

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**

**Proposed new buildings for Spires Academy at land off Bredlands Lane, Sturry, Canterbury– CA/10/1790**

---

A report by Head of Planning Applications Group to Planning Applications Committee on 15 February 2011.

Application by Kent Council Children, Families and Education for the erection of a new state-of-the-art educational building, together with outdoor sports pitches, a new 3 court MUGA, new parking provision, drop off zones, new circulatory access and pedestrian access, landscaping and ancillary works at land off Bredlands Lane, Sturry, Canterbury – CA/10/1790.

Recommendation: permission be granted subject to conditions.

**Local Member:** Mr A Marsh

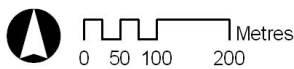
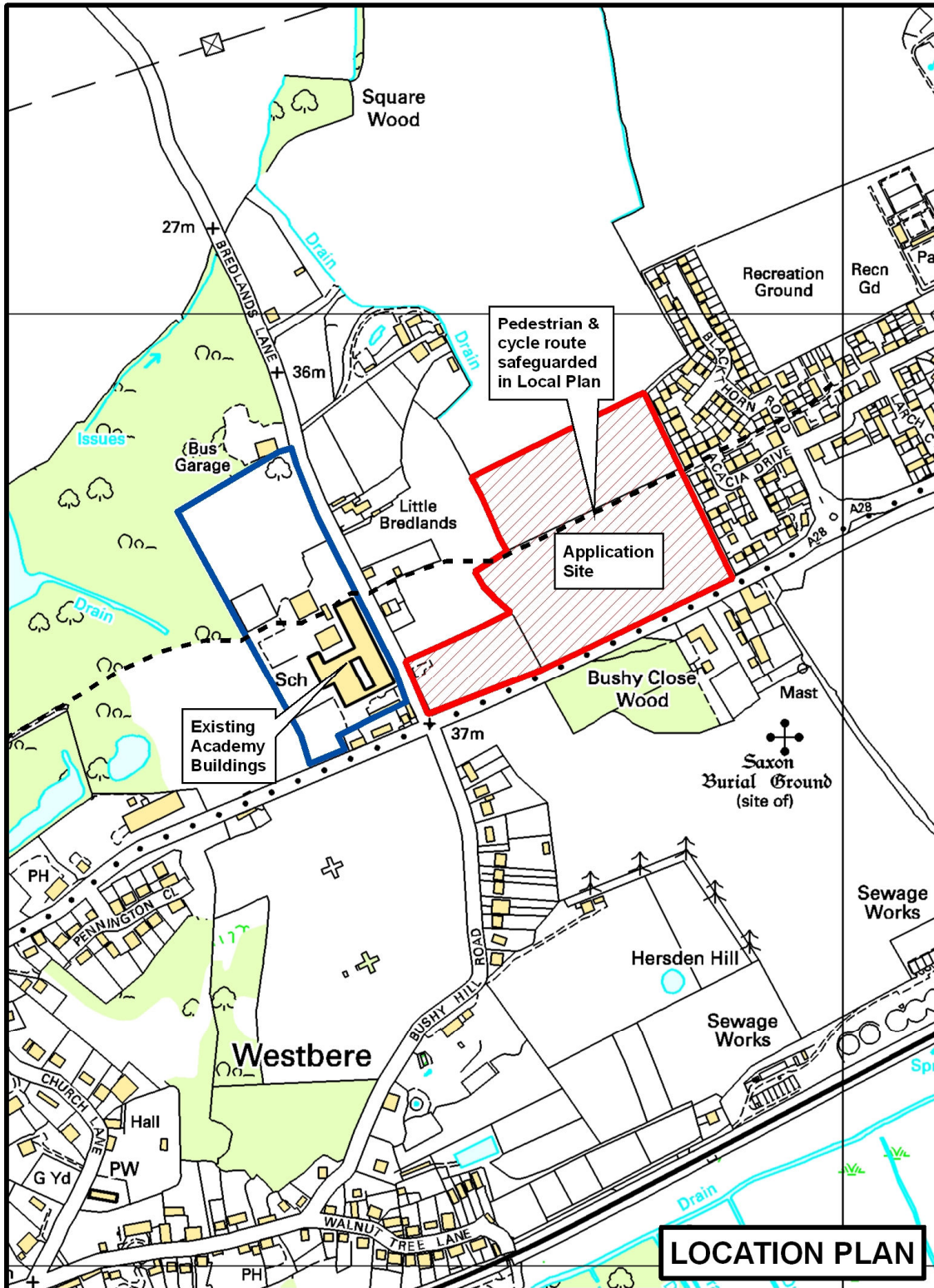
**Classification:** Unrestricted

**Site**

1. Spires Academy is located between the villages of Sturry and Hersden, approximately 5km east-north-east of Canterbury. The existing Academy, formally named Montgomery School, is located just off the A28 Island Road, which runs between Canterbury and Margate. The existing Academy site is located to the north of Island Road, around the junction with Bredlands Lane. The existing academy buildings are located on the west side of Bredlands Lane, with the playing fields located to the east side. The application site is the existing academy playing fields, along with a small area of agricultural land to the north which has recently been acquired by Spires Academy. The 5.45 hectare site is bound to the south by the A28 and a substantial hedgerow, to the east by the back gardens of a number of residential properties, to the north by agricultural land, and to the west by Bredlands Lane. A small number of properties are located on Bredlands Lane, but do not directly adjoin the application site boundaries.
2. The new academy buildings are proposed towards the centre of the site. The existing vehicular access off of Bredlands Lane would be retained, and the western portion of the site is proposed to accommodate car parking and vehicle circulation routes. The eastern side of the site would remain as sports pitches, as would the area of agricultural land to the north.
3. Policy C3 of the Canterbury District Local Plan (adopted 2006) identifies land running through the site as a proposed pedestrian and cycle route, land for which must be safeguarded. *A site location plan is attached.*

# Item D1

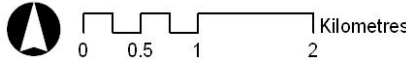
## Proposed new buildings for Spires Academy at land off Bredlands Lane, Sturry, Canterbury – CA/10/1790



This material has been reproduced from Ordnance Survey digital map data with the permission of the controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright.



**Proposed new buildings for Spires Academy at land off Bredlands Lane, Sturry, Canterbury – CA/10/1790**



This material has been reproduced from Ordnance Survey digital map data with the permission of the controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright.









