

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

Re-cladding of existing sports hall, demolition of swimming pool building and ancillary building, and erection of single storey replacement sports and changing room facilities extension at Broomhill Bank School (Northern Site), Rowhill Road, Swanley, Kent BR8 7RP - SE/22/645 (KCC/SE/0036/2022)

A report by Head of Planning Applications Group to Planning Applications Committee on 20th July 2022.

Application by Broomhill Bank School (North Site) for the re-cladding of existing sports hall, demolition of swimming pool building and ancillary building, and erection of single storey replacement sports and changing room facilities extension at Broomhill Bank School (Northern Site), Rowhill Road, Swanley, Kent BR8 7RP- SE/22/645 (KCC/SE/0036/2022)

Recommendation: Permission be granted subject to conditions.

Local Member: Mr Perry Cole

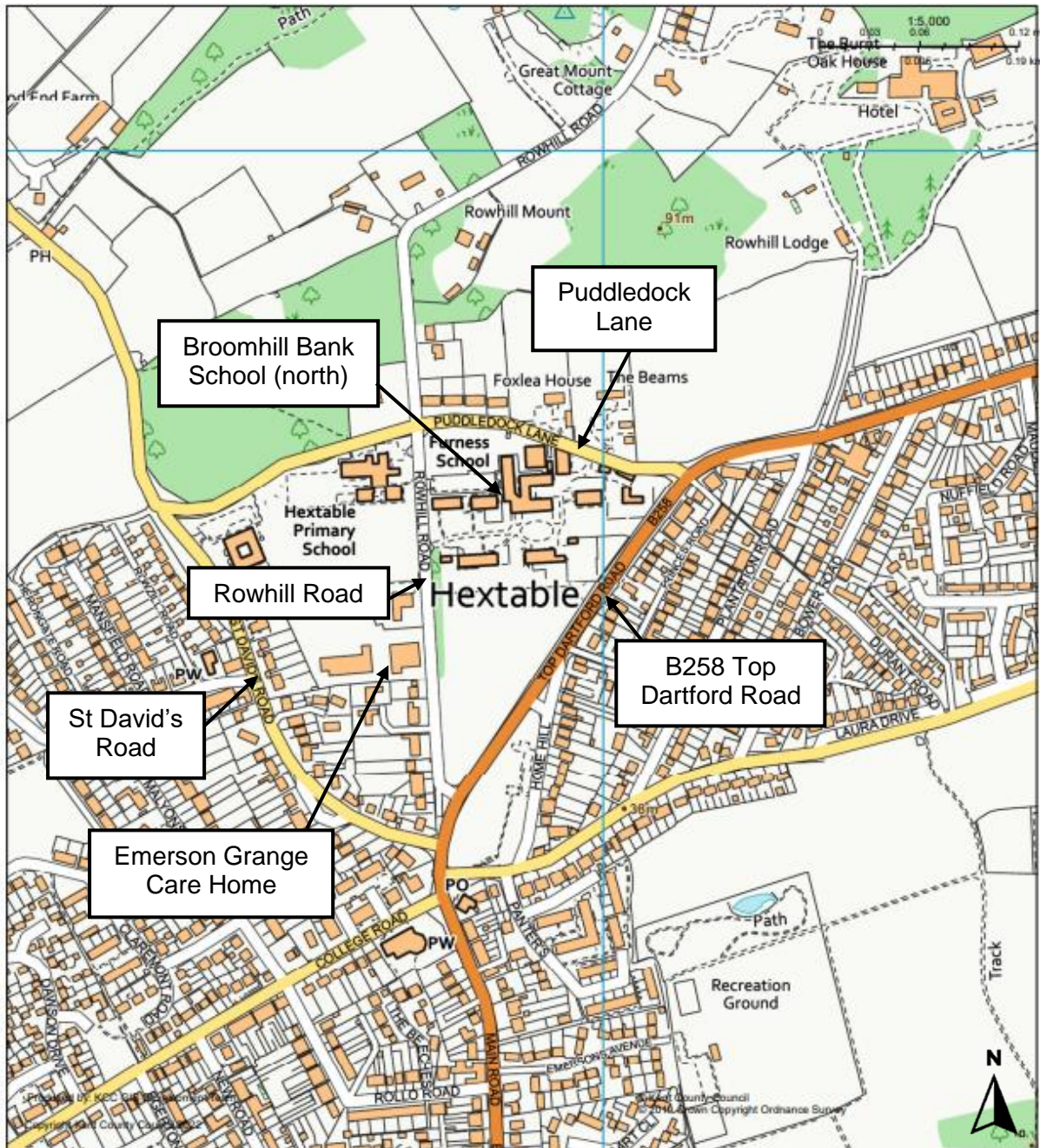
Classification: Unrestricted

Site

1. Broomhill Bank School is a mixed Special Educational Needs (SEN) School for students who have an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) relating to their communication and interaction difficulties. The school provides SEN provision for pupils aged between 11 and 19 who have communication and interaction difficulties associated with autism, speech, language and communication needs. Broomhill Bank School is a split-site school comprising two sites within Kent, with this application relating to the northern site located in Hextable near Swanley.
2. Broomhill Bank School (north) is located within the village of Hextable, approximately 1.5 miles north of the town of Swanley. The school site is situated in a triangular piece of land located between the B258 Top Dartford Road, Puddledock Lane and Rowhill Road. The school is accessed via Rowhill Road to the west of the site, and also includes a secondary access via Puddledock Lane to the north. The school site covers approximately 4.15 hectares and comprises a car park, residential accommodation and existing main school buildings to the north, and a playing field to the south. It is situated adjacent to Hextable Primary School and Emerson Grange Care Home to the west, and residential properties to the north and east.
3. The proposed area of development is situated on an existing developed area to the north of the school site, adjacent to Puddledock Lane. The Metropolitan Green Belt is located north of the school site, the development is not within this. A site location plan is attached.

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Site Location Plan



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Recent Planning History

4. The school site was previously known as The Furness School which provided Special Educational Needs (SEN) schooling for students with a special educational need or disability. Due to insufficient demand and the requirement of educational improvements, The Furness School was proposed to be closed. In 2015, Broomhill Bank School took over the running of The Furness School. The school site became a satellite of Broomhill Bank School which has an existing site located in Tunbridge Wells, with the handover of the school site taking place in September 2015, and sixth form opening in September 2016.

