

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday, 11th October, 2017**

**10.00 am**

**Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall,  
Maidstone**





## AGENDA

### PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

**Wednesday, 11th October, 2017, at 10.00 am**  
**Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone**

Ask for: **Andrew Tait**  
Telephone: **03000 416749**

*Tea/Coffee will be available from 9:30 **outside the meeting room***

#### **Membership (13)**

Conservative (10): Mr R A Marsh (Chairman), Mr R A Pascoe (Vice-Chairman),  
Mr A Booth, Mr P C Cooper, Miss E Dawson, Mr K Gregory,  
Mr H Rayner, Mr C Simkins, Mrs P A V Stockell and Mr J Wright

Liberal Democrat (1): Mr I S Chittenden

Labour (1) Mr B H Lewis

Independents (1) Mr P M Harman

#### **UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**

*(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)*

#### **A. COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

1. Substitutes
2. Declarations of Interests by Members in items on the Agenda for this meeting.
3. Minutes - 13 September 2017 (Pages 5 - 8)
4. Site Meetings and Other Meetings

#### **B. GENERAL MATTERS**

1. General Matters

#### **C. MINERALS AND WASTE DISPOSAL APPLICATIONS**

#### **D. DEVELOPMENTS TO BE CARRIED OUT BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL**

1. Proposal SE/17/2395 (KCC/SE/0210/2017) - Retention of temporary classrooms for a further three year period at Seal CE Primary School, Zamba Way, Seal; KCC Property and Infrastructure Support (Pages 9 - 22)
2. Proposal MA/17/503887 (KCC/MA/0197/2017) - Change of use of former stationmaster's house to public library for up to five years at Station House, Ware Street, Bearsted; KCC Property and Infrastructure Support (Pages 23 - 36)

#### **E. COUNTY MATTERS DEALT WITH UNDER DELEGATED POWERS**

1. County matter applications (Pages 37 - 42)
2. County Council developments
3. Screening Opinions under Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017
4. Scoping Opinions under Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (None)

**F. OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT**

**EXEMPT ITEMS**

*(At the time of preparing the agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public)*

John Lynch  
Head of Democratic Services  
03000 410466

Tuesday, 3 October 2017

*(Please note that the background documents referred to in the accompanying papers may be inspected by arrangement with the Departments responsible for preparing the report. Draft conditions concerning applications being recommended for permission, reported in section D, are available to Members in the Members' Lounge.)*

**KENT COUNTY COUNCIL**

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of A meeting of the Planning Applications Committee held at Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Wednesday, 13th September, 2017.

PRESENT: Mr R A Marsh (Chairman), Mr R A Pascoe (Vice-Chairman), Mr P Bartlett (Substitute for Mr A Booth), Mr I S Chittenden, Miss E Dawson, Mr K Gregory, Mr B H Lewis, Mr J P McInroy (Substitute for Mr P C Cooper), Mr H Rayner, Mr C Simkins, Mrs P A V Stockell and Mr J Wright

OTHER MEMBERS: Mr M D Payne

OFFICERS: Sharon Thompson (Head of Planning Applications Group), Andrea Hopkins (Principal Planning Officer), Paul Hopkins (Principal Planning Officer), Jim Wooldridge (Principal Planning Officer - Mineral Developments), Mary Green (Senior Planning Officer), Matt Hogben (Principal Transport and Development Manager) and Andrew Tait (Democratic Services Officer)

**UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**

**36. Membership.**  
*(Item. )*

The Committee noted the appointment of Miss E Dawson in place of Mr B J Sweetland.

**37. Minutes - 19 June 2017.**  
*(Item. A3)*

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2017 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

**38. Site Meetings and Other Meetings.**  
*(Item. A4)*

The Committee noted that a training session on the Development Consent Order process would take place following the meeting.

**39. Application DA/17/762 (KCC/DA/0104/2017) - Application to vary Condition 1 of Permission DA/13/140 to allow continuation of restoration operations until 31 May 2020 at Stone Pit 1, Cotton Lane, Stone; Land Logical Dartford Ltd.**  
*(Item. C1)*

RESOLVED that permission be granted to the variation of Condition 1 of Permission DA/13/140 to allow the continuation of restoration operations until 31 May 2020 subject to conditions, including conditions covering the infilling and restoration of the site being completed by 31 May 2020; the re-imposition of all other conditions previously imposed on Permission DA/13/140 (updated and amended as necessary to reflect any details approved pursuant to this permission) including landfilling operations being restricted to between 0730

and 1700 hours on Mondays to Fridays and between 0730 and 1300 hours on Saturdays with no operations taking place on Sundays and Public Holidays; a maximum of 158 HGV movements per day; pollution prevention control measures; implementation of the approved ecological mitigation strategy; delivery of a surface water management scheme; maintenance and continued operation of the landfill gas monitoring and collection system; noise controls at sensitive properties; and the submission and implementation of a final management plan.

**40. Application AS/17/243 (KCC/AS/0045/2017) - Application to extend the hours of operation under Permission AS/12/813 to allow for the transportation of waste to and from the site at the beginning and end of each day at Ashford Waste Transfer Station, Cobbs Wood Industrial Estate, Brunswick Road, Ashford; Biffa Waste Services.**

*(Item. C2)*

(1) Mr P Bartlett addressed the Committee in his capacity as the Local Member. He did not participate in the decision-making in respect of this application.

(2) On being put to the vote, the recommendations of the Head of Planning Applications Group were carried by 8 votes to 2.

(3) RESOLVED that permission be granted to the application subject to conditions, including conditions covering the re-imposition of all conditions previously imposed on Permission AS/12/813 (updated and amended as necessary to reflect any details approved pursuant to this planning permission); Condition 26 being amended to allow operation of the Waste Transfer Station only between 0500 and 1800 hours on Mondays to Fridays, 0600 and 1800 hours on Saturdays and 0700 and 1730 hours on Sundays; and the imposition of additional conditions covering no HGVs entering or leaving the site before 0600 hours; all mobile plant / equipment based on site being fitted with broadband (white noise) reverse alarms; and additional controls on HGV movements during the extended hours to no more than 9 HGV movements (3 in and 6 out) between 0600 and 0700 on Mondays to Fridays, 6 HGV movements (3 in and 3 out) between 0600 and 0700 on Saturdays, 10 HGV movements (5 in and 5 out) between 0700 and 0900 on Sundays, 14 HGV movements (7 in and 7 out) between 1630 and 1800 on Mondays to Fridays, 24 HGV movements (12 in and 12 out) between 1300 and 1800 on Saturdays and 6 HGV movements (3 in and 3 out) between 1600 and 1730 on Sundays.

**41. Application AS/17/1054 (KCC/AS/0192/2017) - Installation of Ferric Dosing Kiosk at Ashford Wastewater Treatment Works and Sludge treatment Centre, Kinneys Lane, Canterbury Road, Ashford; Southern Water Services Ltd.**

*(Item. C3)*

(1) Mr P Bartlett addressed the Committee in his capacity as the Local Member. He did not participate in the decision-making in respect of this application.

(2) RESOLVED that:-

(a) permission be granted to the application subject to conditions, including conditions covering the submission of a Construction Management Plan detailing arrangements for routing, speed of vehicles on site, parking and turning, timing of deliveries, wheel

washing and temporary traffic management/signage; limits on the number of HGVs as set out in the application; limits to the hours of construction activities; appropriate handling and storage of fuel, oil and lubricants; and the access road being kept free of mud and debris; and

- (b) the applicants be advised by Informative that they need to obtain necessary highway approvals and consents, including appropriate controls regarding the management of abnormal loads.

**42. Application SE/17/179 (KCC/SE/0179/2017) - Section 73 application for the temporary relaxation of Condition 13 of Permission SE/90/1302 to allow the waste transfer station only to be extended to run from 0500 to 1800 hours on Mondays to Fridays during repairs to the Tunbridge Wells Waste Transfer Station at Dunbrik Waste Transfer Station, Main Road, Sundridge, Sevenoaks; KCC Waste Management.**  
*(Item. C4)*

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) permission be granted to the application subject to all existing conditions on Permission SE/90/1302 (as amended) being re-imposed and to additional conditions covering the extended operating hours being limited to between 0500 and 0700 hours on Mondays to Fridays for a temporary 10 week period commencing with the closure of the Tunbridge Wells Waste Transfer Station; and no more than 16 HGV / articulated waste freighter movements (8 in / 8 out) taking place between 0500 and 0700 hours on Mondays to Fridays; and
- (b) the applicants be advised by Informative that they should use their best endeavours to minimise vehicle movements and associated activities between 0500 and 0700 hours.

**43. Proposal TH/17/818 (KCC/TH/0137/2017) - Change of use from agricultural land to school sports field with associated pavilion building, storage and fencing, and the creation of a horticultural area with associated polytunnels at land adjacent to Forelands Fields School, Ramsgate; KCC Property and Infrastructure Support.**  
*(Item. D1)*

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) permission be granted to the proposal subject to conditions, including conditions covering the standard time limit; the development being carried out in accordance with the permitted details; the submission of details of all materials to be used externally; the submission of the scheme of landscaping; control of hours of use of the sports field and pavilion building out of school hours to between the hours of 1600 and 2100 only, during daylight hours, with no artificial lighting; the school car park being made available for use by community users of the facility out of school hours; the submission of a specification and timetable for the implementation of a programme of archaeological

work; the submission of a detailed Sustainable Surface Water Drainage Scheme; the submission of details of the implementation, maintenance and management of the Sustainable Surface Water Drainage Scheme; control of surface water drainage and infiltration into the ground; the prohibition of piling and other penetrative foundation design methods; control of the development should land contamination be identified; hours of working during construction and demolition being restricted to between 0800 and 1800 on Mondays to Fridays and between the hours of 0900 and 1300 on Saturdays, with no operations on Sundays and Bank Holidays; the submission of a Construction Management Strategy, including the location of site compounds and operative/visitor parking, details of site security and safety measures, lorry waiting and wheel washing facilities, and details of the construction access and management of the site access to avoid peak school times; and

- (b) the applicants be advised by Informative that:-
  - (i) their attention is drawn to the letter from Public Rights of Way which contains general informatives with regard to works adjacent to and/or on a Public Right of Way. It is also advised that “the granting of planning permission confers on the developer no other permission or consent or right to close or divert any Public Right of Way at any time without the express permission of the Highways Authority”; and
  - (ii) they are advised to speak to the County Council Public Rights of Way team should any works to the Public Right of Way be required.

