (Class D1) for Trafalgar Secondary School.

Trafalgar Secondary School is a free school being opened by the Inspiration Trust, a not-for-profit educational charity that runs a number of state-funded schools across East Anglia.

In order to secure retrospective planning permission, the EFA is seeking to remove Condition 2 and 12 of planning permission ref. 6/85/313/F granted on 8 May 1985. Condition 2 states *"the application site shall be used only for open storage, offices, warehouse accommodation and ancillary car parking"*. Condition 12 states *"the offices hereby approved shall only be used in conjunction with the use of the site and in connection with the occupier's offshore industrial activities or by other similar offshore related concerns"*.

The application seeks to remove the Conditions to enable the school to occupy the former Perenco offices at Great Yarmouth Business Park from September 2016.

**Background to the Proposal**

Trafalgar College is a free school being opened by the Inspiration Trust, a not-for-profit educational charity that runs a number of state-funded schools across East Anglia. The Trust family of 11 academies includes three primary schools in the Great Yarmouth borough: Great Yarmouth Primary Academy, Cobholm Primary Academy, and Stradbroke Primary Academy. The Trust has a strong track record of improving educational attainment: Great Yarmouth Primary (formerly Greenacre Primary) was highlighted in the Department for Education's 2015 Academies Annual Report as an exemplar of school turnaround; last summer, Stradbroke Primary recorded the highest ever level of pupils leaving with good levels of reading, writing and maths; and at secondary level, Hethersett Academy near Norwich was in January judged Outstanding in all areas by Ofsted, less than three years after joining the Trust whilst in special measures. The Trust is led by chief executive Dame Rachel de Souza, a nationally-recognised educational reformer and innovator, and Chairman Sir Theodore Agnew, a businessman and philanthropist who lives in the

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borough.

Great Yarmouth has historically low levels of educational attainment and of social mobility, as well as significant pockets of deprivation. Trafalgar College is squarely aimed at tackling that, by offering a strong and aspirational focus on academic excellence with a particular focus on the science, technology, engineering and maths skills required by local businesses in the energy and technology sectors. This focus supports the Council's strategic objectives of addressing social exclusion and reducing deprivation, and strengthening the competitiveness of the local economy by helping transition from a low skilled, low wage, seasonally-fluctuating economy, to a higher skilled, higher wage, year-round sustainable economy.

The borough has a rising population, with growth above of that of the county average. Norfolk County Council has acknowledged the need for additional secondary school places in Great Yarmouth but the only high school in the main urban area of the town - Great Yarmouth High School - is on a physically restricted site and the county council has been unable to bring forward viable plans for its expansion. Trafalgar College will provide a complementary offer to existing provision, delivering the required additional places and stimulating innovation and improved standards at all local schools. In its first year the College will offer up to 150 places at Year 7, growing by one year group each academic year.

The reason why a S73 application has been submitted is to allow the School to open in September 2016 in the existing offices on the site. Following this, a full planning application will be submitted for the redevelopment of the site.

#### **Why has this site been chosen by the school?**

An extensive site search has been undertaken over the past 18 months. 16 sites across Great Yarmouth were identified and investigated; the Perenco Thamesfield Way site was confirmed as offering the best balance between the secondary school's overall space requirements, and access for pupils. This option is the preferred option of the Inspiration Trust.

Of the 16 site options that were considered, the following shortlist of five were identified as those that provided sufficient space to accommodate the school in addition to Thamesfield Way:

- a. **Cobholm Island site NR31 0AL:** A waterside regeneration site in Local Authority ownership. The site is undeliverable for a school because of the need for new access from the A12, site levels, flooding, ecology and planning risk.
- b. **Pasta Foods site, NR 31 0DW:** The vendor was approached on a commercial basis and the offer was rebuffed on the basis that the site is part of an operational business. Site was not available.
- c. **Land adjacent to Broadlands Rugby Club NR31 0AY:** The site is owned by Great Yarmouth Borough Council but is within the Broads Authority planning area. The site has High planning risk due to access, localised flooding, designation in part as Herbert Barnes Riverside Park and ground nesting site for migratory birds. Further the site would require major off site highways infrastructure work for access from the A12 or indirectly via Cobholm.
- d. **John Fuller land (next to Vauxhall Holiday Park) NR30 1TB:** Location in the NW of the town would require students to be bussed to site. Site would require major off site highways infrastructure development to provide access from the A47.
- e. **NHS Northgate Hospital NR30 1BU:** Not considered suitable by the Trust as it is too close and would be potentially damaging to Great Yarmouth High School, an existing VA secondary school in Great Yarmouth.



- f. **Land adjacent to Gapton Hall Road:** The Green Triangle of land adjacent to Gapton Hall Road and the A12 was also considered. However, it has no pedestrian access and is separated from the residential areas (and potential students) by the A12.

## **Results of the Site Search**

Based on the searches undertaken over the past 18 months and the lack of alternative viable options, the Perenco Thamesfield Way site was confirmed as the property that could best meet the secondary school's overall space requirements and offer a good location and access for pupils.