5. The most relevant recent site planning history is listed below:

| | |
|------------|---|
| SE/85/1910 | Provision of a sports hall and changing accommodation Granted with conditions 15 April 1986 |
| SE/05/1275 | 2-storey extension to the main existing teaching block to provide science, admin facilities, general teaching spaces and ancillary accommodation. Linked to this is a single storey art block. Single storey technology store extension to the courtyard area of the main existing teaching block. Corridor link to same area to provide circulation between main teaching block, new extension & access to ICT/dining facilities. New vehicular/pedestrian access off Rowhill Road and provision of a new car park for 48 no. spaces. Relocation of 4 no. mobile classrooms and eventual removal from site. Removal of 11 no trees. Granted with conditions 2 August 2005 |
| SE/10/2277 | Demolition of single storey garage. Erection of single storey practical cookery building (east of the Simon Harrison Centre) including ancillary works. Granted with conditions 29 September 2010 |

Proposal

6. This planning application seeks permission for the modernisation and refurbishment of the existing sports hall building, together with the demolition of the existing swimming pool building and ancillary building, and replacement with a dedicated sports and changing room facilities building. The proposed development area would be located at the very northern end of the existing school site on an existing developed area, adjacent to Puddledock Lane.
7. The application proposal seeks to retain the existing sports hall building at the north of the school site. The application documents set out that the existing sports hall building is in a poor state of repair requiring much needed improvement and is proposed to be re-cladded with a profiled panel system in a grey finish.

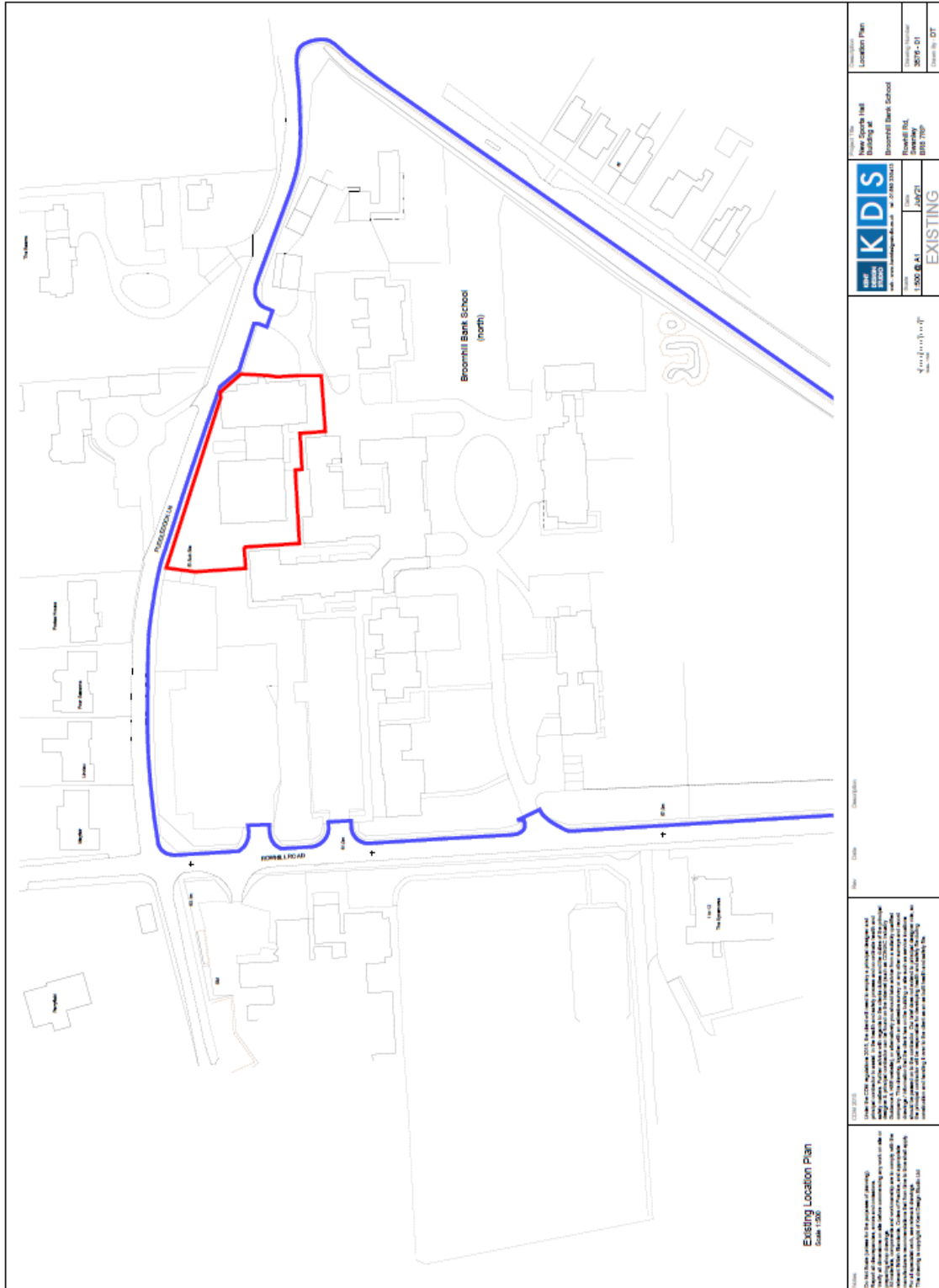
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8. The application also includes the demolition of a single storey swimming pool and associated building, and ancillary sports building at the north of the school site, east of the existing sports hall building. Partial demolition of the existing swimming pool building, and ancillary building has already been undertaken by the school due to the roof beginning to collapse and exposed asbestos causing significant health and safety concerns. Further demolition works are however required to complete demolition of the buildings, including the foundations, and therefore remain as part of the planning application.
9. Following the completion of the demolition works to the swimming pool and associated building, and ancillary sports building, the application proposes to erect a 372 square metre single storey replacement building partly to the rear of the existing sports hall building to the north, and partly to the east of the existing sports hall building, adjacent to the northern secondary access from Puddledock Lane. The replacement accommodation would serve as an extension to the existing sports hall building and would largely constitute a replacement of the existing facilities/built development on site already, situated predominantly on the extent of the existing hardstanding/building area of the buildings that would be demolished. The replacement buildings would comprise a lobby area, a fitness suite, two changing rooms, a separate facility room and associated lobby/entrance, toilets to the east of the existing sport hall and storage/sports rooms to the north.
10. The application proposes to retain the existing hedgerow along the northern boundary, surround the new building to the east of the existing sports hall building with a lawn, along with a path to gain access into the side of the sports hall to the north.
11. The application proposes to ensure all lighting is energy efficient with low energy bulbs, proposes a modern and highly efficient heating system as well as 38.4 square metres of south facing photovoltaic (PV) panels on the roof of the proposed extension to the east of the existing sports hall building.
12. The proposal would be providing on-site physical education needs and amenities for use by the school only, and does not propose to increase the school capacity, pupil intake or staffing numbers.