**44. Matters dealt with under Delegated Powers.**  
*(Item. E1)*

RESOLVED to note matters dealt with under delegated powers since the last meeting relating to:-

- (a) County Matter applications;
- (b) County Council developments;
- (c) Screening Opinions under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017; and
- (d) Scoping Opinions under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.



SECTION D  
DEVELOPMENT TO BE CARRIED OUT BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL

Background Documents: the deposited documents; views and representations received as referred to in the reports and included in the development proposals dossier for each case; and other documents as might be additionally indicated.

### **Item D1**

## **Retention of temporary classrooms for a further 3 year period at Seal C of E Primary School, Zambra Way, Seal, Sevenoaks - SE/17/2395 (KCC/SE/0210/2017)**

A report by Head of Planning Applications Group to Planning Applications Committee on 11 October 2017.

Application by Kent County Council Property & Infrastructure Support for the retention of two temporary double classroom modular buildings, permitted under consent references SE/11/980 and SE/15/2465, for a further 3 year period at Seal C of E Primary School, Zambra Way, Seal, Sevenoaks, TN15 0DJ - SE/16/01043/KCCREG3 (KCC/SE/0055/2016)

Recommendation: The application be referred to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in respect of the objection from Sport England, and subject to his decision, that planning permission be granted, subject to conditions.

**Local Member: Mr Roger Gough**

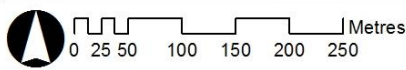
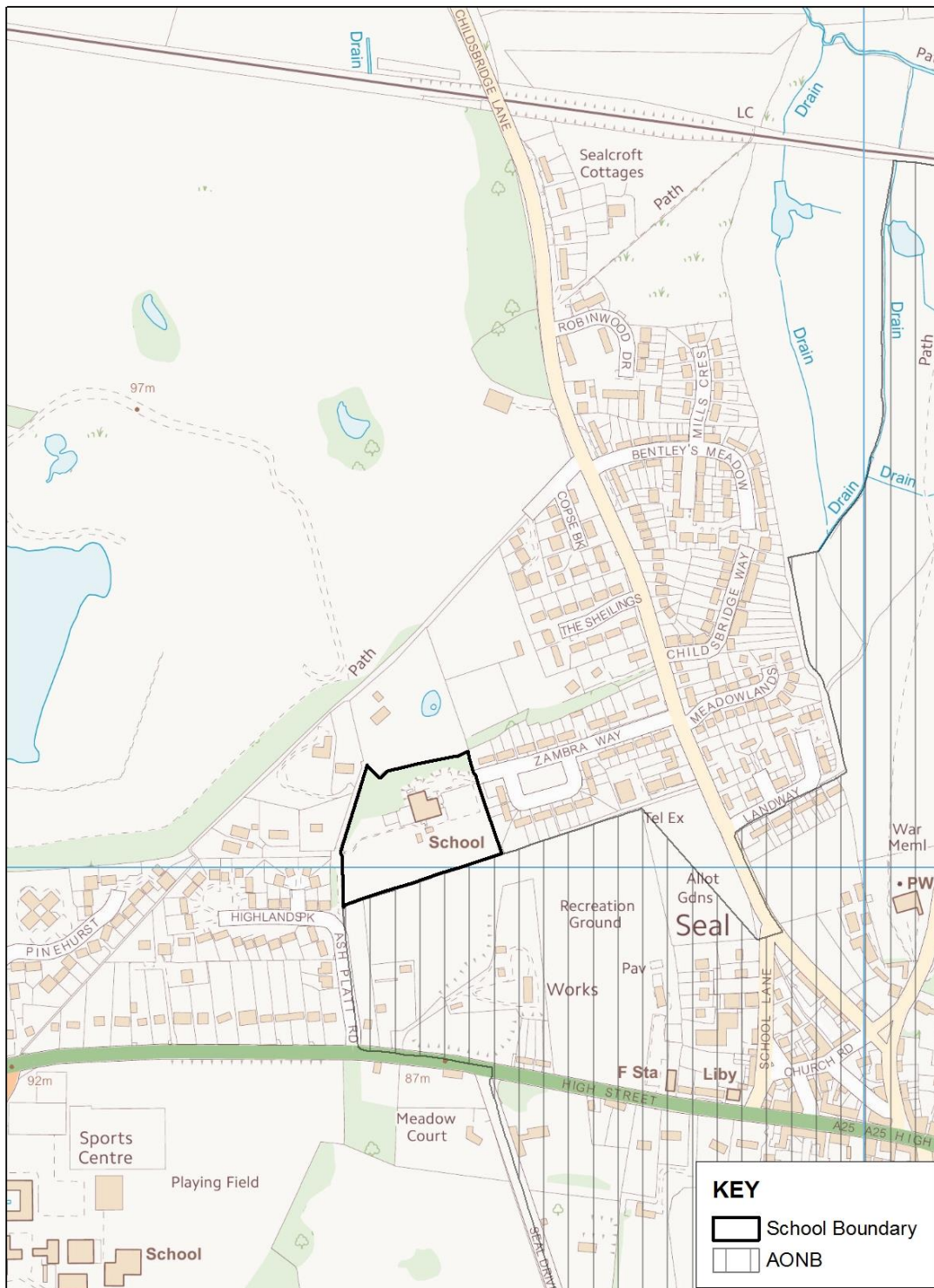
**Classification: Unrestricted**

### **Site**

1. Seal Primary School is housed in a single storey building which is located at the end of a cul-de-sac in the village of Seal. The existing building is constructed with brickwork and rendered blue panels under a flat roof, with white fascias, windows and doors. The school is located in a central position within the school site, behind the hard surfaced playground. The playing fields lie to the south of the school and the site is well screened along the boundaries, including a wooded area to the north. Four temporary mobile classrooms are located on site, to the west, south and east of the main building, one of which is occupied by a private nursery. An area of staff parking (28 spaces) is located to the north of the school, accessed from a single vehicular entrance off Zambra Way. The access is gated and there are zig-zag keep clear markings outside the school gates. Zambra Way is a residential cul-de-sac, with semi-detached two storey properties located in a regular pattern around a small green. A secondary pedestrian only access to the school is provided from Ash Platt Road to the west, after its junction with Highlands Park, where it becomes a single width unmade road. Ash Platt Road is accessed from the A25 and serves a number of detached properties, but also provides access to Highlands Park which is a residential cul-de-sac of 26 properties.
2. The school lies outside of the settlement boundary of Seal, within the Metropolitan Green Belt and adjacent to the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), which meets the school's southern boundary. On a wider scale the village's recreation ground and community centre lie to the south-east of the school, accessed from the A25 Seal Road. The community centre has a car park and a pedestrian footpath which runs between this and Zambra Way. This recreation ground falls within the Seal Conservation Area which extends further to the south-east.

**Retention of temporary classrooms for a further 3 year period at Seal C of E Primary School - SE/17/2395 (KCC/SE/0210/2017)**

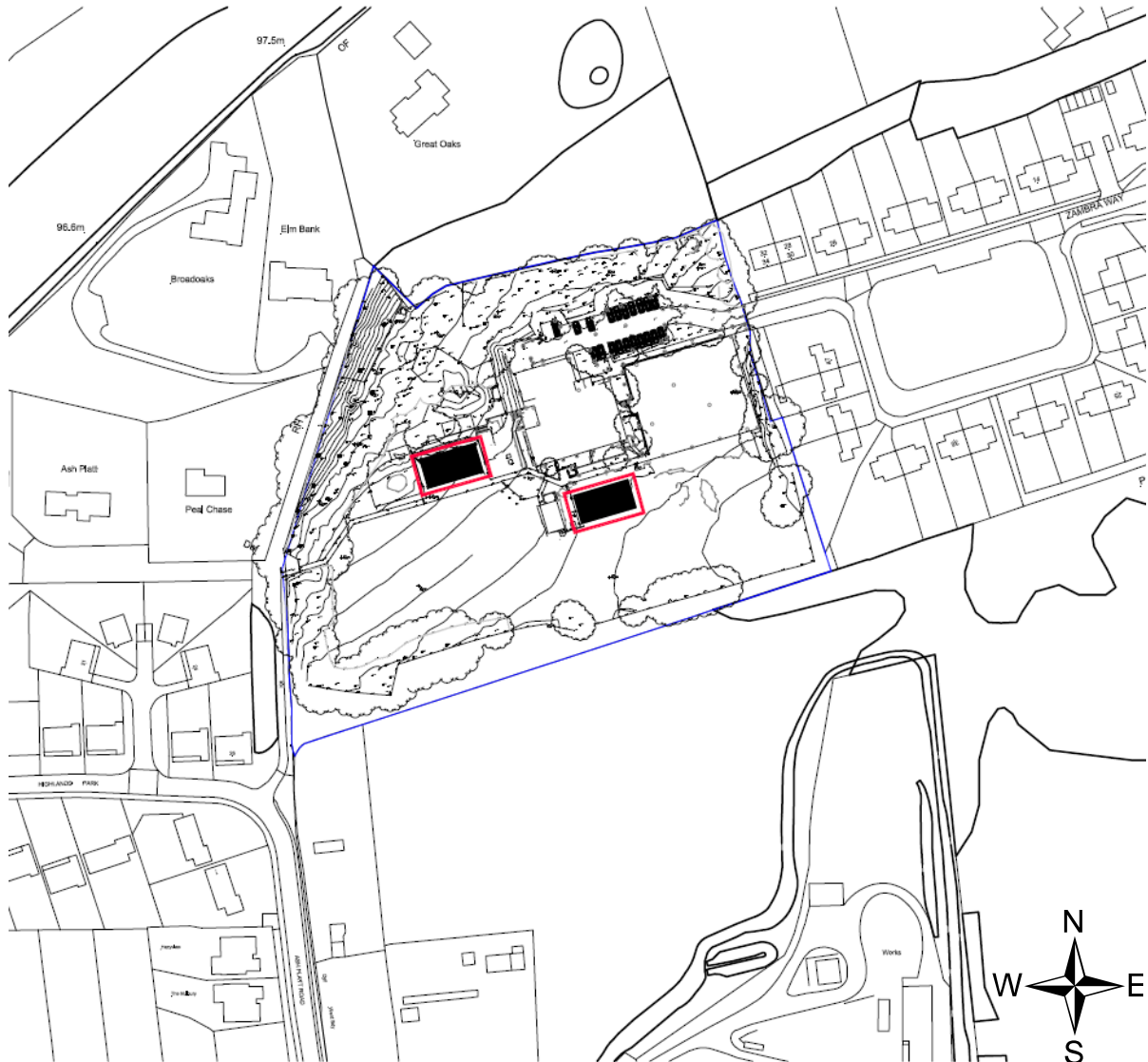
**General Location Plan**



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Ordnance Survey 100019238

**Retention of temporary classrooms for a further 3 year period at Seal C of E Primary School - SE/17/2395 (KCC/SE/0210/2017)**