The location offers good walking routes from key population areas via Southtown, has good existing road infrastructure and access, and is placed relatively evenly between existing secondary school provision.

The office accommodation has been vacant since Perenco transferred their operations to Norwich.

## **Economic benefits**

As a free school centrally funded by the Government, Trafalgar College will represent a direct capital investment in the region of £20m in the borough's community facilities, based on similar previous free school builds. This will provide a transformative high quality development on a visually prominent brownfield site, representing a strong vote of confidence in the borough's future. It directly supports the council's strategic objective of delivering key community facilities to support housing and economic growth.

The school, with its strong focus on STEM subjects, will deliver the skills sought by employers aiding the recruitment and retention of high skilled, high paying jobs in the borough. This supports the council's strategic objective to strengthen the competitiveness of the local economy.

The school will directly employ approximately 100 full and part time staff when fully open.

The use of the existing office block on site is key to establishing the school and unlocking these benefits.

## **Health and cultural benefits**

The size of the Thamesfield Way site will enable Trafalgar College to be built with a wide range of sporting and cultural facilities, which we plan to make available to local communities outside of school hours.

OECD research indicates clear links between educational attainment and life expectancy, with progressively lower levels of chronic disease and obesity among those successfully completing secondary and tertiary education. Provision of the school will have a positive effect on health outcomes for the borough.

## **Supporters**

Trafalgar College has many notable local supporters, including Great Yarmouth MP Brandon Lewis and Norfolk County Council member Mick Castle. The Trust has engaged with Great Yarmouth Borough Council ward members for Southtown & Cobholm, Robert Connell and Penny Linden, both of whom are supportive of the Trust's work improving education in the borough.

The school has had more than 100 pupils apply for places, following a series of well-attended consultation and information evenings at St George's Theatre. An online consultation promoted in the Great Yarmouth Mercury, on the College website, and in social media, has so far recorded 96% of respondents in favour of opening the school and unanimous support from those giving a postcode within the borough.

I trust that this submission meets with your requirements and I look forward to receiving notification of the formal validation of the application.

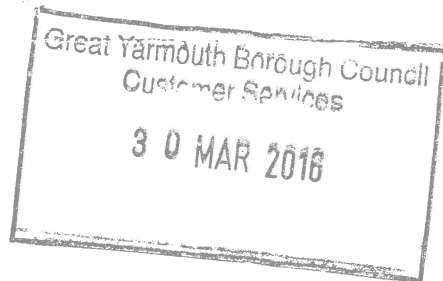
Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

A black rectangular redaction box covering a signature.

**Neil Wells**  
**Cushman & Wakefield – Development Consultancy**

ACK 31/3/16



184 Lowestoft Road  
Gorleston-on-Sea  
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Mr. D. Minns,  
Group Manager (Planning)  
Great Yarmouth Borough Council  
Town Hall  
Hall Plain  
Great Yarmouth  
NR30 2QF



25 March 2016

Dear Sir,

**Planning Application number 06 / 16 / 0125 / F**

**Ref: removal of conditions 2 and 12 re planning permission 06 / 85 / 313 / F to allow site for class D1 (education) use**

I wish to object to the proposed use of this site on Thamesfield Way for education purposes, namely a School.

The grounds for my objection are traffic volume. The access road in to the properties in Thamesfield Way is a narrow road off a roundabout that is itself off another roundabout.

If the traffic congestion at the Harfreys roundabout at the beginning and end of the day gets any worse then travelling in from the Bradwell or Gorleston directions will become a nightmare and most of us have experienced what 'school run' traffic is like in the neighbourhood of several of the Borough's existing schools that are off narrow or side roads. Please just think, is this another traffic bottleneck in the making?

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

Les Cockrill (Mr)

**Mick Castle**  
10 Town Wall Road  
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NR30 1DJ

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County Councillor for  
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Dean Minns  
Planning Dept.  
Great Yarmouth Borough Council

Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2016

Dear Sir

**I write in support of the change of use planning application for the former Perenco office block for use by the new Trafalgar College – reference 01/16/0125/F.**

It is important to remind people about why the new Trafalgar College is to be in Southtown. Most Yarmouth Secondary Schools were closed in the 1980s following Norfolk County Council taking over responsibility for schools.

There has been a shortage of secondary school places in the town for several years - only 900 places at Yarmouth High School - so many youngsters have to travel to Caister and Gorleston. Also the 8 primary schools in town have all become all-through primaries and are increasing pupil numbers to meet demand for primary places - and that will have a knock-on effect for secondary school places from 2020.

The County Council was not able to build a new school and has been unable to expand the existing Yarmouth High School to create the extra school places needed. Only a Free School can now provide provision. Car ownership in Yarmouth is very low which makes local supply of school places even more important.

