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National Experts Local Knowledge

Education Estates 2022



***We are DPP.
An independent, nationally
recognised, director-led
planning consultancy with
offices in Cardiff, Leeds,
London, Manchester and
Newcastle upon Tyne.***

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DPP At Education Estates 2022

A Message from our Head of Education

All too often it is assumed that an education project will 'sail' through the planning process. However, issues such as intensification of existing sites; loss of playing fields; developing beyond settlement limits; and operational issues such as traffic management, mean that the planning process can frustrate school development. People invariably say they want schools in their area, but they don't want them too close to them. A single challenge by a well-informed resident can delay and even derail the planning process.

DPP have a 100% success rate in delivering education projects across the UK, achieving planning permission for over 39,000 pupil/student places and over 3.3m sq.ft of education floorspace since 2019 alone. Our breadth of experience covers all aspects of the education sector ranging from nurseries and extensions to existing schools, all the way through to the provision of brand new secondary schools and strategic university masterplans.

The Education Estates Conference aims to shed light on the funding, design, build, maintenance and management of schools, and to connect key parties in the education industry together in order to deliver innovative projects and solutions. Contacts from DPP will be in attendance at the Conference, so if you would like to get in touch with any of us or set up a bespoke meeting please get in touch.

Michelle Davies
*Director and Head of Education Sector
at DPP Planning*

Cardiff University, Innovation Campus

DPP were appointed by Cardiff University to progress the third phase of the Cardiff University Innovation Campus. This involved the development of two large buildings, public realm, and a new pedestrian/cycle bridge over the adjoining railway line. The buildings are intended to accommodate and encourage World-leading science, increases in research capacity and capabilities through increased levels of research income and collaborative and interdisciplinary translational research.

In order to deliver the scale of development required to meet the users' needs, the original masterplan and scale parameters set by the outline planning consent needed to be amended. DPP supported the University and design team in securing this crucial amendment whilst working closely with three separate design teams led by Hawkins/Brown, BDP and HOK, to develop a planning strategy that enabled key funding timescales to be met. This strategy required the submission of three different planning applications to facilitate the 'early release' of one site. It also required a fresh planning application for the pedestrian/cycle bridge in order to address previous legal undertakings.

The funding requirements and programme meant that the determination period of the application was critical, but following close dialogue with the public, local councillors and stakeholders, DPP managed to secure all three consents under delegated powers.

DPP secured consent for the Translational Research Facility within 10 weeks of submission thereby meeting the key funding timescales, with the Innovation Central, Public Realm, and the new pedestrian bridge element all approved within the agreed wider programme. The Innovation Campus opened on St David's Day, 1st March 2022.



University of Cumbria Citadels, Carlisle

DPP were appointed by the University of Cumbria to provide strategic pre-planning advice regarding proposals to redevelop The Citadels in Carlisle City Centre to provide a new University of Cumbria campus.

The Carlisle Citadels project is at the heart of the proposed wider transformation of Carlisle City Centre taking place over the next five years, ensuring Carlisle reaches its full potential as the hub of the Borderlands area. The redevelopment is a key component in the shared Vision for Carlisle in 2030 'to develop a thriving centre for business, residents, education and culture'.

The Citadels new campus proposal will see the University of Cumbria relocated from its two Carlisle campuses into one city centre location. Just over 14,000 square metres of space will be provided across the refurbished Citadel buildings and the new build provision.

An additional 6,000 square metres of space will be available on site for future university expansion. The proposals include the creation of extensive publicly accessible amenity space and new facilities such as multi-purpose 200 seater lecture theatre, café, exhibition space and a Business Interaction Centre and access to the Grade 1 listed building assets. The university intends to open up both heritage assets and the new university facilities to the public. There will be limited on-site parking due to the sustainable location of the site.

DPP undertook an online and in-person public consultation event which took place in December 2021. DPP submitted a full planning and listed building consent application for the proposed development in March 2022, and the application received a unanimous recommendation of approval at planning committee on 5th August 2022.



Kingston Park Primary School, Newcastle upon Tyne

DPP were appointed to prepare, submit and manage a full planning application for the construction of a new single storey block and extension to the existing Kingston Park Primary School with associated landscaping and car parking works to support the expansion of the existing school from a two form entry (2FE) to a three form entry (3FE) school to serve the projected growth in demand for pupil places within the area.

It was established that the Site lies within Flood Zone 1, however it also lies within a Critical Drainage Area and within an area of flood risk from a mixture of surface water and ordinary minor watercourse flooding. The LLFA indicated in pre-application discussions that they considered the surface water flood areas to be equivalent to EA Flood Zone 3 and would treat it as floodplain / functional floodplain as the EA might. DPP were therefore required to prepare a Flood Risk Sequential Assessment to support the application, in addition to a Statement of Community Involvement and a Playing Fields Assessment as the proposed new block will be located on an area which currently forms part of the school's playing fields. Sport England were a statutory consultee on the application, which raised no objection due to the proposed provision of improvements to the existing drainage of the playing fields and the provision of community use of the playing fields will provide tangible benefits to local residents through encouragement of physical activity and participation in sports.

The planning application was approved at planning committee on February 4th 2022 and construction is now underway with the school due to open in time for September 2023.





Whitmore High School, Barry

DPP gained unanimous planning approval on behalf of the Vale of Glamorgan Council and their contractors, Morgan Sindall, for the first 21st Century Band B funded new build school in the Vale of Glamorgan. The proposal forms one of three secondary school projects for Barry, collectively known as Barry Secondary Learning Communities.

DPP were chosen for our track record in delivering schools in the UK and also the relationships established over time with the project team. Early involvement in the whole process enabled DPP to advise on this, and the two other projects, identifying key issues that would affect all three schemes.