# Item D1

## Proposed new buildings for Spires Academy at land off Bredlands Lane, Sturry, Canterbury – CA/10/1790



**ST. JESTICO + WHILES**  
 100 Bredlands Lane, Sturry, Canterbury, Kent, CT12 6JL  
 01227 300000

DATE: 12/08/2024  
 PROJECT: CA/10/1790  
 DRAWING: 2326-JW-102

**SECOND FLOOR**

DATE: 12/08/2024  
 PROJECT: CA/10/1790  
 DRAWING: 2326-JW-102

CLIENT: Spires Academy  
 PROJECT: Spires Academy  
 DRAWING: 2326-JW-102

**NOTES:**

1. EXACT POSITION, NUMBER, ORIENTATION AND USE OF FOOTPRINTS MUST BE SHOWN.

**ST. JESTICO + WHILES**

SCALE: 1:100

# Item D1

## Proposed new buildings for Spires Academy at land off Bredlands Lane, Sturry, Canterbury – CA/10/1790



**WEST AND SOUTH ELEVATIONS**

DATE: 10/10/2018  
 DRAWN BY: J. WILSON  
 CHECKED BY: J. WILSON  
 PROJECT: Spires Academy  
 SHEET: 2328-W-200

**WEST ELEVATION KEY**

- 1. CONCRETE/BRICK/CLAY BRICKS
- 2. GLAZED ALUMINUM FRAME
- 3. ALUMINUM CLADDING SYSTEM
- 4. CONCRETE/BRICK/CLAY BRICKS
- 5. GLAZED ALUMINUM FRAME
- 6. ALUMINUM CLADDING SYSTEM
- 7. CONCRETE/BRICK/CLAY BRICKS
- 8. GLAZED ALUMINUM FRAME
- 9. ALUMINUM CLADDING SYSTEM

**South Elevation Key**

- 1. CONCRETE/BRICK/CLAY BRICKS
- 2. GLAZED ALUMINUM FRAME
- 3. ALUMINUM CLADDING SYSTEM
- 4. CONCRETE/BRICK/CLAY BRICKS
- 5. GLAZED ALUMINUM FRAME
- 6. ALUMINUM CLADDING SYSTEM
- 7. CONCRETE/BRICK/CLAY BRICKS
- 8. GLAZED ALUMINUM FRAME
- 9. ALUMINUM CLADDING SYSTEM

**WEST AND SOUTH ELEVATIONS**

DATE: 10/10/2018  
 DRAWN BY: J. WILSON  
 CHECKED BY: J. WILSON  
 PROJECT: Spires Academy  
 SHEET: 2328-W-200

**WEST AND SOUTH ELEVATIONS**

DATE: 10/10/2018  
 DRAWN BY: J. WILSON  
 CHECKED BY: J. WILSON  
 PROJECT: Spires Academy  
 SHEET: 2328-W-200





**Proposed new buildings for Spires Academy at land off Bredlands Lane, Sturry, Canterbury – CA/10/1790**

---

**Background**

4. Spires Academy has been operating as an Academy since September 2007 in the buildings of the former Montgomery School. The School was one of the worst performing schools in the Country and was facing closure prior to achieving academy status. However, last year over 80% of students gained 5 A-C GCSE grades, and the academy is now achieving well and increasing in popularity. However, we are advised that its achievements are hampered by life-expired facilities on the existing site, and the applicant has advised that the current buildings are cramped and have a number of issues including:
- no purpose built performing arts facilities (one of the Academy specialisms);
  - inadequate indoor sports facilities;
  - internal configuration of individual teaching rooms with no flexibility for working with larger and smaller teaching groups;
  - lack of space to bring people together for examinations, assemblies, and other communal activities.

The Academy believes that they have reached the point where inadequate accommodation is holding back educational development. In addition, currently the academy can offer little to enhance activities in the wider community. Refurbishment of the existing buildings is not considered to be cost effective or desirable and, therefore, a new purpose built facility is proposed.

**Proposal**

5. Kent County Council Children, Families and Education is seeking planning permission to construct a new facility for Spires Academy to the east of Bredlands Lane. The existing buildings and the site to the west of Bredlands Lane would then be vacated upon completion of the development (anticipated to be September 2012), and the site released to be redeveloped subject to separate proposals. The new Spires Academy would cater for 600 students aged 11-16 (4FE) with Business and Enterprise, and Visual, Creative and Performing Arts as specialisms. It is intended that the proposed new building would be constructed towards the centre of the 'L' shaped site, with surrounding areas maintained as playing fields, and used for access and car parking.
6. The application proposes the following:
- a new school building of 5,876m<sup>2</sup>, including a new four-court indoor sports hall;
  - a new external three-court Multi Use Games Area (MUGA);
  - existing pitch areas and agricultural land to the north redefined and marked out to provide senior, medium and junior grass playing pitch provision and meet DfES and Sport England standards, including community use;
  - hard and soft play and social areas;
  - 132 car parking spaces, circulatory access, 86 cycle spaces and pedestrian access;
  - landscaping; &
  - extended cycle path.
7. The development of the site masterplan has been directed by the requirement to provide the proposed academy, and all associated facilities, within the one site, and to minimise the loss of playing fields. The other principal driving components of the masterplan were the requirements to provide sufficient car parking, pick-up/drop-off

**Proposed new buildings for Spires Academy at land off Bredlands Lane, Sturry, Canterbury – CA/10/1790**

---

facilities and cycle parking, whilst retaining the existing site access from Bredlands Lane. Kent Highway Services advised the applicant that no new entrance to the site, either pedestrian or vehicular, could be formed from the A28 Island Road due to concern over school traffic impeding the flow of traffic on the main road between Canterbury and Thanet. Accordingly, the pedestrian and vehicular entrance is maintained in approximately the same position as the current access to the playing fields on the northern end of the Bredlands Lane site frontage.