Site Layout Plan



**Retention of temporary classrooms for a further 3 year period at Seal C of E Primary School - SE/17/2395 (KCC/SE/0210/2017)**

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**Background/Relevant Planning History**

3. Seal Primary School has recently been expanded from 1 form of entry to 2 form of entry (FE). However, the School does not currently have the building capacity to accommodate the number of pupils it is allocated. Application reference SE/16/1043 (KCC/SE/0055/2016), which proposed to provide the required accommodation for the pupil allocation by undertaking internal alterations and refurbishments in addition to a single storey extension, was originally on the Agenda of the Planning Applications Committee meeting on the 13 July 2016. However, at the request of the Applicant, the application was deferred from that meeting to allow the applicant additional time to give further consideration to the highway and access concerns raised by the local community and to explore the possibility of further mitigation, over and above that that was already proposed.
4. Following additional consideration by the applicant of the concerns raised, which included a meeting with Seal Parish Council to consider possible alternative sites for additional parent parking, the application was considered at the 7 December 2016 Planning Applications Committee Meeting. My recommendation was to refer the application to the Secretary of State (in relation to a Sport England objection) and that, subject to his decision, permission be granted subject to conditions. However, after the debate, Members resolved to refuse permission on the following grounds:
  1. *The proposal would represent inappropriate development in the Metropolitan Green Belt by reason of the scale and size of the extension and the increase in built form on the site, which would be harmful to and would not maintain the open character of the Green Belt, contrary to Policy GB8 of the Sevenoaks District Council Allocation and Development Management Plan, Policy L08 of the Core Strategy and paragraph 89 of the National Planning Policy Framework.*
  2. *The proposed expansion of the school would result in an increase in school related traffic on surrounding roads without provision in place of adequate mitigation measures to offset the expected adverse travel impacts, contrary to Policy T1 of the Sevenoaks District Council Allocation and Development Management Plan.*
5. The applicant is currently in the process of preparing a revised application for the provision of the additional permanent accommodation required for a 2FE Primary School which also seeks to address the above grounds of refusal. That application is due to be submitted in the near future.
6. In the interim, the applicant has provided a temporary classroom building of 129m<sup>2</sup> on the school site to accommodate the September 2017 pupil intake. That building was provided under permitted development pursuant to Class M of Part 7 to Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). Therefore, a planning application was not required.
7. In addition to the above, the planning history for the school includes a number of applications over the past 9 years for various temporary mobile classrooms, and their subsequent retention. This includes an application granted permission in October 2015 for the demolition of 4 prefabricated units and their replacement with a double mobile classroom unit for a period of 18 months. That application, SE/15/2465, granted

**Retention of temporary classrooms for a further 3 year period at Seal C of E Primary School - SE/17/2395 (KCC/SE/0210/2017)**

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temporary permission for the modular building which expired on the 31 March 2017. The School has use of one further modular building on the site, which was granted temporary permission under consent reference SE/11/980. That permission expired at the end of June 2016. Apart from a modular building used by a private nursery, all other temporary classroom buildings have been removed from the site.

**Proposal**

8. This application has been submitted by Kent County Council Property & Infrastructure Support and proposes the retention of the two double mobile classroom units on the site for a further three year period. As detailed in paragraph 7 above, the two double mobile classroom units were permitted under consent references SE/11/980 and SE/15/2465, and both previous temporary consents have now expired.
9. The first of the two modular buildings, permitted under consent reference SE/11/980, is located to the west of the main school building, on an area which was previously home to an outdoor swimming pool. The second of the two buildings, permitted under consent reference SE/15/2465, is located to the south of the main school building on the edge of the school playing field. However, as outlined in paragraph 7 above, the modular building replaced 4 smaller prefabricated units which were spread over a wider area.
10. Both modular buildings are single storey with a flat roof, and are used for general teaching accommodation. The modular building to the west of the school is finished in a pale blue, to match the colour finish of the main school building. The other modular building is finished in dark green. The retention of these two buildings per se would not result in an increase in staff or pupil numbers so no additional parking/access improvements are proposed at this time.

**Planning Policy**

11. (i) **National Planning Policies** – the most relevant National Planning Policies are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012), which sets out the Government’s planning policy guidance for England at the heart of which is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The guidance is a material consideration for the determination of planning applications but does not change the statutory status of the development plan which remains the starting point for decision making. However the weight given to development plan policies will depend on their consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the development plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

The NPPF states that, in determining applications, local planning authorities should look for solutions rather than problems, and decision-takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

In terms of delivering sustainable development in relation to this development proposal, the NPPF guidance and objectives covering the following matters are of particular relevance:

- achieving the requirement for high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;

**Retention of temporary classrooms for a further 3 year period at Seal C of E Primary School - SE/17/2395 (KCC/SE/0210/2017)**

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- the great importance the Government attaches to Green Belts, with the fundamental aim of Green Belt Policy being to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open;
- minimising impacts on biodiversity, and protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, contributing to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity;
- promoting sustainable transport;

In addition, Paragraph 72 states that: *The Government attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local Planning Authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. They should give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools, and works with schools promoters to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.*

**Policy Statement – Planning for Schools Development** (15 August 2011) sets out the Government's commitment to support the development of state-funded schools and their delivery through the planning system.

**(ii) Development Plan Policies****Sevenoaks District Core Strategy: Adopted February 2011:**

- Policy L08      **The Countryside and Rural Economy:**** Seeks to maintain the extent of Green Belt, and conserve and enhance the countryside, including the distinctive features that contribute to the special character of its landscape and its biodiversity. The distinctive character of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its setting, will be conserved and enhanced.
- Policy SP1**      Requires all new development to be designed to a high standard, reflect the distinctive local character of an area, create safe, inclusive and attractive environments, incorporate sustainable development principles and maintain biodiversity. Account should be taken of guidance adopted by the District Council in the form of Conservation Area Appraisals and Parish Plans, amongst other matters. The District's heritage assets and their settings, including listed buildings, conservation areas, historic buildings, archaeological remains, landscapes and outstanding views will be protected and enhanced.
- Policy SP2**      Sets standards for sustainable design and construction. Institutional development will be required to achieve a BREEAM rating of at least 'very good'.
- Policy SP11**      Seeks to conserve biodiversity, to ensure no net loss through development and to promote opportunities to enhance biodiversity.

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**Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan (February 2015)**

- Policy EN1**     **Design Principles:** sets out the need for high quality design and for proposals to meet criteria including: responding to scale, height and materials; respecting the topography and character of the site and any sensitive features; not result in the loss of buildings or open space that would affect the character of an area, provided satisfactory means of access and parking provision; include opportunities for increasing biodiversity potential, including sustainable drainage and to avoid harm to existing biodiversity; create a permeable layout; safe and easy access for those with disabilities; creation of a safe and secure environment to deter crime and fear of crime; include modern communication technology and infrastructure; and make efficient use of land.
- Policy EN2**     **Amenity Protection:** Proposals should provide adequate residential amenities for existing and future occupiers of development, and safeguard amenities of existing and future occupiers of nearby properties by ensuring development does not result in excessive noise, vibration, odour, activity, vehicle movements, overlooking or visual intrusion and where it would not result in a loss of privacy or light.
- Policy EN5**     **Landscape:** Sets out that the Kent Downs and High Weald Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and their settings will be given the highest status of protection. Proposals that affect landscape throughout the District will need to conserve the character of the landscape including areas of tranquillity.
- Policy GB8**     **Limited Extensions to Non Residential Buildings in the Green Belt:** Proposals to extend an existing non-residential building within the Green Belt which would meet the following criteria would be permitted – (a) the existing building is lawful and permanent in nature and (b) the design and volume of the proposed extension, taking into consideration the cumulative impact of any previous extensions, would be proportional and subservient to the original building and would not materially harm the openness of the Green Belt through excessive scale, bulk or visual intrusion.
- Policy T1**     **Mitigating Travel Impact:** Sets out the need to mitigate against adverse travel impacts including their impact on congestion and safety, environmental impact such as noise, pollution and impact on amenity and health.
- Policy T2**     **Vehicle Parking:** Sets out that vehicle parking provision, including cycle parking, for non-residential developments should be in accordance with the advice of Kent County Council as Local Highway Authority.

**Consultations**

12. **Sevenoaks District Council** raise no objection to the application.

**Seal Parish Council** raise no objection to the application.

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**Kent County Council Highways and Transportation Officer** raises no objection to the application, and comments as follows:

“It is assumed that since this is an application for the renewal of an existing temporary consent for temporary classrooms that they will be no increase in pupil numbers or staff numbers as a result of purely this application.

Whilst it is appreciated that there is a certain amount of congestion and parking caused at school start and finish times which affect local residents, these are of short duration and only occur during school term times. The impact of this application should not make the current situation any worse and create a highway safety issue - this was the recommendation to you by Highways in October 2015 when the previous application for temporary classrooms was applied for renewal.

Therefore no objection is raised to this application on highway grounds but it is recommended that a condition be applied to require a revised School Travel Plan to be submitted and registered on KCC's "Jambusters" web site within 3 months of the start of the term when these temporary buildings are utilised. This will hopefully encourage a greater number of pupils and staff to travel to and from the school by sustainable means and reduce the highway impact of the pupil / staff numbers already attending the school.”

**The County Councils School Travel Plan Advisor** confirms that Seal Primary School has an up-to-date and approved School Travel Plan that meets the County Councils criteria.

**Sport England** raise objection to the application as comment as follows:

“The existing modular building to the west of the school would appear to be separated from the rest of the playing field land by a pathway, making this land less usable as playing field.