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Previous Photos of the North of Site (showing the existing sports hall building to be retained and re-clad, as well as the swimming pool and ancillary buildings prior to any demolition works)



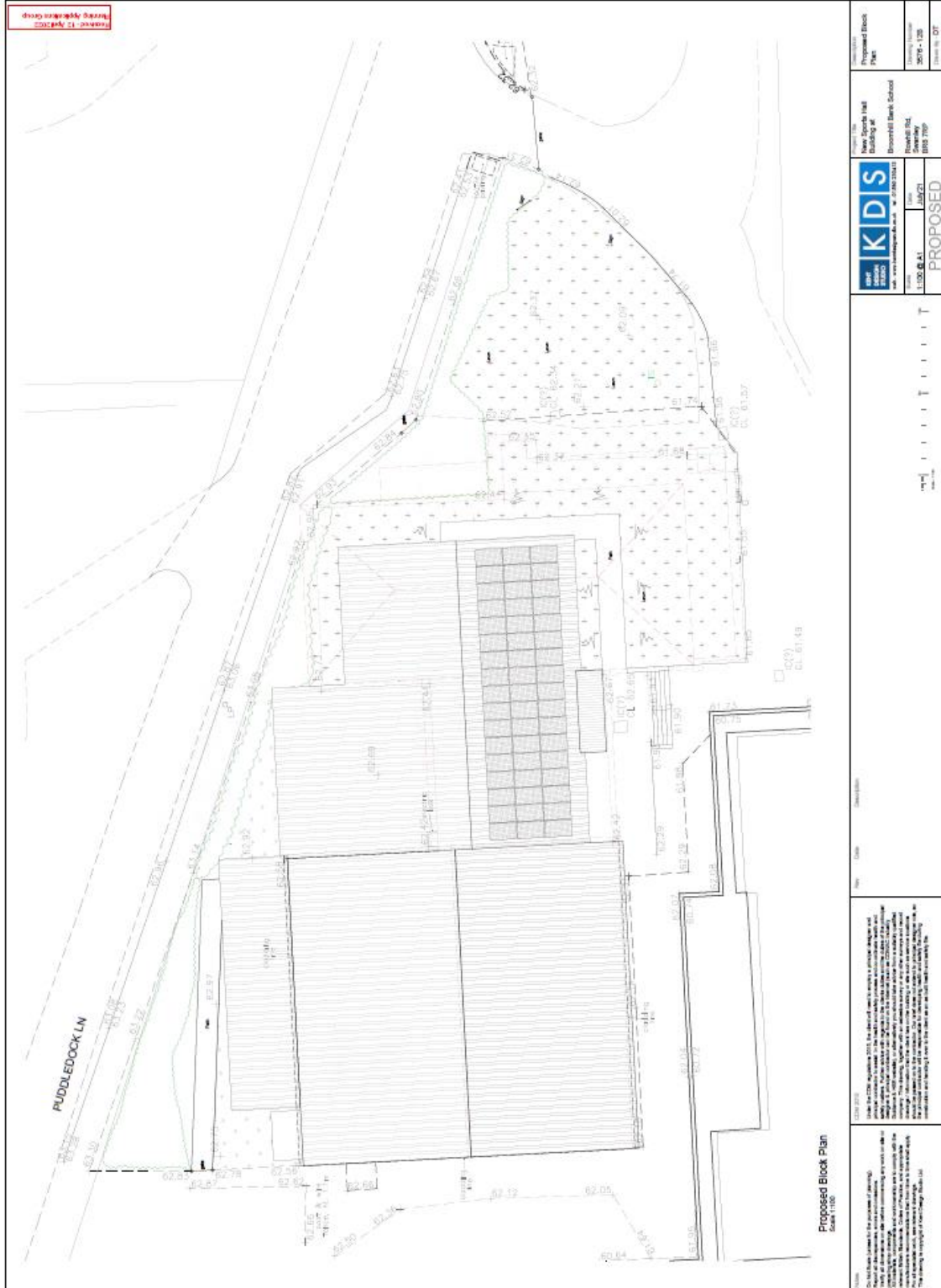
Photos of Partial Demolition Taken Place of the swimming pool and ancillary buildings to the east of existing sports hall (site visit 16 Mar 22)



Item D1

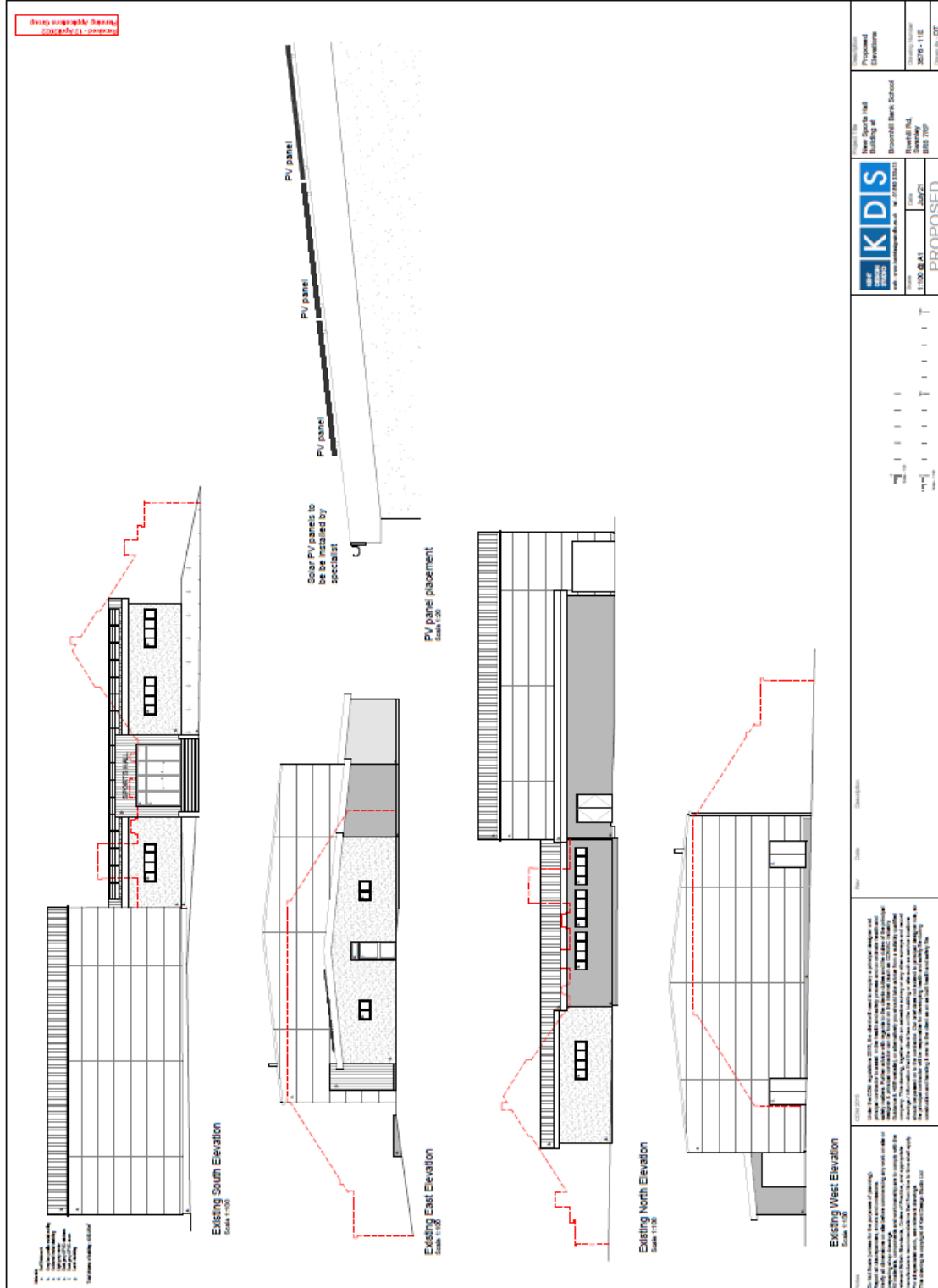
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Proposed Block Plan