8. The architectural proposals place the academy building at the centre of the site where the building location would divide the external areas between the front of the academy, which includes a welcome plaza, cycle parking and car parking, and the rear of the site which would house informal social areas, sports facilities and external learning spaces. This would allow the building to form part of the secure boundary between public facilities at the site frontage and the private academy facilities to the west of the building. The structure of the building would further define external areas with the 'wings' marking out open courtyards on the four sides of the structure. A fenced MUGA is proposed to the south-eastern side of the site, adjacent to the sports hall, pitches and changing facilities. The sports pitches to the east of the site are proposed to be extended to the north, with alterations to the pitch orientations and markings to provide the required level of playing field provision.
9. The proposed academy building would be two and three storeys in height, and has been designed around a central double height heart space, from which radiate four 'wings'. The central heart would function as the assembly hall and café/dining area, performance, exhibition and circulation space, and would link the school's entrance with the four learning 'wings'. It is proposed that the learning areas would be set out as follows:
  - 'Wing 1' – enterprise (ground floor), art and music (first floor) & science (second floor).
  - 'Wing 2' - maths (ground floor), English (first floor) & humanities (second floor).
  - 'Wing 3' – sports (ground floor) & performing arts (first floor).
  - 'Wing 4' – support and guidance (ground and first floor).The proposals allow for increased use of the indoor spaces and outdoor sports facilities by the wider community, and the building has been designed to enable community facilities to operate out of normal school hours without compromising the security of dedicated teaching areas.
10. The applicant advises that the building form and massing has resulted from the response to the site and the relationship of the internal space with the external environment. The three storey element of the building would be located to the north of the academy, further from the site's frontage with the A28, with the two storey elements providing sports facilities and a welcoming entrance to the school. The building would have a flat roof to reduce the height, with the three storey elements reaching 12.5 metres at the highest point, and most of the building being below 9 metres in height. The building is proposed to be finished the grey and green tones, with a simple external appearance and palette of materials. The building has been designed to meet the BREEAM rating of 'very good'.
11. The development proposals would result in the removal of two hedgerows which currently divide the site. Boundary planting, including the substantial hedgerow to the south of the site, adjacent to the A28, would however be retained and enhanced. The applicant has submitted detailed arboricultural reports, landscape proposals and ecological reports in support of the application which address the removal of the hedgerows in detail. The boundary of the site would be secured with a 2.4 metre high fence and gated access.



**Proposed new buildings for Spires Academy at land off Bredlands Lane, Sturry, Canterbury – CA/10/1790**

---

12. The applicant advises that the majority of students arrive at the existing academy by private vehicles and coaches and, due to the fairly isolated nature of the site, it is not expected that this situation would change. Therefore, the following vehicle parking is proposed:
- i. 132 car parking spaces (including 8 disabled spaces);
  - ii. 4 coach parking spaces;
  - iii. 4 spaces for parental/taxi drop-off/pick-up;
  - iv. 86 cycle parking spaces;
  - v. 7 motorcycle parking spaces; &
  - vi. 1 mini bus parking space.

The new internal access road is proposed to enter from one location off Bredlands Lane with potential to be defined as either a one way or two way system of circulation. An external entrance plaza would direct students and visitors to the main entrance of the academy building.

13. A footpath and cycle way is proposed to run along the eastern and southern boundaries of the site, linking housing in the east to Bredlands Lane. The route would be secured from the school grounds by fencing, and would be privately owned by the academy who would allow public access. The footway/cycleway would be built to adoptable standards, but without lighting, and maybe adopted by Kent Highway Services in the future. A pedestrian and cycle entrance to the academy site would be provided from this route, located approximately half way along the site frontage with the A28 Island Road. However, this route would be protected and screened from the A28 by the existing barrier hedging, thus minimising the risk of parental drop off along this busy road. The provision of the footway/cycleway is necessary to accord with Policy C3 of the Canterbury District Local Plan, which requires land through the site to be safeguarded as part of the strategic footway/cycleway network.

*The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement, Phase 1 Habitat Survey, Geotechnical Investigation, Contaminated Land Investigation, Energy Strategy, Statement of Community Involvement, Transport Statement and Travel Plan, Arboricultural Survey, Archaeology Statement, Sports Strategy Assessment, Drainage Assessment, Flood Risk Assessment, Acoustic Report, External Lighting Statement, BREEAM Pre-Assessment, Un-exploded Ordnance Survey, Secured by Design Meeting Notes, and a Landscape Maintenance Strategy.*

**Planning Policy**

14. The following Guidance/Statements Development Plan Policies summarised below are relevant to the consideration of the application:

**(i) Planning Policy Guidance and Statements:**

<b>PPS1</b>	Delivering Sustainable Development
<b>PPS4</b>	Planning and Sustainable Economic Growth
<b>PPS7</b>	Sustainable Development in Rural Areas
<b>PPS9</b>	Biodiversity and Geological Conservation
<b>PPG13</b>	Transport

**Proposed new buildings for Spires Academy at land off Bredlands Lane, Sturry, Canterbury – CA/10/1790**

---

**PPG17** Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation

**PPS23** Planning and Pollution Control

**PPG24** Planning and Noise

**PPS25** Development and Flood Risk

(ii) The adopted **South East Plan 2009**:

**Policy CC1** Seeks to achieve and maintain sustainable development in the region.

**Policy CC4** The design and construction of all new development will be expected to adopt and incorporate sustainable construction standards and techniques.

**Policy CC6** Promotes the creation of sustainable and distinctive communities that respect the character of settlements and landscapes, and achieve a high quality built environment.

**Policy CC7** States that the scale and pace of development will depend on sufficient capacity being available in existing infrastructure to meet the needs of new development. Where this cannot be demonstrated the scale and the pace of the development will be dependent on additional capacity being released or the provision of new infrastructure.

**Policy T4** Sets out the approach to parking standards to be taken in Local Development Documents including restraint-based maximum levels of parking provision for non-residential development in line with PPG 13 and provision of adequate secure cycle parking.

**Policy NRM2** Water quality will be maintained and enhanced through avoiding adverse effects of development on the water environment.

**Policy NRM4** Confirms that the sequential approach to development in flood risk areas set out in PPS25 will be followed.

**Policy NRM5** Requires Local Planning Authorities and other bodies to avoid a net loss of biodiversity, and actively pursue opportunities to achieve a net gain across the region.

**Policy BE1** Local Authorities and their partners will use opportunities associated with new development to help provide significant improvements to the built environment.

**Policy S1** Supports measures for developing and shaping healthy sustainable communities, including: community access to amenities such as open spaces and physical recreation activity; and healthier forms of transport.

**Proposed new buildings for Spires Academy at land off Bredlands Lane, Sturry, Canterbury – CA/10/1790**

---

- Policy S3** States that, local planning authorities, taking into account demographic projections, should work with partners to ensure the adequate provision of pre-school, school and community learning facilities.
- Policy S5** Promotes increased and sustainable participation in sport, recreation and cultural activity.
- Policy S6** Encourages the mixed use of community facilities, and requires community facilities to be located and designed appropriately.
- Policy W2** Requires development design, construction and demolition which minimises waste production and associated impacts.