However there are concerns regarding the building to the south of the school. This is sited on what is considered to be usable playing field and makes the land less usable for pitches, interrupting what would be a rectangular section of playing field and making the space far less flexible for sport. It is considered that the land it is on is capable of forming part of a playing pitch and no evidence has been provided to the contrary to support the applicant's claim that the area is unsuitable for playing field. The proximity of school buildings, as claimed by the applicant, does not preclude this area being used as a playing pitch providing the necessary run-off distances are maintained. Therefore this application cannot be considered under Exception 3<sup>1</sup>. Nor is the proposal considered to meet Exception 4<sup>2</sup> as claimed by the applicant, as no replacement playing field is proposed by this application as demanded by this exception.

It is noted that Sport England does not appear to have been consulted when these modular buildings were originally put in place.

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<sup>1</sup> *Exception E3: The development is on land that is incapable of informing, or forming part of a playing pitch.*

<sup>2</sup> *Exception E4: The playing field to be lost would be replaced by a playing field of equivalent or better quality in a suitable location.*



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In light of the above, Sport England objects to the application because it is not considered to accord with any of the exceptions to Sport England's Playing Fields Policy or with Paragraph 74 of the NPPF."

**Local Member**

13. The local County Member, Mr Roger Gough was notified of the application on 26 July 2017.

**Publicity**

14. The application was publicised by the posting of two site notices (one at each entrance to the school), an advertisement in a local newspaper, and the individual notification of 17 residential properties.

**Representations**

15. In response to the publicity, 1 letter of representation has been received. The key points raised can be summarised as follows:
- Objection is raised if this application in anyway facilitates a further expansion of the school;
  - Even with the current pupil numbers, it is considered that the use of the rear pedestrian access poses a serious health and safety issue to pupils and parents, as well as being a major inconvenience to local residents;
  - It is considered that the existing rear access to the school is not fit for purpose, and that a new entrance should be created which would avoid parents and pupils using the narrow road leading up from Ash Platt Road to the rear school gate;
  - Parents should be prevented from parking in Ash Platt Road and Highlands Park, and made to park in Seal Recreation Grounds car park and walk with their children from there.

**Discussion**

16. In considering this proposal regard must be had to the Development Plan Policies outlined in paragraph 11 above. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) states that applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Therefore the proposal needs to be considered in the context of the Development Plan Policies, Government Guidance and other material planning considerations arising from consultation and publicity.
17. This application is being reported for determination by the Planning Applications Committee due to an objection raised by Sport England, and the single neighbour representation received concerning the safety of an existing access and general highway matters. In my opinion, the key material planning considerations in this particular case are the principle of the retention of the modular buildings in this location in relation to the Green Belt and adjacent AONB, a continued loss of part of the potential playing field, and highway and traffic implications. Amenity impacts for neighbouring residents also needs to be considered.

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Green Belt and Wider Landscape Considerations

18. Sevenoaks District Core Strategy Policy L08 seeks to resist inappropriate development within the Green Belt, unless justified by very special circumstances and this aim is reflected in Policy GB8 of the Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan Document – the details of these policies are set out above in paragraph 11. The NPPF, section 9, paragraph 80 states that the Green Belt serves five purposes:
  - a. to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas;
  - b. to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
  - c. to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
  - d. to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
  - e. to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
  
19. The NPPF further states that “as with previous Green Belt Policy, inappropriate development is by definition harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances”. The NPPF does not explain in any detail what “very special circumstances” means, but does go on to say “very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations”. Any built development within the Metropolitan Green Belt which affects the openness of it would be contrary to planning policy.
  
20. By virtue of the criteria in the NPPF, and various Local Plan policies, the development is inappropriate in Green Belt terms. Although paragraph 89 of the NPPF lists examples of development that could be considered appropriate within the Green Belt, in my view the proposals would not meet these exceptions and the development is, therefore, inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and it is for the applicant to demonstrate why permission should be granted with regard to planning policies and other material considerations. Such development should not be approved, except in very special circumstances. It is, therefore, necessary to consider the impact of the development on the openness of the Green Belt and whether or not there are very special circumstances that would warrant setting aside the general presumption against inappropriate development.
  
21. A Design and Access was submitted in support of this application, which includes a Green Belt Statement setting out why the applicant considers it is justified to set aside the general presumption against what would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt in this case. First, it is important to note that the two temporary double classrooms units are already on site, and have previously been subject to separate planning approvals. The Green Belt case for the siting of each of the buildings has therefore previously been accepted by the County Planning Authority. Furthermore the secluded nature of the site, which is well screened by existing mature tree and hedge planting, combined with the siting of the buildings adjacent to the main school building, and the massing of the single storey buildings, in my view means that the development as proposed would not unduly impact upon the functioning of the Green Belt (as set out in paragraph 18). I am also satisfied that the development as proposed would not have an impact on the character and appearance of the adjacent Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) due to the degree of separation between the boundary of the AONB and the modular buildings, in addition to the mature tree screening along the southern

**Retention of temporary classrooms for a further 3 year period at Seal C of E Primary School - SE/17/2395 (KCC/SE/0210/2017)**

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boundary of the school site which acts as a physical barrier between the AONB and the school.

22. Further, as detailed in paragraphs 3 to 5 of this report, a permanent accommodation solution is being sought by the applicant. The existing permanent accommodation on site is not of sufficient size and suitability to accommodate the allocated pupil numbers following an expansion from 1 to 2 Forms of Entry. Although this application is not proposing accommodation for an additional intake of pupils at the Primary School, a refusal of the application would result in a loss of accommodation, resulting in a loss of school spaces. As outlined in paragraph 11 of this report, great emphasis is placed within planning policy generally, specifically paragraph 72 of the NPPF, on the need to ensure that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs to existing and new communities.
23. The NPPF states that Planning Authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement. The NPPF further states that Planning Authorities should give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools. The Policy Statement – Planning for Schools Development (15 August 2011) further sets out the Government’s commitment to support the development of state funded schools and their delivery through the planning system. In addition, Sevenoaks District Core Strategy contains planning objectives that seek to protect existing school sites and support the improvement of facilities where necessary. The loss of existing school places would therefore be contrary to Development Plan Policy, and would not be justified in this instance.
24. Although the continued retention of temporary accommodation is not an ideal planning solution, it is a temporary interim measure which would enable the County Council to fulfil its statutory obligations to provide sufficient school places in the area whilst an acceptable permanent solution is developed. It will also be noted that the District Council have not raised an objection to this application in this instance.
25. Overall, I accept the applicant’s assessment and application of Green Belt Policy as set out in the submitted documentation, and I have considered this in the context of the Development Plan Policy, guidance and the NPPF. The development is, by definition, inappropriate development for the purposes of Green Belt considerations and is, therefore, potentially harmful. Nevertheless, in my view, the considerations summarised above are sufficient collectively to constitute very special circumstances capable of outweighing harm, in this particular case. Furthermore, I accept that the particular siting and design of the temporary buildings helps to mitigate and minimise the impact of the development on the functioning and openness of the Green Belt. The site layout represents the option which strikes the best balance between minimising physical intrusion into the Green Belt and providing sufficient accommodation and facilities to enable the School to deliver its educational requirements. Accordingly, I do not consider that an objection on Green Belt grounds would be warranted in this particular case. In addition, I also do not consider that the development as proposed would adversely affect the character and appearance of the adjacent AONB due to the contained nature of the development and the significant existing tree screening which separates the school site from the AONB.
26. The Town and County Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009 states that inappropriate developments within the Green Belt should be referred to the Secretary of State for determination if the floor space to be created is 1000 square metres or more,

**Retention of temporary classrooms for a further 3 year period at Seal C of E Primary School - SE/17/2395 (KCC/SE/0210/2017)**

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or if the development, by reason of its scale or nature or location, would have a significant impact on the openness of the Green Belt. In considering this application, and taking into account the matters discussed and addressed above, I do not consider that the scale, nature or location of this development would have a significant impact on the openness of the Green Belt. In addition, the development is under the 1000 square metre threshold. For these reasons, I do not consider that this application needs to be referred to the Secretary of State for determination on Green Belt grounds.

**Impact on Playing Field Provision**

27. As outlined in paragraph 9 of this report, the first of the two modular buildings, permitted under consent reference SE/11/980, is located to the west of the main school building, on an area which was previously home to an outdoor swimming pool. As set out in paragraph 7, Sport England do not have concerns over the siting of that modular building as it is separated from the rest of the playing field by an established pathway, making the land upon which it is sited less usable as playing field.
28. However, the second of the two buildings is located to the south of the main school building, on the edge of the school playing field. Sport England object to the retention of that building as they consider that it would not accord with any of the exceptions to Sport England's Playing Field Policy. Although that modular building replaced 4 smaller prefabricated units which were spread over a wider area, Sport England advise that had they commented on the original application, an objection would have been raised.
29. As outlined above, and supported by aerial photographs, the area of the site where the second of the modular classrooms is located has accommodated various modular buildings for in excess of 10 years. The area has not therefore been usable playing field for that period of time. The requirement to consult Sport England is set out in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, and specifically refers to consulting them on developments on land which has been used as playing field within the last 5 years. Although arguably the modular building is on playing field land, it has not been used as such in the last 5 years and I am satisfied that the temporary retention of the modular building would not in any way affect the usable playing field that has been available for at least 10 years.
30. Furthermore, the applicant advises that the temporary buildings to be retained do not affect the schools main playing field area as they are adjacent to the main school building and/or a further modular building (which is used by a private nursery and under the planning control of the District Council). The two modular buildings to which this application relates do not, in my view, affect the schools main playing field area which is located to the south west of the site. Further, the school has a considerable amount of open amenity space which again would not be affected by the temporary retention of the modular buildings.
31. It is also important to note that the retention of the modular buildings is only required as an interim temporary measure whilst a permanent accommodation solution is sought. The applicant is seeking a further three year temporary approval for both of the modular buildings, and I do not consider that time frame to be unreasonable in considering the work the applicant is undertaking in seeking to provide permanent accommodation at the site subject to planning permission being granted. However, should permission be granted, I consider it appropriate to require the removal of the temporary modular buildings, and reinstatement of the land, at the expiration of a further 3 year period.

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Subject to that condition, I do not consider that the retention of the modular buildings would have an adverse effect on playing field provision at the site.