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Proposed Elevations



| | | |
|--|--|---|
| <p>KDS KENT DESIGN SERVICES www.kentdesignservices.co.uk 01889 232221</p> | <p>Project Title Building at 1166 Broomhill Bank School Rowhill Rd BR8 7RP</p> | <p>Proposed Drawings S01 - 11E Sheet No. 01</p> |
| | <p>Date 11/02/24</p> <p>Drawn JAW</p> <p>Checked JAW</p> | <p>Scale 1:100</p> |

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Planning Policy

13. The most relevant Government Guidance and Development Plan Policies summarised below are appropriate to the consideration of this application:

- (i) The **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) July 2021** and the **National Planning Policy Guidance (first published in March 2014)**, 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).

In determining applications, the NPPF states that local planning authorities should approach decisions in a positive and creative way, 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:

- That access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation are important in their contribution to health and well-being, and therefore that existing open space, sports and recreation facilities should not be built on unless the loss would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality (paragraph 98,99);
- Consideration of whether the opportunities for sustainable transport have been taken up and safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people (paragraph 110);
- Consideration of whether impacts from the development on the transports network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highways safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree (paragraph 110);
- Development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road would be severe (paragraph 111);
- The creation of high quality, sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities (paragraph 126);
- Achieving the requirement for high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. Planning decisions should

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ensure that developments would function well and add to the overall quality of an area; be visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping; be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting; establish or maintain a strong sense of place, creating a welcoming and distinctive place to live, work and visit; include an appropriate mix of development and support local facilities and transport networks; and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being (paragraph 130);

- Contributing to and enhancing the natural and local environment (paragraph 174);

In addition, Paragraph 95 states that: *It is important 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.*

- (ii) **Policy Statement - Planning for Schools Development (August 2011)** sets out the Government's commitment to support the development of state-funded schools, and their delivery through the planning system. In particular, the Policy states that the Government wants to enable new schools to open, good schools to expand and all schools to adapt and improve their facilities. This will allow for more provision and greater diversity of provision in the state funded school sector, to meet both demographic needs, provide increased choice and create higher standards.

- (iii) **Development Plan Policies**

The adopted **Sevenoaks District Core Strategy (February 2011)** (summarised policies)

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| Policy LO1 | Distribution of Development: Requires all new development to be focused within the built confines of existing settlements. |
| Policy L07 | Development in Rural Settlements: Requires all new development to be of a scale and nature appropriate to the village concerned and should respond to the distinctive local characteristics. |
| Policy SP1 | Design of New Development and Conservation: 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. |
| Policy SP2 | Sustainable Development: Sets standards for sustainable design, construction and low energy generation. Proposals also cover measures to reduce the reliance on travel by car and seek to improve air quality. |

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- Policy SP9** **Infrastructure Provision:** Supports the development of infrastructure facilities required to resolve existing deficiencies or to support the scale and distribution of development proposed.
- Policy SP10** **Green Infrastructure, Open Space, Sport and Recreation Provision:** Promotes the provision of multifunctional green space by linking existing green space areas. The Policy also seeks the retention of open space, sports and recreational facilities, including indoor facilities of value to the local community, unless any loss can be justified by additional provision of at least equivalent value to the local community.
- Policy SP11** **Biodiversity:** Seeks to conserve biodiversity, to ensure no net loss through development and to promote opportunities to enhance biodiversity.

The adopted **Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan (February 2015)** (summarised policies)

- Policy SC1** **Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development:** States that a positive approach should be taken in considering planning applications to reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. The District Council will work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area. Planning applications that accord with the policies in the Local Plan will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 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

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visual intrusion and where it would not result in a loss of privacy or light.

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.

Consultations

14. **Sevenoaks District Council:** Raise no objection to the application and recommend consideration is given to the imposition of conditions relating to details of all landscaping and boundary treatments including retained or additional landscaping, and details of ecological mitigation and enhancement strategies as set out within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal dated September 2021.

Hextable Parish Council: Has made no comments on the application.

KCC Biodiversity Officer: Accepts that the submitted information is sufficient to determine the planning application and raises no objection subject to the imposition of several planning conditions;

The Biodiversity Officer sets out that the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal assessed that the buildings have limited potential to be used by roosting bats and whilst it would have been preferred that the report provided a more detailed description of the building to demonstrate why the conclusion was reached that bats are unlikely to roosting, they are satisfied that based on the limited information and photos submitted it is accepted that the conclusions are valid and additional information is not required. It is likely that bats forage/commute within the site and therefore it is recommended that any lighting condition require the lighting plan to follow the recommendations within the Bats and artificial lighting in the UK document produced by the Bat Conservation Trust and Institution of Lighting Professionals.

It is also advised that although evidence of breeding birds was not recorded during the survey, there are suitable features within the site for breeding birds. All breeding birds and their young are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and it is therefore advised that a breeding bird informative is included, should planning permission be granted.

The Biodiversity Officer also outlines that the habitat within the site is not optimum for reptiles however there is connectivity to the surrounding area and therefore, if suitable features for reptiles are created on site, it is possible that reptiles may establish. The Construction Management Plan has confirmed that the precautionary mitigation detailed within the ecological report would be implemented during the works.

Lastly, the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has made recommendations to enhance the site for biodiversity, but no information has been provided demonstrating what enhancements will be incorporated into the site. Therefore, should planning permission

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be granted, it is recommended that an ecological enhancement condition is included seeking its submission for approval.

KCC Highways and Transportation: Raise no objection to the application subject to the imposition of a condition requiring adherence to the submitted Construction Management Plan.