The part two, part three storey building will provide a co-educational facility for 1,100 pupils aged 11 to 18, and will also provide indoor sports facilities, and an all-weather pitch and games court.

DPP undertook a pre-application with the LPA to develop the scheme and undertook a consultation programme consisting of a letter-drop to residents and parents, and a public meeting at the existing school.

DPP successfully demonstrated that the proposed development was acceptable and that there would be no significant impact on residential amenity, that the new highway and pedestrian accesses were acceptable.

"The Council is proud to have such an ambitious programme, which proposes to deliver new 21st century schools here in Barry and throughout the Vale of Glamorgan. This and other projects like it can make a real difference to thousands of Vale children, helping them towards bright fulfilling futures."

Thames Park School, Grays, Thurrock

Acting on behalf of Bowmer and Kirkland, DPP secured planning permission for a new secondary school in Grays, Thurrock. Thames Park School provides a modern teaching facility for up to 900 pupils as part of the Osborne Co-operative Academy Trust, focusing on delivering digital learning and Artificial Intelligence for the pupils with ICT fully integrated into the curriculum and the building itself.

The school delivers urgently needed secondary school places in Thurrock and will provide a permanent site for the pupils already studying at Thames Park in temporary accommodation in central Grays. DPP successfully demonstrated a balanced planning case in support of the school development, despite being located within the Green Belt, demonstrating that Very Special Circumstances are triggered by the urgent need for school places and the lack of alternative sequentially preferable sites in the borough.

The school was the first project for which DPP have secured consent under the Department for Education's MMC1 (Modern Methods of Construction 1) Framework, with a number of future schools due to be delivered under the framework in the coming years across the UK. Thames Park School was delivered in just over 1 year from initial site mobilisation to occupation and is now open as of September 2022.



Dixons Academy Sixth Form, Bradford

DPP were instructed by Kier Construction to prepare and project manage a planning application for a new sixth-form academy. The new academy, funded by the Department for Education (DfE) and operated by Dixons Academies, provides 880 student places and 81 new staff positions in an area of identified need.

The site contains a Grade II Listed mill and associated Grade II Listed coach house. The mill had already been converted into office use, however, the coach house lay vacant and in a poor state of repair. The proposals involved the conversion of the mill to provide teaching facilities and the restoration of the coach house to provide changing facilities for a newly proposed sports hall within the existing site car park.

DPP provided initial strategic advice to the client on potential planning constraints and carried out pre-application discussions with the LPA to agree the design of the scheme ahead of the formal planning submission. This primarily focused on the alterations to the Listed mill buildings and the design and form of the sports hall within their setting.

DPP project managed the development team in compiling the planning application package which addressed and overcame planning policy matters including impact on the Listed mill buildings, loss of employment use and wider design considerations.

The sixth form is now open following planning approval in 2018.





West Coventry Academy

DPP were instructed by Bowmer + Kirkland on behalf of the Department for Education to secure planning permission for full planning application for the demolition of the existing school buildings (with the exception of the Caretaker's House) and construction of a replacement secondary school comprising a three-storey teaching block with linked single-storey double height sports building, the construction of a new access off Tile Hill Lane, and associated parking, external landscaping works, outdoor sports facilities, and infrastructure.

DPP were appointed to conduct pre-application discussions with the Local Authority and the relevant consultees and ensure that the proposal met and complied with local and strategic planning policy and prepare the relevant planning documents including a Planning statement.

DPP worked closely with the Local Planning Authority, Bowmer + Kirkland and other relevant consultees to ensure conditions were discharged promptly to ensure development was able to start as soon as possible.

Consent was secured for this project in August 2021.



Mo Mowlam Academy, Redcar

On behalf of Tilbury Douglas, DPP prepared a full planning application for the erection of a replacement school and associated outdoor-sports areas on Corporation Road in Redcar. Once operational, the school will provide a new building for the current Mo Mowlam Academy (former Pathways School) in Grangetown, Redcar, and will accommodate up to 100 school children (30 primary and 70 secondary) with social, emotional and mental health needs.

DPP coordinated the planning application process, through preparation to submission of the application to a successful decision. DPP initially held pre-application discussions with the LPA and statutory consultees to gather their initial thoughts on the proposal and facilitate input into the design process. Following this, DPP organised a public consultation leaflet drop to inform nearby residents and stakeholders of the proposal and to answer any queries that they may have. DPP coordinated the planning application to submission within tight timescales and prepared a planning statement and statement of community involvement to support the planning application. The planning application received unanimous approval at planning committee on 5th September 2019.



Our Team

Every member of our team brings professional skills and technical expertise which we utilise on projects to deliver successful outcomes.

Director input throughout every project ensures clients benefit from our vast experience. We draw together our project teams based not just on geographical location but on the expertise required to deliver the outcome.

Our people deliver projects with passion, openness and accountability.
They focus on action, not words, on outcome not process. The single goal for everybody is delivering results for our clients.



Michelle Davies

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Michelle has over 33 years' experience in planning and development for both local government and private consultancy. She's been involved in a variety of projects, in particular; mixed-use, retail, commercial, industrial and residential schemes as planning adviser and often as overall project coordinator and client representative.

Michelle is National Head of Education at DPP, responsible for the knowledge management of key trends and issues in Education planning. A regular speaker at Education conferences, she's based in the Leeds office and is a DPP Board Director.

DPP has a strong Educational offer and expertise and is currently working around the country, both in the Schools sector including Primary, Through, Secondary and Free, and in Higher Education, acting for several Universities on both strategic and non-strategic issues. Michelle has a 100% track record in delivering school consents, with over 30 in the last 5 years.



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