32. Should Members be minded to agree with the recommendation of this report and grant planning permission subject to conditions, then in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009, and the DCLG letter of 10 March 2011, the application should be referred to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government for his consideration

Amenity Considerations

33. Having accepted the suitability of a temporary retention of the modular buildings on Green Belt (and wider landscape) and Sport England grounds, it is important to assess amenity implications. No objections have been received regarding the buildings themselves, only potential highway and access implications which will be discussed below. It is important to note that the modular buildings are already on site and located well within the site boundaries, screened from local properties by existing school buildings and/or mature and substantial boundary planting and trees. The temporary retention of the modular buildings, in my view, would not impact upon the amenity of local residents. Although temporary accommodation should be just that, a planning application is due to be submitted in the near future which would, subject to planning approval, provide permanent accommodation for a full 2 Form of Entry. I therefore consider that a further temporary permission would be appropriate in this instance, subject to the consideration of highway matters.

Access, parking and highway issues

34. As outlined in paragraph 10 of this report, this application is seeking a temporary retention of two modular buildings that are already on site. Should permission be granted, the modular classrooms would continue to provide teaching space for existing pupils and would not directly result in an increase in staff or pupils numbers. The representation received from a local resident objects to the proposal should it facilitate a further school expansion. As stated above, that is not the case.
35. However, the representation also states that the use of the existing pedestrian rear access point poses a health and safety risk to pupils and parents, as well as being an inconvenience to local residents. The resident considers that that access should be shut and a new access created, with parents prevented from parking in Ash Platt Road and Highlands Park and made to use Seal Recreation Grounds car park instead.
36. As outlined throughout this report, this application is proposed as an interim temporary measure whilst a permanent solution is sought and seeks a continuation of existing arrangements. Should a temporary retention of the modular buildings be granted permission, the existing highway and access arrangements would remain unchanged. Given that staff and pupil numbers would not be affected by such a temporary retention, I do not consider it justified to require any changes to the existing access arrangements in this instance.
37. Kent County Council Highways and Transportation raise no objection to this application and confirm that the retention of the modular buildings would not 'make the current situation any worse and would not create a highway safety issue'. However, even though the School have an up-to-date and approved School Travel Plan, it is considered

**Retention of temporary classrooms for a further 3 year period at Seal C of E Primary School - SE/17/2395 (KCC/SE/0210/2017)**

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by Highways and Transportation that a further updated version should be submitted within 3 months to further encourage the use of sustainable transport and reduce the reliance on car use. Therefore, subject to the imposition of a condition requiring the submission of a revised School Travel Plan within 3 months of the date of the decision (should permission be granted), I see no reason to refuse this application on highway grounds. However, that conclusion is also based on the temporary nature of the accommodation, and subject to the two modular buildings being removed from site at the expiration of 3 years from the date of the decision.

**Conclusion**

38. This proposal seeks the retention of two existing modular classroom buildings for a further 3 year period to meet educational needs in the locality. In my view, the development would not give rise to any significant material harm and is in accordance with the general aims and objectives of the relevant Development Plan Policies. I do not consider that the temporary retention of the two modular buildings would affect the principle aim of protecting the Green Belt, or have an undue impact on playing field provision. The development is in accordance with the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning Policy Statement for Schools (2011). Subject to the imposition of the conditions outlined throughout this report, I consider that the proposed development would not have a detrimental impact on the functioning or openness of the Green Belt and/or the character and appearance of the local landscape, particularly the adjacent Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the local highway network or the amenity of local residents. I therefore conclude that the development is sustainable and recommend that the application be referred to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government for his consideration in respect of the Sport England objection and, subject to his decision, that permission be granted subject to conditions.

**Recommendation**

39. I RECOMMEND that the application BE REFERRED to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in respect of the objection from Sport England, and SUBJECT TO his decision, PERMISSION BE GRANTED, SUBJECT TO the imposition of conditions covering (amongst other matters) the following:

- the development to be carried out in accordance with the permitted details;
- the two modular buildings to be removed from site at the expiration of 3 years from the date of the decision, and the land reinstated; and
- submission of an updated School Travel Plan within 3 months of the date of the decision.

Case Officer - Mary Green
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Background documents - see section heading
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**Item D2****Change of use of former stationmaster's house to public library for up to 5 years, Station House, Bearsted, Maidstone – MA/17/503887 (KCC/MA/0197/2017)**

A report by Head of Planning Applications Group to Planning Applications Committee on 11 October 2017.

Application by Kent County Council Property and Infrastructure Support for a change of use of the former stationmaster's house for use as a public library for a temporary period of up to 5 years– Station House, Ware Street, Bearsted, Maidstone, ME14 4PH (Ref: KCC/MA/0197/2015 and MA/17/503887).

Recommendation: Temporary planning permission to be granted, subject to conditions.

Local Member: Mr P Carter

Classification: Unrestricted

**Site**

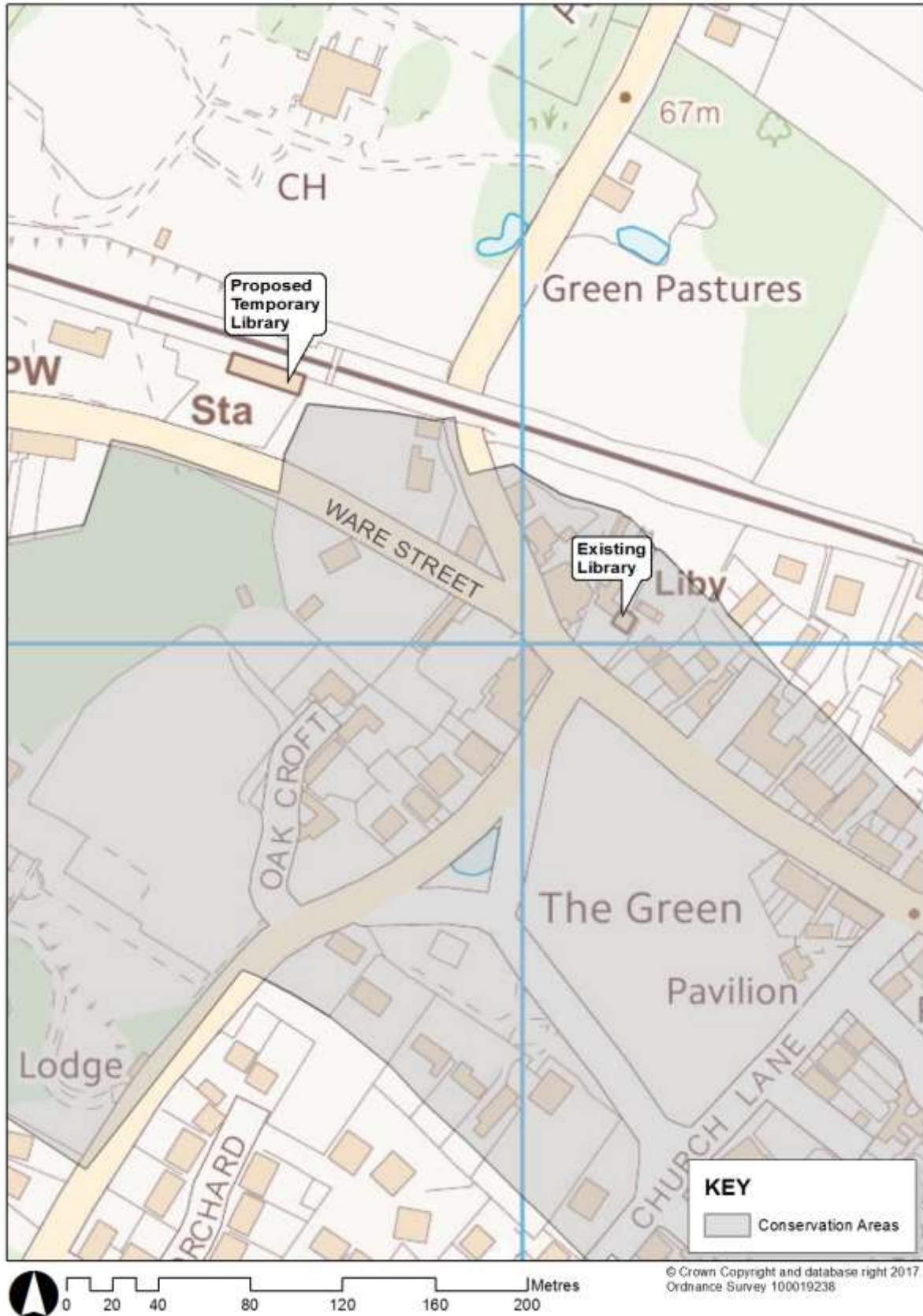
1. Bearsted railway station is located within the village of Bearsted, on the eastern outskirts of Maidstone. The railway line lies to the north of the village and the station is located towards the north western side of The Green, and in close proximity to a parade of shops and a public house. Bearsted train station was designed by Arthur Stride and was opened on 1 July 1884. It was built for the Maidstone and Ashford Railway, which was constructed between 1880 and 1884 to give a direct connection between these two towns. At the same time a goods shed, weighbridge and cattle dock were constructed to the west of the station building. In 2011 the station and its associated infrastructure were afforded Grade II listed status. The site is also adjacent to the Bearsted Conservation Area which is located to the east of the railway station.
2. The building, to which the existing library is temporarily proposed to be relocated to, comprises the eastern portion of Bearsted railway station and was formerly used as the stationmaster's house. This part of the building has been vacant for the last 18 months. The western part of the building is currently used as the ticket office. Please refer to the Site Location Plan.

**Background**

3. Bearsted Library has since 1975 occupied a building fronting The Green at Bearsted. This building was constructed in 1839 and occupies a central position, close to other services and facilities of the village and is therefore widely accessible to the community that it serves. In April 2017 the library was closed to allow a condition survey of the fabric of the building to be undertaken. This survey revealed that the building required extensive restorative work to address various matters including dry rot and that it was unsuitable for public use. This has necessitated the temporary relocation of the library whilst the works are undertaken and consideration of alternative facilities as close as possible to the original.