**Important note regarding the South East Plan:**

*As a result of the judgement in the case brought by Cala Homes in the High Court, which held that the powers set out in section 79 [6] of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 could not be used to revoke all Regional Strategies in their entirety, Regional Strategies (the South East Plan in the case of Kent) were re-established as part of the Development Plan on 10 November 2010. Notwithstanding this, DCLG's Chief Planner Steve Quartermain advised Local Planning Authorities on 10 November 2010 that they should still have regard to the Secretary of State's letter to Local Planning Authorities and to the Planning Inspectorate dated 27 May 2010. In that letter he had informed them of the Government's intention to abolish Regional Strategies in the Localism Bill and that he expected them to have regard to this as a material consideration in any planning decisions. The 10th November 2010 Quartermain Letter is now being challenged in the High Court and must in my view carry little weight until such time as the Court decision is known. This is currently expected.*

*Department of Communities and Local Government advice on this matter reads:*

*'Local planning authorities and planning inspectors should be aware that the Secretary of State has received a judicial review challenge to his statement of 10 November 2010, the letter of the Chief Planner of the same date and to the Secretary of State's letter of 27 May 2010 on the ground that the Government's intended revocation of Regional Strategies by the promotion of legislation for that purpose in the forthcoming Localism Bill is legally immaterial to the determination of planning applications and appeals prior to the revocation of Regional Strategies.*

*The Secretary of State is defending the challenge and believes and is advised that it is ill founded. Nevertheless, pending determination of the challenge, decision makers in local planning authorities and at the Planning Inspectorate will in their determination of planning applications and appeals need to consider whether the existence of the challenge and the basis of it, affects the significance and weight which they judge may be given to the Secretary of State's statements and to the letter of the Chief Planner'.*

**(iii) The adopted (2006) Canterbury District Local Plan First Review:**

- Policy BE1 -** The City Council will expect proposals of high quality design which respond to the objectives of sustainable development.
- Policy BE3 -** Design statements and/or Development Briefs shall be submitted with planning applications setting out the principles used in the scheme to relate the development within and to its context. This will



**Proposed new buildings for Spires Academy at land off Bredlands Lane, Sturry, Canterbury – CA/10/1790**

---

apply to all planning applications, where the development is visually significant or is significant to its neighbours.

- Policy NE1** - Where development proposals are being considered for a site known, or likely to have, protected species, or species identified in national or Kent Biodiversity Action Plans, developers will be expected to carry out a survey and present proposals for mitigation.
- Policy NE5** - Development should be designed to retain trees, hedgerows, woodland or other landscape features that make an important contribution to the amenity of the site and the surrounding area, and which are important to wild flora and fauna.
- Policy C1** - In considering the location or control of new development, or the relocation of existing activities, the Council will always take into account the principles of the adopted 2004 Canterbury District Transport Action Plan.
- Policy C3** - Land will be safeguarded for the proposed pedestrian and cycle routes shown on the proposals map.
- Policy C4** - Development proposals considered to have significant transport implications are to be supported by a Transport Assessment and a Travel Plan.
- Policy C9** - The City Council will apply Kent County Council's adopted Vehicle Parking Standards to development proposals.
- Policy C11** - Proposals for new buildings or uses for local communities to provide social infrastructure will be encouraged and granted planning permission on the basis that any new building is appropriately designed and located, and highway safety would not be prejudiced.
- Policy C27** - Proposals for development, which would result in the loss, in whole or in part, of playing fields, will only be permitted if a number of criteria are met including provision of alternative open space of an equivalent standard, an overriding need for the development outweighs the loss of playing field, and that development of a small part of the site would lead to the retention and enhancement of the remainder of the sports facilities.
- Policy C40** - When granting planning permission for development which could potentially result in pollution, the City Council will impose conditions or seek agreements to ensure subsequent mitigation measures are undertaken.

**Consultations**

15. **Canterbury City Council** objects to the application. The City Council objects to the proposed relocation of the buildings on to a greenfield site as building on a greenfield site is intrinsically objectionable when it is not necessary; the school could and should be redeveloped on its existing site. In addition, development of this open land would

**Proposed new buildings for Spires Academy at land off Bredlands Lane, Sturry, Canterbury – CA/10/1790**

---

intrude into the open countryside between Hersden and Sturry, and result in the unnecessary loss of agricultural land. The City Council also expresses concern over the extent of car parking proposed to serve the site as this increases the developed area of land and undermines the objective of securing a 'Green Travel Plan'.

In any redevelopment of the school, the City Council asks that the following points be fully considered and implemented:

- i) the development should be carried out to the BREEAM 'very good' standard;
- ii) a School Travel Plan should be adopted, retained and be subject to ongoing monitoring and review. The Travel Plan should cover both daily pupil and staff travel and also address any evening adult education and school led extra curriculum functions, and ensure that there is not an over provision of car parking on the site;
- iii) the development should provide the connecting cycleway/footpath link, both through the proposed school site (in accordance with the submitted plans), and through the existing school site to link back up with the route identified in the Canterbury District Local Plan.

**Sturry Parish Council** no comments received to date. Consulted on the 13 October 2011.

**Westbere Parish Council** no comments received to date. Consulted on the 13 October 2011.

**The Divisional Transportation Manager** comments as follows:

"Further to my previous consultation response, and continued discussion regarding the proposed cycleway / footway to the south of the application site, I can confirm that I am satisfied that the revised plans are acceptable in highway terms, however it is regrettable that on site constraints, and hedge retention issues precluded an immediately adoptable solution. Providing public access is maintained, and an informal agreement is realised which facilitates the adoption of this route at a later date, I am confident that the future viability of a strategic cycle/walking route between Hersden and Sturry, (as identified within the Canterbury City Council, Walking and Cycling Strategy) will not be compromised by this development.

With regards to parking provision, in view of the justification provided by the applicant, I am happy to accept the level of parking provided. The parking arrangements for the new proposals, are a significant improvement over those currently available within the existing academy."

The Divisional Transportation Manager raises no objection to the application subject to the following being covered by planning condition:-

- measures to address the deposit of mud and similar substances on the public highway;
- disposal of surface water so as to prevent its discharge onto the highway;
- parking on site for site personell/operatives and visitors, and space for construction vehicles to unload, load and turn on site;
- provision and retention of vehicle parking and cycle parking;
- provision of a properly consolidated surfaced access;

### **Proposed new buildings for Spires Academy at land off Bredlands Lane, Sturry, Canterbury – CA/10/1790**

---

- provision of visibility splays in accordance with the submitted plans, prior to commencement;
- pedestrian visibility splays to be provided (2m x 2m);
- the cycleway/footway to be completed and maintained, and thereafter be available for public access;

**Environment Agency** has no objection to the application subject to the imposition of a condition requiring the submission of a detailed surface water drainage scheme prior to the commencement of any development. In addition, advice is provided with regard to flood risk, land contamination, drainage, and the storage of fuel, oil and chemicals.

**Sport England** raises no objection to the application subject to the imposition of conditions regarding ground conditions and playing field quality, retention of the existing playing field on land to the north of the existing school buildings, submission of a report setting out expected community use of the indoor and outdoor sports facilities, sports hall to be designed and laid out in accordance with Sport England guidance, and the MUGA to be constructed in accordance with Sport England Technical Design Guidance Notes.