KCC Highways and Transportation initially commented that the site would utilise an existing access, would not result in any change to the existing parking provision and the proposal would not result in an increase in pupil intake, and therefore raised no objection subject to the submission of a Construction Management Plan prior to the commencement of any development on site. It was advised that the Construction Management Plan must include routing of construction and delivery vehicles to and from the site, parking and turning areas for construction, delivery vehicles and site personnel, timings of deliveries, provision of wheel washing facilities and temporary traffic management/signage.

The Applicant subsequently submitted a Construction Management Plan and KCC Highways and Transportation commented that it is noted that a Construction Management Plan has now been included within the planning application and is acceptable from a highways perspective. It was confirmed that providing the adherence to the submitted Construction Management Plan is secured by planning condition, no objection is raised.

Sustainable Drainage: Raise no objection to the proposal.

Local Member

15. The local County Council Member for Swanley, Mr Perry Cole, was notified of the application on 8 March 2022, and raised concerns surrounding the lack of sustainability elements included within the proposal, and potential impacts on the already constrained local highway network from construction traffic during peak times in particular.

Mr Cole outlined that he was “rather disappointed to see that with this opportunity, no alternative energy sources have been explored. For example, the sports hall, that is to be retained and ‘re-clad’ has a large south facing shallow pitched roof that would lend itself one would have thought, perfectly for EV panels? As KCC are spearheading our 2030 carbon neutral target and advocating the benefit of ‘Solar Together’ then is this a missed opportunity? Low power lights or bulbs (as per Access and Design statement) is a small step toward reducing a carbon/energy use footprint but so much more can be done retrospectively – and with this sort of project, the scaffolding etc will already be in place for the cladding work to be undertaken.”

Mr Cole also raised concerns regarding highways and access implications, stating that a “methodology statement is missing from the application. I thought that logistical issues would have been identified and addressed within the Design and Access Statement, but were not. I was disappointed to read simply that access is via Rowhill Road to the West and Puddledock Lane, to the North. This area, comprising Rowhill Road, St David’s

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Road and Puddledock Lane causes many traffic problems – especially at school opening and closing times – with Hextable Primary School being literally across Rowhill Road from the entrance to Broomhill Bank School. I have managed to secure ‘Road not suitable for HGV’ signs to be installed at the junction of Puddledock Lane and St David’s Road where they meet Top Dartford Road. My predecessor argued for the inclusion of these signs for some years without success but since my election in May ’21 and having provided photographic evidence of the problems encountered with HGV’s and general traffic on this stretch of road, it was agreed that although the signs are not enforceable, there was justification for their installation due to the number of inappropriate vehicles using this ‘cut-through’ route. I am currently working with Hextable Primary School in establishing a School Transport Plan to assist with morning and afternoon traffic problems/chaos/pupil and pedestrian safety concerns and also with KCC Schools Transport Officer Iona Rogulski to look at how this area can be improved. I have spoken with my Highways Schemes officer to look at how the traffic priorities might be changed to assist with traffic flow and pedestrian safety in the immediate area. You will see from mapping software that Puddledock Lane is very narrow in places (single track – and I use the word ‘track’ deliberately) with little or no pavement, and although the site of the sports hall sits to the East of the main problem area, many parents and pupils use Puddledock Lane to arrive at or depart from Hextable School on foot or by car. Similarly, a large number of parents and pupils use Rowhill Road and although Hextable Primary have recently acquired a parcel of land adjacent to Broomhill Bank School for off-street parking this acts both as a magnet for those seeking to park as well as increasing the traffic flow in that road – especially at school closing time. I would very much like to see proposals from the applicant as to how they intend to mitigate any disruption in this area caused by their intended proposals with regard to the arrival and departure of both contractors and deliveries; the size of the vehicles intended to be utilised for deliveries and the steps that will be taken to ensure that pedestrian and pupil safety will not be compromised by the temporary increase in both private vehicle and larger MGW or HGV traffic. I hope that any works could be undertaken during school holidays when the surge for demand at peak times (08:00 – 09:15 and 14:30-15:30hrs) will simply not exist.”

16. Following the comments made by Mr Cole, the applicant submitted a Construction Management Plan which KCC Highways and Transportation have confirmed is acceptable from a highways perspective, as well as a ‘Low Zero Carbon Technology Report’ and a ‘Compliance Report’ which proposed 38.4 square metres of south facing photovoltaic panels. Mr Cole was notified of this and confirmed on 25 April 2022 that he had nothing further to add in relation to the update.

Publicity

17. The application was publicised on the 16th March 2022 by the posting 3 site notices.

Representations

18. In response to the publicity, 7 letters have been received objecting to the application. The key points can be summarised as follows:

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Access, Parking and Highways

- Puddledock Lane is a narrow single track lane which cannot cope with the volume of traffic/vehicles and already gets congested by parked cars during school drop off and pick up times.
- Frequent obstructive parking along Puddledock Lane during drop off and pick up times, presents a road safety danger to pedestrians, including school children walking to and from Broomhill Bank School, Hextable Primary School as well as visitors to the nearby Emerson Grange Care Home.
- Frequent parking on private neighbouring driveways and property entrances along Puddledock Lane when the road is blocked up during drop off and pick up times.
- Existing congestion prevents unhindered access to residents of Puddledock Lane, Rowhill Road and St David's Road and restricts emergency vehicle access.
- Suggest that obstructive parking of Broomhill Bank School traffic in the public highway is conditioned and suggest KCC Highways revisit the school and look at school pick up times to see existing issues.
- Question why the access gate to the north of the school site on Puddledock Lane is kept closed, and doesn't allow the vehicles causing obstructions to park on the school site. This gate being kept closed is the main cause of the ongoing chaos and congestion problems on Puddledock Lane with traffic building around peak times. Suggest that the north access gate on Puddledock Lane is opened to prevent ongoing congestion issues.
- Question why the main school gates to the west of the site on Rowhill Road is not being utilised, which is located on a wider and safer road more suitable for school vehicle access.
- Question if the development would be open to the general public, and if so where they would park. Suggest that the non-public use of the proposed buildings, both now and in the future, are secured via planning condition.

Local and Residential Amenity

- Noise from the school is already and has been an ongoing problem, with the new facilities creating more noise.
- Potential noise and music nuisance from the sports hall and proposed fitness suite causing disturbance to neighbouring residential properties.
- Suggest a planning condition to control noise.

Design

- Proposal is not in keeping with the character of the surrounding buildings .

Discussion

19. In considering this proposal regard must be had to the Development Plan Policies outlined in paragraph 13 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. Section 70(2) of

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the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 provides that the local planning authority shall have regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations. The proposal therefore needs to be considered in the context of the Development Plan Policies, Government Guidance, local finance considerations (where applicable) and other material planning considerations arising from consultation and publicity.