**Change of use of stationmaster's house to a public library – Station House, Ware Street, Bearsted, Maidstone – MA/17/503887**

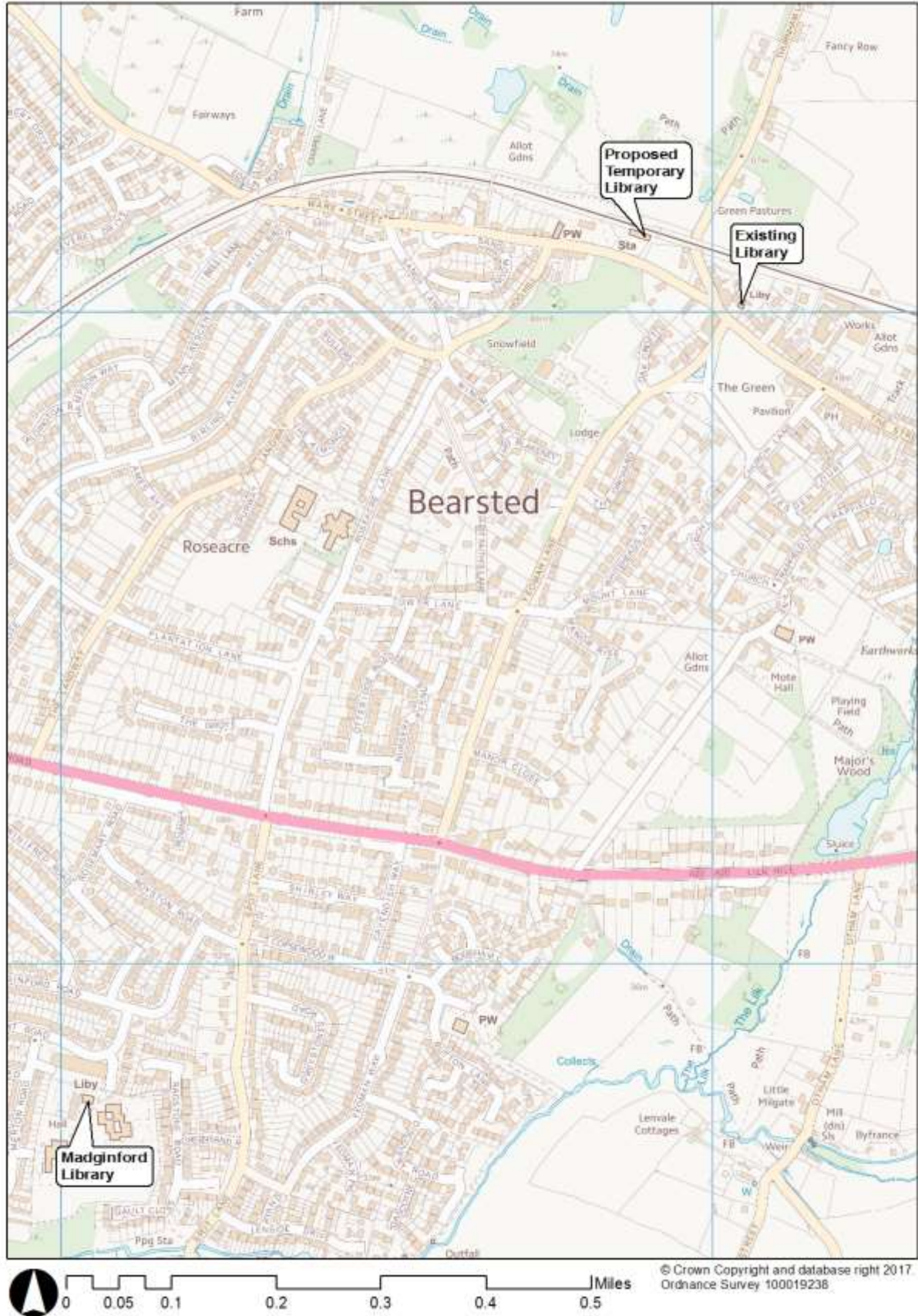
**Site Location Plan**





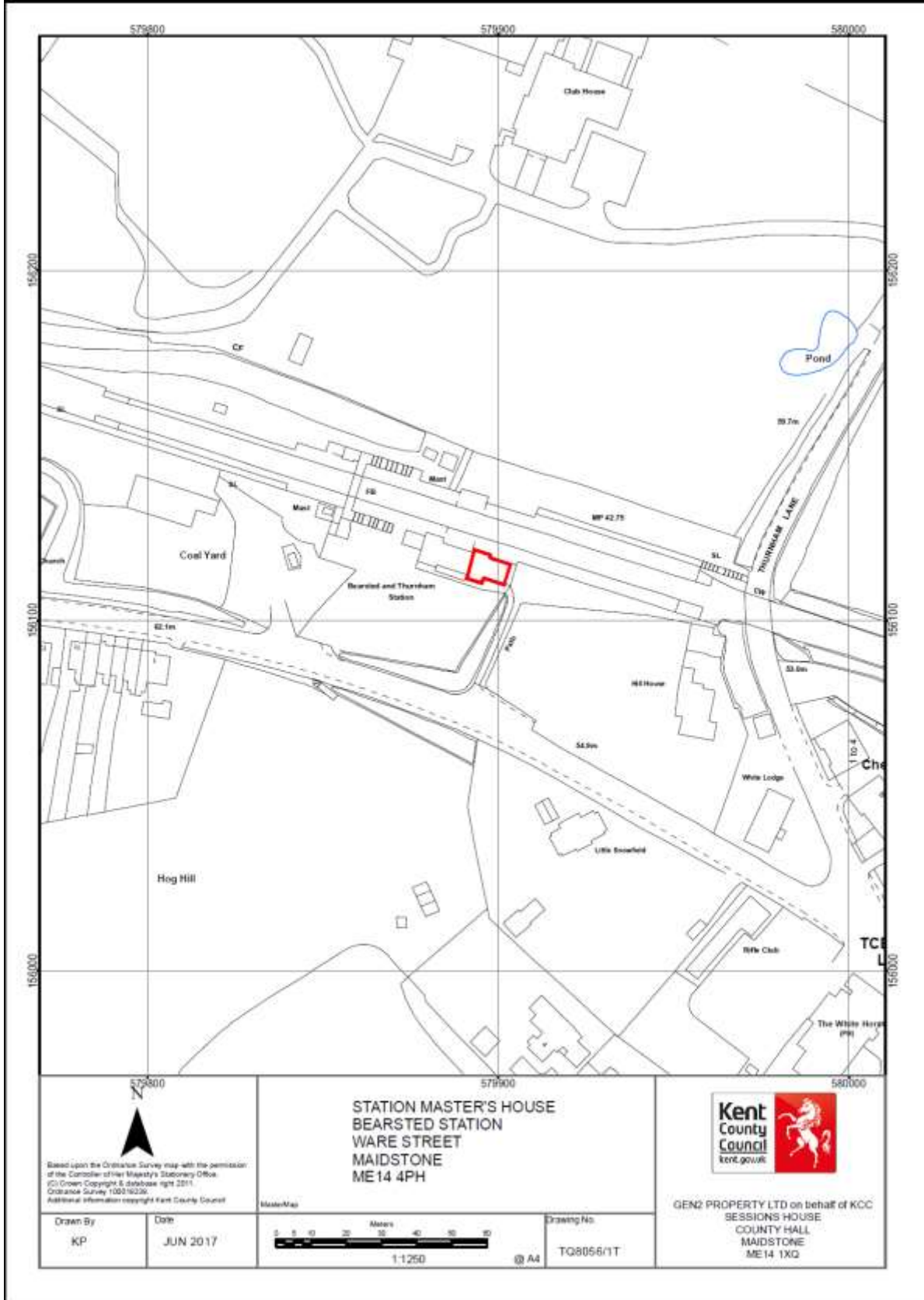
**Change of use of stationmaster's house to a public library – Station House, Ware Street, Bearsted, Maidstone – MA/17/503887**

**Wider Location Plan**



**Change of use of stationmaster's house to a public library – Station House, Ware Street, Bearsted, Maidstone – MA/17/503887**

**Site Location Plan**



**Change of use of stationmaster's house to a public library – Station House, Ware Street, Bearsted, Maidstone – MA/17/503887**

**Existing elevation**



**Proposed elevation**



**Change of use of stationmaster's house to a public library – Station House, Ware Street, Bearsted, Maidstone – MA/17/503887**

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**Bearsted Library which is now closed and is currently undergoing restorative works**



**Front elevation of application site**

**Change of use of stationmaster's house to a public library – Station House, Ware Street, Bearsted, Maidstone – MA/17/503887**

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4. At present the loss of the existing library in Bearsted is currently being accommodated by extended opening hours at the Madginford Library, which is located about 1.2 miles away to the south of Bearsted. This facility is not as easily accessible to the local community.
5. The existing Bearsted Library does not have any allocated parking spaces either within the curtilage of the library site or any dedicated on-street parking spaces. There are unrestricted on-street parking spaces in the vicinity of both the existing library as well as within the vicinity of the proposed relocated library. There are 46 parking spaces and 2 disabled parking spaces available in the station car park which can be used subject to a charge and availability. The existing library is located centrally and is served by public transport including bus and train services. The existing library is located about 200 metres to the east of the stationmaster's house and there is a footpath located on the southern side of Ware Street, which provides a footpath link between the two sites. There is also a public footpath which runs to the eastern side of the former stationmaster's house from Ware Street and extends along the frontage of this building, giving pedestrians a separate route away from the vehicular entrance to the train station car park.

**Recent Planning History**

6. There is no previous planning history for this site that has been determined by Kent County Council. However as the stationmaster's house is a Grade II Listed Building, there is a separate Listed Building Consent application currently submitted to Maidstone Borough Council, under reference MA/17/503612. Listed Building Consent is being sought for internal alterations, attachment of an external sign and the installation of push-button activation system for disabled access. At the time of writing this report, the application was still undetermined by Maidstone Borough Council. In order for the development to proceed both this and the Listed Building Consent applications will need to have planning consent

**Proposal**

7. The application has been submitted by Kent County Council Property and Infrastructure Support and seeks approval for a change of use of the existing stationmaster's house for use as a public library (Use Class D1) for a temporary period of up to 5 years. To accommodate the relocated library, internal changes are also required. These are not structural and simply involve the relocation of the existing ground-floor kitchen to the first floor, and the removal of the ground-floor toilet located within the single-storey eastern portion of the site. No alterations are proposed which would lead to the loss of internal or external features of heritage value, as identified within the building's listing description. A small external notice board and a push button for the front entrance door are proposed but these are planned to be fixed into the mortar joints within the brickwork, which can easily be made good once the sign and push button are removed. Please be aware that the proposed internal alterations, signage and push button are for Maidstone Borough Council to determine as part of the Listed Building Consent application that has been submitted for their determination and are not for this Committee to determine. The works required internally and externally are listed in this application as background information to show how the building would need to be adapted to accommodate the temporary library.