It should be noted that if the County Council does not attach the conditions specified by Sport England, a statutory objection would be raised. This would necessitate referral of the application to the Secretary of State for consideration.

**The County Council's Biodiversity Officer** has no objection to the application subject to the imposition of conditions to ensure that the recommendations set out within the submitted Protected Species Reports/Surveys are implemented and adhered to, the protection of nesting birds, and the submission of a reptile mitigation and compensation strategy.

**Public Rights of Way Officer** has no comments to make as there are no recorded Public Rights of Way in the area.

**The County Council's Landscape Advisor** has expressed concern that the development could be out of scale with neighbouring residential development along Bredlands Lane and at Hersden to the east, and would perhaps lessen the distinction between Westbere and Hersden, and further urbanise this section of the A28. Views from adjacent housing within Hersden to the east (along Acacia Drive and Blackthorn Road in particular) and views from nearby properties along Bredlands Lane could be adversely affected. It is also considered by the landscape advisor that the green colour finish is clarified prior to any planning permission being granted.

**The County Council's Noise Advisor** has no objection to the application and does not consider that noise from the proposed development, including the sports pitches and MUGA, would be an issue at the closest residential properties.

**The County Archaeologist** raises no objection subject to a condition requiring archaeological field evaluation works and subsequent safeguarding measures to preserve/record archaeological remains.

**EDF (seaboard)** has no objection to the proposed development.



### **Proposed new buildings for Spires Academy at land off Bredlands Lane, Sturry, Canterbury – CA/10/1790**

---

#### **Local Member**

16. The local County Member, Mr A Marsh, was notified of the application on the 13 October 2010.

#### **Publicity**

17. The application was publicised by an advertisement in a local newspaper, the posting of 4 site notices and the individual notification of 51 neighbouring residential properties.

#### **Representations**

18. To date, I have received 8 individual letters of representation from local residents. A summary of the main issues raised/points made is set out below:

##### Landscape

- The development would change the ambience of Bredlands Lane and the surrounding area entirely;
- The proposed building would not enhance the countryside and is out of character with the surrounding area;
- The outlook from local properties would be completely changed, for the worse;
- The loss of green open space is regrettable.

##### Residential amenity

- Local residents regularly use the site for dog walking and amenity space;
- The development would exacerbate noise and other issues associated with the current weekend use of the school playing field, by introducing use during evenings and intensification of use during the school day;
- Light pollution would affect local residents, and wildlife;
- Floodlighting of the pitches/MUGA should not be allowed;
- The development could have security implications for local properties which back onto the site.

##### Highway/traffic implications

- Concern is expressed over an increase in traffic movements due to the expansion of the school roll and additional use in evenings and weekends;
- Bredlands Lane is not suitable for increased traffic, as it is virtually a single lane with passing places, and has very limited parking. The junction with the A28 is also dangerous;
- The proposed entrance to the school is closer to the Island Road junction than the existing school entrance. Congestion could filter back towards Island Road, causing danger and nuisance;
- Local residents have applied for planning permission for various developments, including the construction of two properties, which have been refused. Increased traffic and lack of parking was cited as a reason for refusal.

##### General matters

- Alternative sites for the school's redevelopment should be considered, including development of the existing site or land to the rear of the school;
- Support for the redevelopment and improvement of the school is expressed, but the development proposed is not considered suitable;

### **Proposed new buildings for Spires Academy at land off Bredlands Lane, Sturry, Canterbury – CA/10/1790**

---

- Concern is expressed over responsibility for Oak Trees located on the boundary of the existing school site and adjacent agricultural land;
- The selling off of the existing school site, presumably for housing, would further change the character of the area, have an urbanising effect and increasing traffic;
- The proposed development should not be considered in isolation, but in conjunction with future use of the existing school site;
- Construction would cause inconvenience and disruption, including parking difficulties, noise and dirt/dust;
- The development would decrease the value of local properties;
- The development goes against the political agenda of the current government.

In addition, I have also received a letter of representation from Protect Kent, whose concerns can be summarised as follows:

- There is no explanation of the rationale for the proposed development, nor is there any reference to the Council's proposals for future use of the existing site;
- There seems no good reason why any further provision of educational facilities should not take place on the existing site;
- Although part of the site is used for the current school's sports activity, the remainder is a greenfield/agricultural site, and the development would effectively remove another part of the open countryside around Canterbury;
- The site is part of or adjoining areas of High Landscape Value and Conservation. It cannot be said that the development would in any way enhance these areas;
- The application would increase traffic in the area;
- The size of the development could overpower the surrounding land and buildings, and the level of lighting could further worsen the existing "night blight" in the area;
- Sustainable features should be included in the design;
- It is considered that construction of buildings and hard surfacing will take away the valuable absorption character of the land and increase flooding risks within Sturry.

The following points were also raised by Protect Kent;

- Agricultural land should not be developed at a time when the nation is reliant for much of its food on imported produce, and rising food prices;
- Will there be a continuing need for a school of this size in the future? In addition, it is questioned whether such vast public expenditure should be considered until the Governments education policies become clearer.

## **Discussion**

### Introduction

19. This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a new building to accommodate the existing Spires Academy, together with outdoor sports pitches, a new 3 court MUGA, parking provision, drop off zones, circulatory access, pedestrian access, landscaping and ancillary works. In considering this proposal regard must be had to the Development Plan Policies referred to in paragraph (14) above. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Therefore, this 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. Issues of particular relevance include the principle of building the school on the east side of Bredlands Lane, landscape and visual impacts, community use and playing field provision, access and highway concerns, and general amenity matters.