20. This application is being reported for determination by the Planning Applications Committee due to the objections received from local residents, as set out in paragraph 18 above. In my opinion, the key material planning considerations in this particular case are the principle of development and the need for education facilities; the siting and design of the development; the sustainability measures proposed; any highway and transportation implications linked to the proposal; landscape, tree and ecological matters and potential impact on residential and local amenity.

Need for the development

21. Planning policy guidance in the form of both the NPPF and the Policy Statement for School Development are strongly worded to ensure that proposals for the development of state funded schools should, wherever possible, be supported. In summary, the guidance states that there should be a presumption in favour of the development of state funded schools; that planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement; and that any refusal would have to be clearly justified. The school site lies within the defined built-up area of Hextable and as such the principle of development is accepted, subject to it being in accordance with other relevant policies.
22. Broomhill Bank School is a Special Educational Needs (SEN) school for students who have an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) reflecting their primary special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) as autism with other co-conditions such as speech and language difficulties and attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD). The school's curriculum is designed to support the students and offers a wide range of subjects providing an academically similar experience to mainstream secondary, within a suitable learning environment. The application documentation sets out that Broomhill Bank School currently suffers from a lack of internal space to deliver a kinaesthetic (personal awareness and movement) curriculum, therapeutic interventions and sports facilities for its existing students. To fulfil the requirements of the students EHCP, many students require occupational therapy interventions or benefit from sensory circuits delivered each morning. The application details that the current lack of internal sports facilities and space has a detrimental impact on the students, limiting effective year round learning and training facilities for teaching sports, and restricts students with a SEN diagnosis the full opportunity to study GCSE and A Level PE to the same standard as students would in a main stream school.
23. The existing sports hall building, located at the north of the school site, is currently in a poor state of disrepair requiring considerable improvement to provide adequate sports facilities for the school. The swimming pool has been closed off with entry prohibited since the handover of the school site from The Furness School to Broomhill Bank School

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in 2015, and following the identification of a large amount of asbestos combined with instability of the roof, the swimming pool building, and ancillary building have been partially demolished due to health and safety concerns. It is therefore proposed as part of this planning application to refurbish the existing sports hall building, complete the demolition works of the swimming pool and ancillary building, and provide a dedicated sports and changing room facilities extension predominantly on the extent of the existing hardstanding/building area.

24. The development would provide a lobby area, a fitness suite, two changing rooms, a separate facility room and associated lobby/entrance, toilets to the east and storage/sports rooms to the north of the existing sports hall. It is considered that the development would provide much needed internal sports facilities to support all year round needs of PE, and provide a dedicated internal space to support and enable therapeutic interventions and kinaesthetic learning through physical activity.
25. Therefore, in my view, there is a strong case for the replacement and improvement of the sports facilities at the school. The development would largely constitute a replacement of the existing facilities/built development on site already within an established educational complex, and I consider that the educational need for the proposed development should be given significant weight in this instance. The site has an established educational use, and the provision of such new facilities would be considered acceptable in principle in respect of the policy and guidance in the NPPF and Planning Policy Statement for Schools Development, subject to other policy considerations which are addressed below. In considering the above, I accept the need for the proposed development.

Siting and Design

26. The planning application proposes to retain the existing sports hall building and re-clad it with a profiled panel system in a grey finish. The application also proposes the demolition of the existing swimming pool building and ancillary building, and the erection of a single storey replacement building, partly to the north of the existing sports hall building, and partly to the east. The area of development would be situated at the north of the school site, within the existing confines of the school premises and on an area of existing development within the school site. The proposed single storey extension to the east of the existing sports hall building would largely constitute a replacement of the existing facilities on site already, and would be situated on the extent of the existing hardstanding and building development area. The proposed single storey extension to the north of the existing sports hall building would extend slightly further towards the northern school boundary (approximately 4 metres). Vegetation between the existing sports hall and northern boundary is proposed to be retained. As shown on the submitted plans, the proposed replacement building works are considered to be subservient in size to the existing sports hall building, and it is not proposed to create any development significantly larger than the existing development currently on site. Considering the matters above, I am satisfied that the proposed location of the single storey extensions are considered appropriate within the school site.
27. The application also seeks to improve and enhance the existing and poor external appearance and physical state of the existing sports hall building through re-cladding

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with a profiled panel system in a grey finish. The agent has stated that the re-cladding would result in a modern, contemporary design that is fit for purpose and responds well to the wider improvement and refurbishment works, and considers that it would improve the existing external appearance.

28. The application proposes that the replacement single storey extensions situated north and east of the sports hall building would be finished in brickwork to match the existing school buildings, along with grey render. The extension to the east of the sports hall building is also proposed to include vertical natural timber cladding to the front entrance, along with grey aluminium doors and windows, and a metal profiled sheet roof. The application proposes a range and mix of materials that would be reflective of its purpose and function within the school setting, whilst maintaining a simple palette to reflect its functional and educational nature and would be consistent with other related development at the school site. It is also stated that the proposed development would integrate with the existing school complex and have minimal impact on the surrounding environment, as well as preserve the character and appearance of the locality. Similarly, it is considered that, as a result of the proposed development, the overall mass and scale of the redeveloped buildings would be reduced compared with the previous group of buildings prior to demolition.
29. In this instance, I consider that the visual appearance of the existing sports hall building, and the swimming pool and ancillary buildings (as they were and now partially demolished) would be significantly improved by the development proposed. I consider that the site currently detracts from the school site and street scene, with the existing sports hall building in need of refurbishment and repair to improve its external visual appearance, and the single storey extensions would replace the partially demolished building works currently on site. I consider that the re-cladding of the existing sports hall building would provide a fresh and clean external appearance, that would be appropriate in this location and that the proposed single storey extensions would not create any development significantly larger or more significant than that was on site previously. Whilst the northern extension of sports hall building would create development slightly further north within the school site, the northern boundary hedgerows and landscaping are to be retained, and this element being single storey would be minimal in relation to the existing sports hall building. Similarly, the single storey extension to the east of the existing sports hall building would be predominantly within the previous footprint (in terms of hard standing and built development) of the partially demolished swimming pool building and ancillary building, and is it not considered that this would create any more significant development than on site previously.
30. I am satisfied that the development would result in improved external design and appearance, which would be acceptable in visual terms and consider that this would result in visual betterment. I am satisfied that the proposed materials are appropriate in principle given the location within the existing school site, and would be in keeping with the surrounding built development. However, I recommend that final details be required pursuant to planning condition, should permission be granted. Further, the development would also be screened to the north to an acceptable extent by the existing hedgerows and vegetation that are to be retained. The proposal would therefore accord with the NPPF objectives on design, Sevenoaks District Core Strategy (February 2011) Policy

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SP1: Design of New Development and Conservation, and Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan (February 2015) Policy EN1: Design Principles.