**Change of use of stationmaster’s house to a public library – Station House, Ware Street, Bearsted, Maidstone – MA/17/503887**

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8. The planning application seeks to maintain a library service to serve the local Bearsted community whilst the existing library is closed for essential maintenance work. It is currently proposed that the temporary library would operate the same public opening hours as the existing facility. The proposed days and hours of opening are listed below;

Sunday	Closed
Monday	Closed
Tuesday	9.30am – 1.00pm 2.00pm – 5.00pm
Wednesday	Closed
Thursday	2.00pm – 6.00pm
Friday	9.30am – 1.00pm 2.00pm – 5.00pm
Saturday	9.30am – 12.30pm

9. The library would continue to be staffed by one employee. As is the case at the existing library, there are no proposals to provide any dedicated parking spaces either for visitors or for the member of staff at the temporary library. The member of staff and visitors that used the library before it closed for repairs would either walk to the library, use public transport or park in available on-street parking bays/spaces surrounding the site. The same is envisaged to happen at the proposed relocated library.

**Planning Policy Context**

10. The most relevant Government Guidance and Development Plan Policies summarised below are appropriate to the consideration of this application:
- (i) National planning policies and policy guidance are set out in the **National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)** and the **National Planning Policy Guidance (March 2014)**. These set out the Government’s planning policy and guidance for England, and are a material consideration for the determination of planning applications. It does not change the statutory status of the development plan which remains the starting point for decision making. However the weight given to development plan policies will depend on their consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the development plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

In determining applications the NPPF states that local planning authorities should look for solutions rather than problems, and decision-takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible. In terms of delivering sustainable development in relation to this development proposal, the NPPF guidance and objectives covering the following matters are of particular relevance:

- Achieving the requirement for high quality design and a good standard of amenity.
- When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation.

**Change of use of stationmaster's house to a public library – Station House, Ware Street, Bearsted, Maidstone – MA/17/503887**

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- The promotion of healthy communities.
- The retention of community facilities as a means of place making and promoting healthy communities.
- Development being located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised, and
- Safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people.

(ii) **Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000 (Saved Policies):**

**Policy CF3** Seeks to ensure that where proposals would lead to a significant loss of community facilities then this would not be permitted unless a replacement facility is deemed acceptable.

(iii) **The Emerging Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2017.** The emerging plan, which is yet to be formally adopted, includes a similar policy covering community facilities, as well as policies covering heritage assets, sustainable transport and parking.

**Consultations**

11. **Maidstone Borough Council:** Raises no objection to the proposed temporary change of use.

**Bearsted Parish Council:** Recommends approval of this application.

**Kent Highways:** Raises no objection to the proposal. Kent Highways confirms that the crossing to the footpath serving the station and the main vehicular access to Bearsted station has a good/low injury crash record. It is considered that this proposal would not exacerbate or create an undue injury crash pattern above that exhibited from current activities associated with the station. Kent Highways therefore have no objection to the proposal. It is further considered that there are no specific conditions, relating to highway issues that need to be applied.

**County Conservation Officer:** Raises no objection to the proposal. The application is for a Change of Use for a limited period of time and no external structural alterations are proposed.

**Local Member**

12. The local County Member Mr Carter was notified of the application on 24 July 2017.

**Publicity**

13. The application was advertised by the posting of a site notice, the notification of 4 neighbours and an advertisement was placed in the local newspaper on 27 July 2017.

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**Representations**

14. One letter of representation has been received objecting to the application from a local resident. One letter of representation from The Bearsted & Thurnham Society has been received in support of the application. The main points raised in relation to this application can be summarised as follows:

Objection

- Raises objection due to concerns about where the staff and people wanting to drive are going to park. States that the station is full by 9am as is the on-street parking. Asks whether it is intended to open the old coal yard for parking. Considers that unless the coal yard is opened up for this purpose, the proposal is not viable and that there is no other parking.

Support

- While the Bearsted and Thurnham Society has certain reservations about pedestrian safety, car parking and the extent to which the limited space within the building can provide a broad range of library facilities, these concerns are outweighed by the advantages of having a library at this end of the village. Given the length of time the existing library is likely to be closed for essential repairs it is important that those who used Bearsted Green are provided with alternative lending facilities, computer terminals, a photocopying machine and, if possible, space for small meetings. Such facilities will be of advantage to all members of the community, but especially the more elderly and those who do not drive. For those reasons the Society support the current proposals.

**Discussion**

15. In considering this proposal regard must be had to Development Plan Policies outlined in paragraph (10) above. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) states that applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Therefore, this proposal needs to be considered in the context of Development Plan Policies, Government Guidance, including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and other material planning considerations arising from consultation and publicity.
16. This application is being reported for determination by the Planning Applications Committee due to the one neighbour representation received. The main issues relating to this application include need, location, heritage, and highway and parking considerations.

Need

17. As outlined in paragraph 10 of this report, the National Planning Policy Network (NPPF) supports the provision and retention of community facilities as a means of place making and promoting healthy communities. Paragraph 70 underlies the important social role of the planning system contributing to sustainable development and healthy communities. Decision should be made which guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day to day needs. It should also ensure that



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established facilities and services are able to develop and modernise in a way that is sustainable and retained for the benefit of the community.

18. The planning application received is for a temporary change of use of the stationmaster's house for up to a period of 5 years. This proposal is to enable the continued provision of a library service in Bearsted due to the existing library needing to close whilst extensive restorative works are undertaken. The length of time that the existing library needs to be shut is longer than originally planned due to the amount of work required. At present the loss of the existing library in Bearsted is currently being accommodated by extended opening hours at Madginford Library, which is located about 1.2 miles away to the south of Bearsted. However due to the distance of the replacement library facility from Bearsted and the length of time that the existing library requires to be shut, has necessitated in a temporary replacement facility to be identified.
19. As the applicant has identified a continued need to provide a library facility for the local community in Bearsted. It is in the interests of public safety and community amenity that an alternative location is sought and that it be as close as possible to the closed library. Support for established facilities and services that are sustainable and retained for the benefit of the community is embedded in the NPPF and local planning policy, and I consider that the need for the temporary library facility should be given significant weight in this instance. I also note the support of the Bearsted and Thurnham Society for a temporary solution for the Bearsted Green area.

**Location**

20. The circumstances surrounding the closure of the existing library to allow restorative works to the building have previously been explained and in terms of geographical location, the proposed temporary use of the former stationmaster's house provides a nearby alternative that would be equally accessible to the local community. The proposed use of the former stationmaster's house would allow a continuity of library services to serve Bearsted whilst the existing library is closed.
21. By virtue of its use as a former stationmaster's house, the site is well served by various modes of public transport and also has good pedestrian links. The proposed new temporary site lies only 200 metres away from the existing library. Consequently the proposed temporary library would be well related to the existing public transport networks which serve the area and would be accessible to the public.
22. A footpath extends along the southern edge of Ware Street, providing access from the existing library to the station. The former stationmaster's house can be accessed via the station's pedestrian access way, which forms a shallow sloping pathway leading from the northern edge of Ware Street to the eastern boundary of the site. The footpath continues across the full extent of the site to provide access to the main station, its forecourt and parking areas. Whilst this is not a level access, the absence of steps allows for wheelchair and pushchair access. Level access to the site can also be gained from the main vehicular access further to the west. The site can therefore be easily accessed by the public on foot or by bicycle.
23. Both the existing and proposed temporary library facilities do not enjoy allocated parking areas however there is parking available on the roads surrounding both locations which has restrictions to the length of time that a vehicle can be parked. The current library users use these roads to park and this is envisaged to continue. As

**Change of use of stationmaster's house to a public library – Station House, Ware Street, Bearsted, Maidstone – MA/17/503887**

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both facilities are centrally located they are easily walkable as well as being well served by public transport.

24. The applicant has undertaken a comprehensive search for the temporary accommodation which would be located as close as possible to the current library facility. The former stationmaster's house was deemed the only suitable building available which would enable the continued provision of a library service in Bearsted. I consider that the proposed location is very close to the existing library and thus the pattern of how visitors access the library facility albeit by foot, cycle, public transport or by car, is unlikely to alter significantly during the period of time the relocated library would be open. The proposed location is only 200 metres away from the closed library and located in a sustainable location and I would therefore not raise a planning objection to the proposed temporary location.

Heritage Considerations

25. The planning application proposes to use for former stationmaster's house, which together with the other buildings at Bearsted railway station was afforded Grade II listed status in 2011. The site is also adjacent to the Bearsted Conservation Area which is located to the east of the railway station. For information, the closed library is actually located within this Conservation Area.
26. As part of this planning application there are no structural changes proposed that would materially harm or alter the fabric of the building. The only external changes proposed include the addition of an external sign and a push button for the front entrance door. These are proposed to be attached to the building via the mortar joints within the brickwork and be made good once the sign and push button are removed.
27. The application for Member's consideration is for the proposed change of use of the former stationmaster's house for a temporary period of up to 5 years. There is a separate Listed Building application lodged with Maidstone Borough Council, which will consider the proposed internal alterations, the attachment of the external sign and installation of the push-button activation system for disabled access. This application is currently undetermined.
28. The application would see the re-use of an empty Listed Building. I am satisfied that the proposed change of use of the former stationmaster's house would not have any implications upon the adjoining Conservation Area and I would not raise an objection to the proposed Change of Use of this Grade II listed building.

Highway Considerations

29. As outlined previously, both the existing and proposed temporary library facilities do not enjoy allocated parking areas, however there is parking available on the roads surrounding both locations which has restrictions to the length of time that a vehicle can be parked. The current library users use these roads to park and this is envisaged to continue.
30. Kent Highways have been consulted on this planning application and considered that as the proposed temporary library was only going to be relocated some 200 metres away from the existing library, travel patterns between the closed and proposed temporary library is unlikely to result in any significant change. Kent Highways were

**Change of use of stationmaster's house to a public library – Station House, Ware Street, Bearsted, Maidstone – MA/17/503887**

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also satisfied that the pedestrian route and crossing points between the two library facilities were good.