The site in Southtown is well-chosen because it is ideally suited for the Southtown and Cobholm communities and in close walking distance over the Haven Bridge from Central and South Yarmouth. It has ready made building to accommodate pupils in the first tranche & 7 acres to develop a campus fit for the 21st century. Yarmouth has two County Divisions - Yarmouth North and Central to the north of the market place to the racecourse, and Yarmouth Nelson and Southtown for the area to the south and across Haven Bridge. Each will now boast a Secondary School and there will now be a real choice of schools within the town.

This location is at the centre of a network of safe cycle routes and a number of existing pedestrian crossings to help pedestrians cross the major roads. The opening of the school may also encourage bus operators to introduce a regular bus service via Pasteur Road to link the town centre with edge and out of town shopping areas which will be of wider benefit to local people.

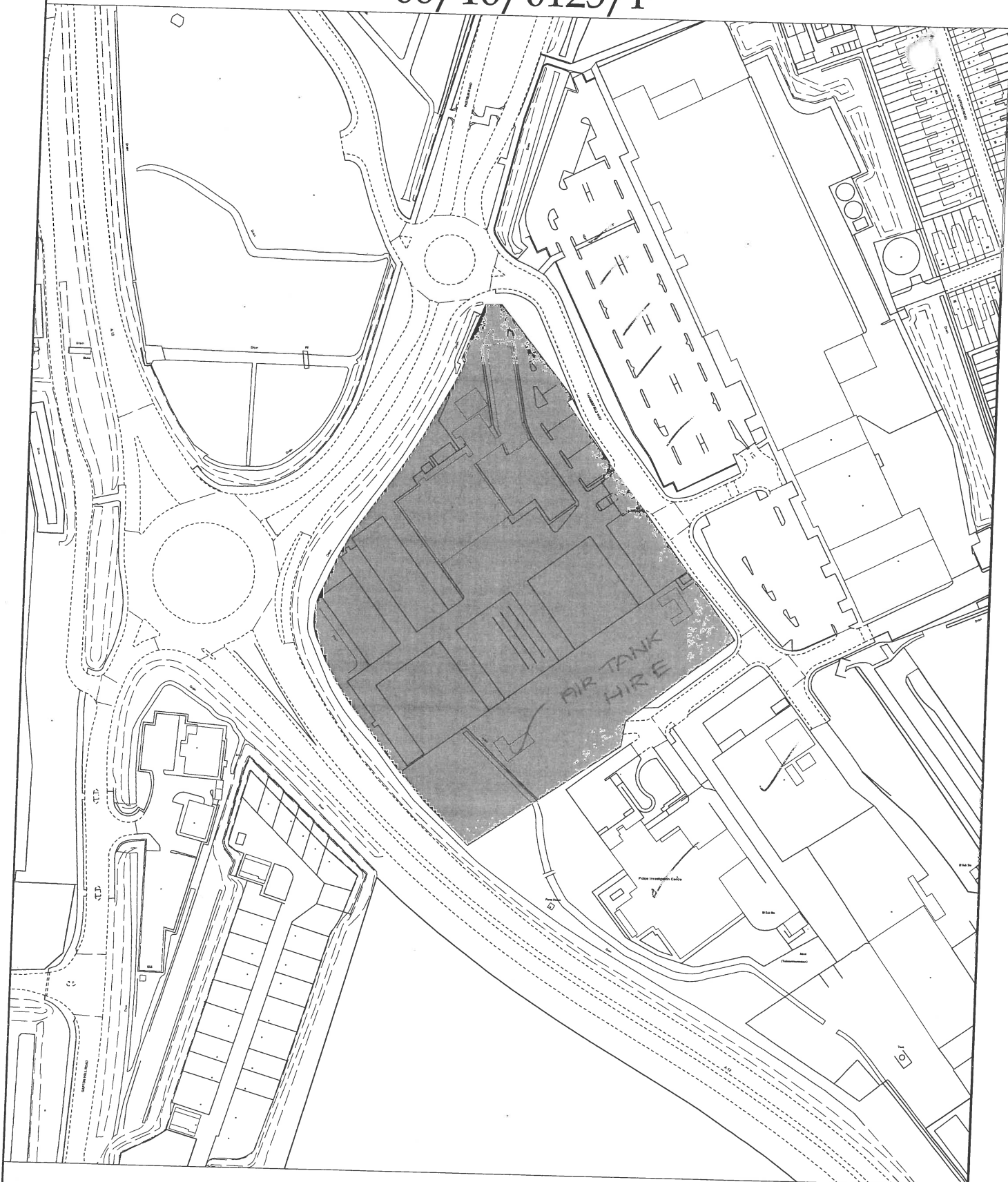
The development of the school will create a number of new jobs - including opportunities for people in the Southtown and Cobholm part of town.

Yours faithfully,



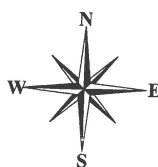
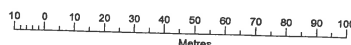
Mick Castle

SITE NOTICE  
06/16/0125/F



**GREAT YARMOUTH**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Planning and Development Department,  
Trafalgar House, Greyfriars Way,  
Great Yarmouth, Norfolk. NR30 2QE



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