Sustainability

31. The application proposes that the single storey extensions, both to the north and east of the existing sports hall building, would be fitted with energy efficient low energy light bulbs, and include a modern highly efficient heating system. Furthermore, the application is supported by a 'Low Zero Carbon Technology Report' and 'L2A Compliance Report' which was submitted following the comments made by the Local Member Perry Cole. The documents detail the anticipated energy use and carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions, heating and power requirements, low carbon design approach, and set out that the 10% target of on-site energy generation would be achieved by the inclusion of a photovoltaic (PV) array of 24 panels totalling 38.4 square metres on the south facing roof of the extension to the east of the existing sports hall building. The agent has confirmed the inclusion of 38.4 square metres of PV panels and the drawings, including roof plan, now reflect this as part of the proposal. In relation to ventilation, the Compliance Report details proposed heating, cooling and ventilation systems, and sets out that natural ventilation by operable windows would be provided to all areas, as well as extract ventilation which would be provided with fans local to the space served.
32. Based on the information set out above, I am satisfied that the proposal would accord with the NPPF objectives on the presumption in favour of sustainable development, Sevenoaks District Core Strategy (February 2011) Policy SP2: Sustainable Development, and Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan (February 2015) Policy SC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development.

Access, Parking and Highways

33. During the consultation period, concerns were raised by Local Member, regarding the lack of information provided on how the combined impact on the local highways network would be mitigated. In particular, how it would be intended to mitigate any disruption to the local area with regards to the arrival and departure of both contractors and deliveries, the size of vehicles intended to be utilised for deliveries, and the steps that would be taken to ensure that pedestrian and pupil safety would not be compromised by the temporary increase in both private vehicles and larger vehicle traffic. Mr Cole also outlined that the local area, comprising Rowhill Road, St David's Road and Puddledock Lane, currently suffers many traffic and congestion issues, particularly during peak drop off and pick up times due to combined pressures from both Broomhill Bank School (north) and the adjacent Hextable Primary School.
34. Similarly, objection has been received from local residents on the grounds of existing ongoing congestion on the local highway network, in particular, Puddledock Lane to the north of the school site. The representations outline that the narrow single track nature of Puddledock Lane mean that it is unable to cope with the existing volume of traffic and parking, and has led to excessive congestion, obstructive parking, causing significant pedestrian safety concerns and restricting emergency access. The objections also outline that one of the main causes of the ongoing congestion is that the school gate at

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the northern access on Puddledock Lane is kept closed, therefore not enabling the vehicles causing obstructions in to the school site to park safely. The combination of school time traffic from Broomhill Bank School (north), Hextable Primary School and occupiers and visitors of Emerson Grange Care Home all contribute to the ongoing existing local congestion issues.

35. Broomhill Bank School (north) is accessed via Rowhill Road to the west of the school site, and also includes a secondary access via Puddledock Lane to the north. The application seeks to provide on-site physical education needs and amenities for use by the school only, and proposes to utilise existing on-site parking provision and access. The application does not propose to increase the school capacity, pupil intake or staffing numbers and therefore there would be no material increase in traffic generation as a result of the proposed development. The facilities will not be available for use by the general public.
36. Should planning permission be granted, there would however be a marginal increase in traffic for a limited temporary period, throughout the duration of the construction of the development. Following the concerns raised by both Local County Member and local residents, a Construction Management Plan (CMP) was submitted. The CMP sets out the likely operations that would be involved as part of any construction activities and aims to ensure a safe and environmentally responsible method of construction. In particular, the document details the proposed hours of working and sets out that heavy commercial vehicles engaged in either the import or export of construction material or waste would not be permitted to enter or leave the site outside the hours of 9.30-14.00 Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays) to minimise the potential impact of construction activities on the surrounding road network. Access to and from the site for all vehicle types is strongly encouraged to approach and exit via the eastern end of Puddledock Lane, and it is intended that deliveries would be staggered to ensure that there is no congestion at or near to the site. Highways and Transportation are satisfied that the site would utilise an existing access, would not result in any change to the existing parking, that the proposal would not result in an increase in pupil numbers and therefore raise no objection. They have also confirmed that the submitted Construction Management Plan is acceptable and should planning permission be granted, request a condition seeking the adherence to the submitted Construction Management Plan. In light of the highways and Transportation advice and the details within the submitted Construction Management Plan I am satisfied that local objections raised would be addressed by the controls set out in the CMP.
37. It is noted that those objecting to the application, question why the access gate to the north off Puddledock Lane is kept closed and does not enable the flow of vehicles into and out of the school site, especially during peak drop-off and pick-up times. As the planning application seeks to provide replacement on-site physical education amenities for use solely by the school and does not propose to increase school capacity or pupil numbers meaning there would not be any increase in long term vehicle movements, the opening of the northern access gate is not within the scope of the determination of this planning application. This matter is considered a school management issue to be taken up with the school directly. The Agent has confirmed that the school is reviewing more comprehensively the way in which it operates the parking and pick-up/drop-off

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arrangements, and the school would be willing to meet with local residents and discuss their concerns regarding current parking arrangements and the gate.

38. The local residents who raised objection were written to advising them of the matters detailed above, however maintain their objection.
39. Highways and Transportation have raised no objection to the application and confirmed that the submitted Construction Management Plan is acceptable and should planning permission be granted, require a condition seeking adherence to the submitted Construction Management Plan. The planning application would have no direct long term implications on traffic generation and vehicle numbers to and from the site, and increased vehicle movement during construction would be for a temporary period. The proposal is in general conformity to Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan (February 2015) Policy T1: Mitigating Travel Impact. It is therefore considered that the application does not pose unacceptable impacts on parking and traffic implications upon the local highway network and complies with planning policy and guidance.

Residential and local amenity

40. As set out above, the proposed development would be sited at the north of the existing school site, adjacent to Puddledock Lane, and seeks to retain and re-clad the existing sports hall building, complete demolition of the existing swimming pool building and ancillary building, and erect a single storey replacement building partly to the north and partly to the east of the existing sports hall building. The building to the east of the existing sports hall building would largely constitute a replacement of the existing facilities on site and would be situated within the existing built confines of the school site. The single storey building to the north of the existing sports hall building would extend slightly further towards the northern school boundary. The existing vegetation along the northern boundary of the school site is proposed to be retained and would continue to provide significant screening to the nearest residential properties which are located to the north along Puddledock Lane. The façade of the nearest residential property is approximately 35 metres from the proposed northern extension. It should also be noted that the boundaries of the residential properties along Puddledock Lane benefit from existing hedging between the houses and road, and the houses are set back from the road.
41. Objection has been received from local residents on the grounds of potential noise and music nuisance from the sports hall and new fitness suite causing disturbance and noise to neighbouring residential properties. The Agent has confirmed that it is unlikely any significant noise or nuisance would be created from the use of the development as part of the scheme relates to the re-cladding of the existing sports hall building, which would be used for its existing purpose and use. Moreover, it is stated that the erection of the single storey replacement sports and changing room facilities would essentially substitute the existing (partially demolished) swimming pool building and ancillary building. The agent has confirmed that the buildings would be for use by the school only and this would be secured via planning condition, should permission be granted. Therefore, it is considered that there would be no net change in the use of the land and

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buildings. Similarly, the proposal is not providing for additional capacity, nor is it seeking to offer any music facility. The Agent states that the existing situation would remain, in terms of the use and facilities on the school site.