31. Whilst there is no dedicated car parking being provided by Network Rail as part of the lease agreement to use the former stationmaster's house as a temporary library, there is a 46 space public car park including two disabled parking spaces, immediately in front of the former stationmaster's house. This car park is available for public use at a cost, on a first come, first served basis.
32. An objection has been received on the grounds of no parking being provided and that the goods yard should be opened to allow parking for the temporary library. However I understand that the goods yard is not available.
33. As the relocation of the library is proposed for a temporary period and is only relocating some 200m away from the current library, then visitors to the library are aware of the current parking restrictions and would more than likely access the proposed relocated library using the same travel methods as currently. The library site is located in a sustainable location and can be accessed by bus, train and by foot. Any under provision of parking should not be considered to outweigh the community benefits provided by the relocated library. It must also be noted that there is public parking available on the road network surrounding the site. Therefore it is a very much like-for-like arrangement and the status quo in terms of parking provision is being maintained. Under these circumstances, I would not raise a planning objection on highway grounds.

**Conclusion**

34. The application seeks a temporary change of use for the stationmaster's house to be used as a public library, whilst the existing library, fronting The Green, Bearsted, undergoes major restorative work. The proposed library lies some 200 metres to the west of the existing facility and would be sited adjacent to the village railway station. In my view, the development would not give rise to any significant material harm and is in accordance with the general aims and objectives of the relevant Development Plan Policies, as well as the National Planning Policy Framework. I consider that the proposed development to be acceptable in terms of its location and need. It is noted that a concern has been raised by a nearby resident on grounds of lack of parking provision. However the current library does not provide any dedicated parking spaces, and there are on-street parking available in the vicinity of both library sites. Both library sites are located in a sustainable location and served by public transport. The sites are also accessible on foot and cycle. I am of the opinion that any perceived under provision of parking should not be considered to outweigh the community benefits provided by the relocated library. In my view the development would be suitable in this location is sustainable and I would not raise a planning objection.

**Recommendation**

35. I RECOMMEND that PERMISSION BE GRANTED subject to the following condition covering the following:
  - The change of use of the building being for a 5 year temporary period, after which it shall revert to its current use class; and
  - The development to be carried out in accordance with the permitted details.

**Item D2**

**Change of use of stationmaster's house to a public library – Station House, Ware Street, Bearsted, Maidstone – MA/17/503887**

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Case officer – Lidia Cook	03000 413353
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Background documents - See section heading
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**E1 COUNTY MATTER APPLICATIONS AND DETAILS PURSUANT PERMITTED/APPROVED/REFUSED UNDER DELEGATED POWERS - MEMBERS' INFORMATION**

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Since the last meeting of the Committee, the following matters have been determined by me under delegated powers:-

**Background Documents** - The deposited documents.

- DA/16/1459/R3&R7 Details pursuant to condition (3) - sustainable surface water drainage scheme and condition (7) drainage system for the infiltration of surface water drainage into the ground.  
Littlebrook Business Park, Zone C Plot 2, Albion Road, Dartford  
Decision: Approved
- GR/17/847 Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for a replacement ready mixed concrete plant that was built adjacent to an existing plant within a Marine Aggregate Wharf. The old plant will be demolished and removed.  
Denton Marine Wharf, Denton, Gravesend  
Decision: Approved
- MA/17/503482 Section 73 application to vary condition 1 of planning permission MA/14/688 to allow for a further 3 years in which to complete the slope remediation within Phase 1.  
Lenham Quarry (Shepherds Farm), Forstal Road, Lenham, Kent, ME17 2JB  
Decision: Permitted
- MA/17/503486 Section 73 application for a temporary relaxation of condition 5 of planning permission MA/14/689 to allow the extraction of sand to advance into Phase 3 (in part)  
Lenham Quarry (Shepherds Farm), Forstal Road, Lenham, Kent, ME17 2JB  
Decision: Permitted
- SH/07/774/MR66/R Request for approval of details for a replacement foreman's office and meeting room under Condition B.2 of Class B of Part 17 of Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.  
Lydd Quarry, Jurys Gap Road, Lydd, Kent, TN29 9JW  
Decision: Approved
- SW/14/76/R5A Revised interim ecological management plan (EMP) pursuant to condition 5 of planning permission SW/14/76.  
MVV Environment Ridham, Lord Nelson Road, Ridham Dock, Iwade, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME9 8SR  
Decision: Approved

- TM/09/1888/R8G Approval of details submitted under condition (8) of planning permission TM/09/1888 (Annual Report).  
Offham Landfill, Teston Road, Offham, West Malling, Kent, ME19 5PF  
Decision: Approved
- TM/17/1490 Extension of existing sand extraction operations with restoration to original levels using imported inert fill.  
Borough Green Sand Pits, Platt Industrial Estate, Borough Green  
Decision: Approved

**E2 COUNTY COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS AND DETAILS PURSUANT PERMITTED/APPROVED UNDER DELEGATED POWERS MEMBERS' INFORMATION**

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Since the last meeting of the Committee, the following matters have been determined by me under delegated powers:-

**Background Documents** – The deposited documents.

- AS/17/236/R3 & 7 Details of external materials and construction management plan, pursuant to conditions 3 and 7 of planning permission AS/17/236.  
The John Wallis Church Of England Academy, Millbank Road, Kingsnorth  
Decision: Approved
- DA/16/1413/RVAR Partial discharge of planning conditions of permission DA/16/1413 in respect of kitchen extension, as follows: Condition 3 - External Materials; Condition 5 - Construction Management Plan; Condition 8 - Ecology; Condition 10 - Surface Water Drainage & Condition 11 – Contamination.  
Craylands Primary School, Craylands Lane, Swanscombe  
Decision: Approved
- DO/15/1079/RVARA Submission of details of lighting (condition 12), validation report (condition 15) and landscape Planting (condition 23) pursuant to planning permission DO/15/1079.  
Portal House School, Sea Street, St Margarets At Cliffe  
Decision: Approved
- DO/16/229/R Non Material Amendment to permission DO/16/229 for replacement of window with double entry doors and location of boiler flue on external face of the building.  
Aylesham Primary School, Attlee Avenue, Aylesham  
Decision: Approved

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- MA/16/507463/R3 Details of external materials pursuant to condition 3 of planning permission MA/16/507463/R3

- permission MA/16/507463.  
Maidstone Grammar School, Barton Road, Maidstone  
Decision: Approved
- SW/16/504262/R15 Details of external lighting, pursuant to condition 15 of planning permission SW/16/504626.  
The Sittingbourne Community College, Swanstree Avenue, Sittingbourne  
Decision: Approved
- SW/16/504626/  
R20 & 21 Details of S278 highway works and yellow box junction pursuant to conditions 20 and 21 of planning consent SW/16/504626.  
The Sittingbourne Community College, Swanstree Avenue, Sittingbourne  
Decision: Approved
- SW/17/503092 Renewal of planning permission SW/14/485 for one no. existing mobile classroom situated to the rear of the school for a period of five years.  
Bapchild & Tonge CEP School, School Lane, Bapchild, Sittingbourne  
Decision: Permitted
- SW/17/503105 Renewal of planning permission SW/14/189 for retention of a mobile unit providing pre-school accommodation and consisting of lobby, class area, office, kitchen and toilet facilities. With external features of a hard play area with temporary canopy and soft play area.  
The Owl and The Pussycat Pre-School, School Lane, Bapchild, Sittingbourne  
Decision: Permitted
- TH/14/112/R7A (Revised) details of the staggering of the start times and end times of Foreland Field School (Foreland School) and Royal Harbour Academy (Ellington & Hereson School) pursuant to condition 7 of planning permission TH/14/112.  
Land north of Ellington and Hereson School, Newlands Lane, Ramsgate  
Decision: Approved
- TH/17/955 Application for a non-material amendment; reduction in size of the hardstanding from that previously approved and a reduction in the amount of play equipment.  
Foreland Fields School, Newlands Lane, Ramsgate  
Decision: Permitted
- TM/15/554/R6 Details of a scheme of landscaping pursuant to condition 6 of planning permission TM/15/554.  
The Judd School, Brook Street, Tonbridge  
Decision: Approved

## **E3 TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS 2017 – SCREENING OPINIONS ADOPTED UNDER DELEGATED POWERS**

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### **Background Documents –**

- *The deposited documents.*
  - *Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.*
  - *The Government’s Online Planning Practice Guidance-Environmental Impact Assessment/Screening Schedule 2 Projects*
- (a) Since the last meeting of the Committee the following screening opinions have been adopted under delegated powers that the proposed development does not constitute EIA development and the development proposal does not need to be accompanied by an Environmental Statement:-
- KCC/AS/0236/2017 Section 73 application to vary condition (11) of planning permission AS/97/829 and condition (8) of planning permission AS/06/24 to allow a limited number of large vehicles to access the Wastewater Treatment Works on Bank (Public) Holidays which are currently restricted at Ashford Wastewater Treatment Works & Sludge Treatment Centre, Kinneys Lane, Canterbury Road, Ashford
- KCC/DO/0238/2017 Construction of a two form entry (2FE) mainstream school plus 1FE SEN school, including the erection of a two storey school building; provision of hard and soft play space; sports pitches and MUGA; vehicular and pedestrian access, car parking and cycle parking spaces and associated hard and soft landscaping.  
Land south-east of Archers Court Road, Whitfield, Dover
- KCC/SCR/SW/0219/2017 Request for a Screening Opinion as to whether the proposed amendment to the restoration scheme approved as part of planning permission SW/93/615 to allow Area F to be restored to part agriculture and part open water (as opposed to using imported material to backfill and restore the entire Area F to grassland) requires an Environmental Impact Assessment.  
Ham Farm Quarry, Faversham
- KCC/SCR/SW/0234/2017 Request for a Screening Opinion to determine whether the proposed junction improvements between the A2500 Lower Road and Barton Hill Drive, Minster-on-Sea requires an Environmental Impact Assessment.  
A2500 Lower Road/Barton Hill Drive, Minster-On-Sea, Sheppey
- (b) Since the last meeting of the Committee the following screening opinions have been adopted under delegated powers that the proposed development does constitute EIA development and the development proposal does need to be accompanied by an Environmental Statement:-

None



**E4 TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS 2017 – SCOPING OPINIONS ADOPTED UNDER DELEGATED POWERS**

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- (b) Since the last meeting of the Committee the following scoping opinions have been adopted under delegated powers.

**Background Documents -**

- *The deposited documents.*
- *Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.*
- *The Government's Online Planning Practice Guidance-Environmental Impact Assessment/Preparing an Environmental Statement*

None

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