**Proposed new buildings for Spires Academy at land off Bredlands Lane, Sturry, Canterbury – CA/10/1790**

---

The principle of building the school to the east of Bredlands Lane

20. Canterbury City Council objects to the proposed relocation of the buildings onto a greenfield site as the City Council considers that building on a greenfield site is intrinsically objectionable when it is not necessary. The City Council concludes that the school could, and should, be redeveloped on its existing site. Local residents, Protect Kent, and the County Council's Landscape Advisor have also raised concern over the principle of developing to the east of Bredlands Lane, although support is expressed in some instances for the redevelopment of the academy buildings. As outlined in paragraph 4 of this report, the existing buildings are no longer fit for purpose and are considered to be holding back students academic development. I consider that the principle of the redevelopment of the academy is a matter for the Education Authority, and has been accepted. It this does not, therefore, need to be discussed in within this report. However, the reasons for proposing a complete new build, and the decision to locate the building to the east of Bredland's Lane, and not on the existing site to the west, need to be considered and addressed. The following paragraphs will therefore consider if a complete new build is the only viable option and, if yes, whether building to the east of Bredlands Lane is necessary, and acceptable in principle.
21. It is important to note that the proposed site is existing school playing field, and has not been nationally or locally designated as an area of important landscape (e.g. Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or a Special Landscape Area). In addition, the site is not allocated as a Green Gap within the Local Plan. The application site is, therefore, not afforded any national, regional or local landscape protection.
22. The applicant advises that various options were considered for the redevelopment of the overall site, but the overriding objective was to provide a new building due to the deficient standard of the existing accommodation. The applicant considers that a new build provides significantly better value for money than refurbishing the existing building because it:
- eliminates the need for decanting pupils, equipment and facilities into temporary accommodation with costly phasing of replacement development;
  - avoids complex and unsuccessful refurbishment of buildings which are hard to adapt and unsuitable for a modern educational use;
  - allows for greater flexibility is designing interior and exterior spaces to successfully deliver the educational vision of Spires Academy Trust.
  - allows for a much faster construction period, lower cost and, therefore, better value;
- In light of the information given above, and considering the information outlined in paragraph 4 of this report, I do not consider that refurbishment of the existing buildings is appropriate in this instance. The buildings are in a state of disrepair and provide insufficient and inadequate accommodation, with a poor internal configuration of space for modern teaching practices. Refurbishment of these buildings would not fulfil the requirements of the Academy or fulfil the brief provided by the Education Authority. I therefore conclude that a complete new build is the only appropriate option in this instance.
23. Having accepted a new build in principle, the option of redevelopment of the existing school site to the west of Bredlands Lane should be considered and discussed in detail. Should this be achievable, the site to the east of Bredlands Lane could remain as playing field. A complete new build on the footprint of the existing school buildings was discounted by the applicant as it would have required moving the whole school into temporary accommodation and would prolong the construction period. Both of these matters would have a negative impact on the education of students, and would add



**Proposed new buildings for Spires Academy at land off Bredlands Lane, Sturry, Canterbury – CA/10/1790**

---

considerable costs to the project. I therefore conclude that rebuilding upon the existing footprint would not be a viable option in this instance.

24. To the north of the existing school buildings, on the west of Bredlands Lane, is an area of playing field which could be developed. A new build here would be spatially possible, and could be constructed whilst the existing buildings remain operational, with demolition upon completion. However, the limited space available would necessitate the construction works being undertaken in unacceptably close proximity to the existing school buildings. Whilst this is often done on school sites, and has, to varying degrees been the case on other academies across Kent, the space constraints on the Spires Academy site would render this option unsuitable. The construction site would be unacceptably close to educational buildings, causing disruption, and posing a Health & Safety Risk. In addition, access for construction vehicles would be via a narrower section of Bredlands Lane, and there would be little or no space for on site construction compounds and car parking for site workers/personnel.
25. In addition, a building in this section of the site would be no less visually prominent, and would impact upon facing residential properties in Bredlands Lane. The applicant also advises that a new building in this section of the site could, upon completion of the demolition of the existing buildings, have left the new building with an odd relationship with the surroundings, including playing fields and access. Lastly, the Academy would still have a split site, with playing fields to the east of Bredlands Lane, something which is not desirable in terms of management or safety of pupils. The site layout as proposed would enable a site security strategy where the building would function as the 'gate' to the site, keeping students within the building or out in the landscaped areas and pitches to the east, whilst car parking would remain accessible to the front of the site, with visitors able to walk to the front entrance, allowing the academy to be accessible to the community. This would not be possible with a split site.
26. In light of the above, I must conclude that a new build on the east side of Bredlands Lane is the only viable option for the successful redevelopment of the Spires Academy. This would also have the advantage of consolidating all the School's accommodation and sports facilities on one site. I therefore consider the development of the 'greenfield' site to be necessary in this instance, and conclude that development to the east of Bredlands Lane is acceptable in principle.

**Landscape Policy and Visual Impacts**

27. Having concluded that building on the east of Bredlands Lane is acceptable and necessary in this case, the landscape and visual impacts of the development as proposed must be considered and addressed. The City Council consider that development of this open land would intrude into the open countryside between Hersden and Sturry, and would result in the unnecessary loss of agricultural land. These points of objection are supported by Protect Kent, local residents and the County Council's Landscape Advisor, and will be discussed in detail below.
28. As outlined in paragraph 1 of this report, the application site includes a small area (1.8ha) of agricultural land to the north, which has recently been acquired by the Academy. It is proposed to 'convert' this land to playing fields, something which Protect Kent consider to be contrary to Development Plan Policy, namely Policy R2 of the Canterbury Local Plan. However, Policy R2 of the Canterbury Local Plan refers to new agricultural development/development of agricultural buildings and is, therefore, not relevant to this application. The applicant further advises that, in respect of development of agricultural land, PPS7, paragraph 28, states that where significant development of

**Proposed new buildings for Spires Academy at land off Bredlands Lane, Sturry, Canterbury – CA/10/1790**

---

agricultural land is unavoidable, Planning Authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality land (grades 3b, 4 & 5) in preference to that of higher quality land, except where this would be inconsistent with other sustainability considerations. First, I do not consider the area of agricultural land to be developed to be 'substantial', and secondly the land is graded as 3 or below. PPS7 goes on to state that 'little weight in agricultural terms should be given to the loss of agricultural land in grades 3b, 4 & 5, except where particular agricultural practices may themselves contribute in some special way to the quality and character of the environment or local economy'. Given the limited amount of agricultural land that would be lost, and the grade of the land, I do not consider that this element of the proposal would be contrary to the principles of relevant Development Plan Policies.