42. In relation to local and residential amenity, I note that Sevenoaks District Council has raised no objection on these ground in its response, and I consider that the development would not cause significant harm to local and residential amenity, and as such would not be in conflict with Policy EN2 Amenity Protection of the Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan (February 2015) in this regard.

Ecological Enhancements and Landscaping

43. The application was supported by the submission of a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal which has been considered by the County Council's Biodiversity Officer. The findings of the Appraisal show that the buildings have limited potential to be used by roosting bats and breeding birds, and recommend that ecological enhancements should, where possible, be included in the proposed development plans to contribute towards the objectives of the NPPF.
44. The Biodiversity Officer notes that the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has made recommendations to enhance the site for biodiversity, but no information has been provided demonstrating what enhancement would be incorporated into the site. Therefore it is recommended that, should planning permission be granted, a condition should be imposed to secure details of ecological enhancement features to be incorporated into the site. With regard to external lighting, the Biodiversity Officer notes that external lighting can have a negative impact on roosting bats and therefore recommend that any lighting condition requires the lighting plan to follow the recommendations of the 'Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK' document. The Biodiversity Officer also states that an informative should be imposed on any permission given to ensure the protection of breeding birds which are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Finally, the Construction Management Plan has confirmed that the precautionary mitigation detailed within the ecological report would be implemented during works and therefore raise no objection subject to the imposition of the conditions and informative mentioned above.
45. Sevenoaks District Council raise no objection and recommend that consideration is given to the imposition of conditions relating to details of all landscaping and boundary treatments including retained or additional landscaping, and details of ecological mitigation and enhancement strategies as set out within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal dated September 2021, March Environmental Ecological Consultants. The Agent has confirmed that the hedgerow along the northern boundary of the site, adjacent to Puddledock Lane, is to be retained. To ensure that the existing landscaping is not adversely affected by the development, details of a scheme of landscaping, replacement trees and tree protection would be secured via condition should planning permission be granted.
46. Subject to the imposition of the conditions and informative mentioned above, it is considered that the application is acceptable on ecological grounds and would accord

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with Policy SP11 Biodiversity of the Sevenoaks District Core Strategy (February 2011). I am also satisfied that the requirements set out in the NPPF in terms of enhancing and protecting biodiversity. The proposal is also considered acceptable in landscaping terms.

Conclusion

47. This planning application seeks to provide physical education facilities to offer year round dedicated spaces for sports activity and suitable facilities to assist in the deliverability of students Educational Health Care Plans (EHCP) at Broomhill Bank (north) Special Educational Needs (SEN) School. The proposal seeks the retention and re-cladding of the existing sports hall building, demolition of the swimming pool building and ancillary building, and the erection of a single storey replacement sports and changing room extension at Broomhill Bank School (north). It is proposed that the replacement building elements would serve as an extension to the existing sports hall building and would be situated partly to the rear of the existing sports hall building to the north, and partly to the east. The proposal largely constitutes a replacement of the existing facilities/built development on site already, predominantly located within the existing hard standing of the swimming pool building and ancillary building that would be demolished. The reclad sports hall and replacement buildings would comprise a lobby area, a fitness suite, two changing rooms, a separate facility room and associated lobby/entrance, toilets and storage/sports rooms.
48. 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 and the guidance contained in the NPPF. It accords with the Planning Policy Statement - Planning for School Development which gives great weight to the development of state-funded schools, their delivery through the planning system and the adaptation and improvement of facilities. Subject to the conditions and informatives below, I do not consider that the development would result in any significant adverse impact in respect of siting and design, residential and local amenity, landscaping and ecology, or parking and traffic implications upon the local highway network.
49. In my view the development is sustainable and I recommend that planning permission be granted subject to the conditions set out below.

Recommendation

50. I RECOMMEND that PERMISSION BE GRANTED SUBJECT TO the imposition of conditions covering (amongst other matters) the following:
1. The standard three year time limit;
 2. The development to be carried out in accordance with the permitted details;
 3. Within 3 months of the date of the decision, details of the external materials, including colour finishes, in accordance with those set out within the application shall be submitted for the approval of the County Planning Authority, and the development shall thereafter be carried out using the approved external materials;

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4. The use of the development hereby permitted shall be for school use and purposes only and shall not be made available for use by the general public;
5. The measures set out in the Construction Management Strategy dated June 2022 shall be strictly adhered to for the duration of construction operations;
6. Within 3 months of the date of this decision, details of a scheme of landscaping shall be submitted for the written approval of the County Planning Authority, and such scheme shall detail all landscaping and boundary treatments including retained or additional landscaping, and shall thereafter be implemented as approved within the first planting season following completion of the works;
7. In the event of any trees, shrubs and hedges included in the landscaping scheme, approved pursuant to condition (6) above, or any replacement trees, shrubs or hedges being removed, destroyed or dying or dead within 5 years of the planting, they shall be replaced within 12 months in the same places by large nursery stock of the same species;
8. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in such a manner as to avoid damage to any existing trees/hedges, including their root system, to be retained as part of the landscaping scheme by providing/installing tree protection;
9. Within 3 months of works commencing within the site, an ecological enhancement plan shall be submitted for the approval of the County Planning Authority, and must demonstrate how the site will be enhanced to benefit biodiversity and thereafter be implemented as approved;
10. Within 3 months of date of this decision, details of any new additional external lighting and hours of lighting operation, including the lighting of access areas, and lighting on the buildings hereby permitted, shall be submitted for the written approval of the County Planning Authority, and thereafter be implemented as approved. The external lighting scheme must adhere to the Bat Conservation Trust's 'Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK' guidance;

51. I FURTHER RECOMMEND that the following INFORMATIVES be added:

1. Advice that planning permission does not convey any approval to carry out work on or affecting a public highway and that engagement with KCC Highways and Transportation would be required at an early stage.
2. The applicant is reminded that, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended (section 1), it is an offence to remove, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built. Planning consent for a development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this act. Trees, scrub, hedgerows and buildings are likely to contain nesting birds between 1st March and 31st August inclusive. Buildings and vegetation are present on the application site and are to be assumed to contain nesting birds between the above dates, unless a recent survey has been undertaken by a competent ecologist to assess the nesting bird activity on site during this period and has shown it is absolutely certain that nesting birds are not present.

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| Case Officer: Chloe Palmer | Tel. no: 03000 415718 |
| Background Documents: see section heading | |