29. As regards the assertion that development of the site would intrude into the open countryside between Hersden and Sturry, it needs to be borne in mind that the site is existing school playing field, and is not subject to any local, national or international landscape designations. Under the circumstances, the site has not been identified as land of important countryside value, nor as necessary to provide some physical separation between Hersden and Sturry. A 'Green Gap' has been specifically identified for that purpose and it does not include the application site.
30. Although it is the applicant's intention that the academy could be seen from the A28, to emphasise its role as a community facility, the building would be partly screened by existing planting and development. The site is well screened from the A28 by an existing mature hedgerow. Although part of this has been reduced in height recently, the applicant has submitted a report outlining future management of the hedge to encourage its growth. It is expected that the whole hedgerow would be 3.5 metres in height in 4 years time. It is important to note that the proposed building would be located behind an area of the hedge which has not been reduced in height and would, therefore, be subject to substantial screening.
31. It is worth considering that of the 350 metre length of the site frontage with the A28 Island Road, the building would only occupy a quarter of that length (88 metres). The building would also be set back from the site frontage. However, the A28 is not a rural road at this point, but bordered by ribbon development spreading from Canterbury. Commercial properties lie to the south of the site, and residential properties, both new and old, surround the site, albeit at changing densities. I do not consider that the siting of the school on the playing field to the east of Bredlands Lane would amalgamate existing development, bearing in mind the wide areas of open space around the proposed building, have an urbanising effect or significantly alter the character of the local area. I appreciate that local residents are also concerned over future development of the existing school site, and the cumulative impact that this could have, but any future development proposals would be subject to separate planning application(s), to be considered in the future. Plans for the site are unknown and, therefore, cannot be taken into account in the determination of this application. I would point out that any future planning application would be subject to consultation, and would need to be considered with the academy building and its impacts in mind, should permission be granted. Having accepted the principle of developing the site to the east of Bredlands Lane in terms of local landscape impact, the impact of the proposed development on the wider landscape, and the siting, massing and scale of the building need to be considered, and will be discussed below.
32. The applicant has undertaken and submitted a Site View Analysis Study, which concludes that from limited distant points the roofs of adjacent residential development could be seen. However, the proposed Academy building would be directly opposite the

**Proposed new buildings for Spires Academy at land off Bredlands Lane, Sturry, Canterbury – CA/10/1790**

---

close screening of 'Bushy Close Wood' on the opposite side of the A28, which, whilst not of particular landscape merit in itself, would screen the development from wider landscape views from the south. The applicant advises that the site presents a similar overall frontage to the north, albeit with a staggered edge. From this direction there are also significant obstructions to potential views of the building by trees. To the north by north west there is Square Wood and a line of trees running down to the upper reaches of Sarre Penn, and to the north by north east there is Ash Plantation before the ground rises towards East Blean Woods. Views from these and other points in the wider landscape have been considered within the Site View Analysis Document. Taking into account the information contained within that document, and the proposed mass and location of the Academy building within the site, I do not consider that the building would actually be visible from many vantage points due to the significant tree screening in the surrounding landscape, and gently undulating contours in the immediate vicinity of the site. Should a view be glimpsed, this would be against a back drop of adjacent woodland, the trees of which far exceed the height of the proposed building. I therefore consider that the proposed development would not have a significantly detrimental impact on the wider landscape, and would not significantly alter the character and appearance of the immediate locality.

33. It should be noted that the proposed building has been located in the centre of the site, away from the site boundaries, to reduce its visual impact. Although amenity concerns will be addressed in detail later in this report, it is appropriate to mention that the siting of the building would not result in overlooking/loss of privacy, loss of light, or be overbearing in nature. The proposed building would be approximately 150 metres away from properties in Bredlands Lane and those to the east of the site, and approximately 88 metres from buildings to the south of the A28 Island Road. I consider these distances to be more than satisfactory. Local residents and the County Council's Landscape Advisor have also expressed concern and objection regarding a loss of view from private properties adjoining the site. As Members are aware, this is not a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. However, given the distances specified above, and the open nature of the site, I consider that wider views beyond the academy building would still be afforded.
34. Local residents and consultees have also suggested that the scale and massing of the building is not appropriate and is out of keeping with surrounding development. However, housing to the east of the site, in and around Acacia Drive, is three storeys in height, with steeply pitched roofs. The applicant considers that these properties are approximately 11 metres high. The proposed Academy building would be 12.5 metres in height at the highest point, with most of the footprint being lower than 9 metres. The building footprint also represents only 10% of the site area, with the remaining 90% forming car parking, hard and soft play areas, sports pitches and landscaped areas. Therefore, the site has the potential to feel rural and open in nature, and I consider the scale and massing to be fit for purpose and appropriate for the site. I do not consider that the siting, scale or massing of the development would have an adverse impact on the character of the area, or have a significantly urbanising effect. I therefore see no overriding justification to refuse the application on these grounds.

#### External Materials

35. Notwithstanding the above considerations, the colour finish of the proposed academy should be compatible with the local landscape and surrounding development. The applicant is proposing a grey and green colour finish and has submitted indicative samples and photomontages to show this. However, the green initially proposed was very bright, almost fluorescent, and met with objection from the County Council's

**Proposed new buildings for Spires Academy at land off Bredlands Lane, Sturry, Canterbury – CA/10/1790**

---

Landscape Advisor. I also did not consider it to be appropriate for the development and, although final details would be required pursuant to planning condition, did not want to approve the colour in principle. Therefore, I requested that the applicant submit an alternative shade of green for consideration prior to the determination of the application. This has now been submitted and is more muted in tone. I consider that this shade of green is acceptable in principle, although final details of all materials to be used externally should be submitted pursuant to condition should permission be granted. Subject to the imposition of that condition, I consider that the external appearance of the building can be controlled to ensure the materials palette is appropriate for the site and its context.

Landscaping and fencing details

36. The development proposals would result in the removal of two hedgerows which currently divide the site internally. Boundary planting, including the substantial hedgerow to the south of the site, adjacent to the A28 would, however, be retained and enhanced. The applicant has submitted detailed arboricultural reports, landscape proposals and ecological reports in support of the application which address the removal of the hedgerows in detail. I have not received any objection to the landscape proposals, but consider it appropriate to require details of exact tree removal, proposed planting, and both hard and soft landscaping, pursuant to condition should permission be granted. I also consider it necessary to impose a condition of consent to ensure the protection of trees to be retained, in accordance with BS5837: Trees in Relation to Construction. The applicant advises that the boundary of the site would be secured with a 2.4 metre high fence and gated access, but no further details are provided. To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development, I consider that details of the fencing colour and specification, and details of all gates and means of enclosure, should be submitted for approval prior to the commencement of development. Should Members be minded to permit, the above matters would all be covered by appropriate planning conditions. Subject to these conditions, I consider that the external appearance of the site can be controlled to ensure a satisfactory finish appropriate for the surrounding landscape.

Ecology

37. An Ecological Scoping Survey, Protected Species Surveys and a Tree Survey have been submitted in support of this application. The Ecology Surveys conclude that no further survey work is required, but make a number of recommendations which should be followed prior to and during construction works, such as the protection of nesting birds. In addition, a reptile mitigation and compensation strategy should be submitted for approval prior to the commencement of development. Subject to the imposition of conditions requiring that the recommendations detailed within the Protected Species Surveys be followed, and a mitigation strategy for reptiles be submitted, I do not consider that the development would have an adverse impact upon protected species.

Community use and sport/playing field provision

38. As it is proposed to construct the Academy buildings upon playing fields, Sport England has been consulted on this application. Sport England raises no objection subject to the imposition of conditions regarding ground conditions and playing field quality, retention of the playing field land to the north of the existing school buildings to the west of Bredlands Lane, submission of a report setting out expected community use of the indoor and outdoor sports facilities, sports hall to be designed and laid out in

**Proposed new buildings for Spires Academy at land off Bredlands Lane, Sturry, Canterbury – CA/10/1790**

---

accordance with Sport England guidance, and the MUGA to be constructed in accordance with Sport England Technical Design Guidance Notes.

39. The applicant has agreed to and accepted the imposition of all of these conditions apart from one. The requirement that the sports hall be designed and laid out in accordance with Sport England guidance would necessitate the inclusion of additional storage, which the Academy considers to be in excess of their requirements. The applicant is currently proposing to provide a total of 68 square metres of sports storage, 40 internally and 28 in external stores. The applicant advises that the brief for the scheme requested an area of 20 square metres, based on the Academy's existing needs and requirements. 68 square metres is far in excess of that. Whilst the internal layout could be adjusted to increase storage capacity, this would be at the expense of important teaching and learning space, or changing facilities. The applicant has confirmed that the remainder of the Sports Hall would be designed and laid out in accordance with Sport England guidance and requirements, the only issues of contention is storage space. Sport England is currently in receipt of additional information submitted by the applicant to justify the level of storage proposed, in conjunction with a list of the Academy's sports equipment and space requirements, and a plan showing the location of external storage facilities. I am expecting that Sport England will accept the case provided and agree to reword the condition so that a lower level of storage can be provided. Members will be updated on this matter verbally at the Planning Application Committee meeting.
40. It is proposed that there would be community use of the academy buildings and the associated sports facilities, a principle which is supported by Development Plan Policies and wider Government aspirations for extended school use and community activities. However, at this stage there are few details against which to access the potential impact of community use. Local residents have expressed concern over hours of use, and increased disturbance from community use of the facilities, particularly use of the external sports facilities in the evening and at weekends. However, Sport England requires a report to be submitted which should set out the details of community use. These details would need to include proposed hours of use for indoor and external facilities, the types of uses proposed and the frequency of use, as well as detailing how use of the facilities by the local community would be managed. The submitted details would be sent to consultation with relevant consultees to ensure that the proposed community use would not have a detrimental impact on the amenities of the locality. Once considered acceptable and approved, the community use of the facilities must strictly adhere to the hours of use and details given. As discussed above, the applicant has accepted the imposition of this condition, and I also consider it necessary in order to protect the amenities of nearby residential properties. Subject to the imposition of such a condition, I consider that community use of the development would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the amenities of the locality.

Access and Highway matters, including the cycle route

41. Objection is raised to this application by local residents on the grounds of increased traffic movements, unsuitability of Bredlands Lane for access and proximity and danger of the junction with the A28 Island Road. The City Council and Protect Kent also express concern over the extent of car parking proposed to serve the site, which is above the maximum specified by Kent Vehicle Parking Standards. However, with regard to the amount of car parking, the applicant has provided additional information with regard to staff numbers and, in conjunction with the fairly remote location of the school, Kent Highway Services have accepted the level of parking proposed. A reduction in the amount of spaces could lead to parking on the local highway which would be unacceptable. I therefore am satisfied with the amount of car parking proposed, and the



**Proposed new buildings for Spires Academy at land off Bredlands Lane, Sturry, Canterbury – CA/10/1790**

---

internal layout of the site which includes circulatory access, pick-up and drop-off facilities and cycle parking. Conditions of consent would ensure that these facilities were provided and fully operational prior to the first occupation of the academy, and thereafter maintained.

42. Bredlands Lane provides access to the existing school and, as this application is not proposing an increase in pupil numbers above the maximum capacity of the existing buildings, I see no reason to object to the principle of an access in Bredlands Lane. In addition, access via the A28 Island Road would meet with objection from Kent Highway Services due to congestion and highway safety concerns. The application was accompanied by a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan, and Kent Highway Services have assessed the information provided and have concluded that the access is acceptable, and that the existing junctions have the capacity to accommodate any increase in traffic that could be generated by the development. Subject to the imposition of a condition to require the submission and approval of an updated Travel Plan, to be subject to ongoing monitoring and review, and conditions requiring car parking to be made available outside school hours to accommodate evening and weekend use of the facility, and the provision of pedestrian and vehicular visibility splays, I see no reason to refuse the application on the ground of impact on the local highway network.
43. Lastly, as outlined in paragraphs 3 & 12 of this report, the development site forms part of the intended 'Cycle Route K', as shown in the Canterbury District Local Plan, the land for which is safeguarded by Policy C3 of the Local Plan. Kent Highway Services advise that the route is intended to link Sturry and Hersden, via the Academy, avoiding the busy A28. This application proposes a footpath and cycle way to run along the eastern and southern boundaries of the site, linking housing in the east to Bredlands Lane. The route would be secured from the school grounds by fencing, and would be privately owned by the Academy, who would allow public access. It is intended that the footway/cycleway would be built to adoptable standards, but without lighting, and maybe adopted by Kent Highway Services in the future. A pedestrian and cycle entrance to the Academy site would be provided from this route, located approximately half way along the site frontage with the A28 Island Road. However, this route would be protected and screened from the A28 by the existing barrier hedging, thus minimising the risk of parental drop off along this major road. Following discussion with Kent Highway Services, the proposed footpath and cycle way has been amended slightly following the submission of this application. The route has been widened, the corners curved, and the western end of the route, located on Bredlands Lane, has been moved further north, away from the junction with the A28, and closer to the academy access point. By moving this entrance/exit to the north, the footway/cycleway would also be closer to the remainder of the route as identified in the Local Plan, removing the need for the City Council's requirement for a connecting link. Although the route proposed within this application deviates from the route outlined in the Local Plan, it is considered to be acceptable by both the Academy and Kent Highway Services. Should the route within the Local Plan have been followed it would have crossed playing fields and created security issues for the Academy, and would also exit onto Bredlands Lane in close proximity to residential properties. I therefore consider the route within the application to be acceptable and, should permission be granted, I consider it appropriate to condition that the route be provided and operational prior to first use of the academy buildings, and thereafter be maintained and kept available for public use.

**General amenity concerns**

44. Local residents have expressed concern over the development with regard to the impact it could have upon their amenity. Issues of overlooking, loss of privacy, loss of

**Proposed new buildings for Spires Academy at land off Bredlands Lane, Sturry, Canterbury – CA/10/1790**

---

views, siting/scale of the development, implications of community use and highway matters have been addressed above. However, concerns over light and noise pollution, and loss of open space need to be considered.

External lighting

45. Limited details have been provided with regard to external/security lighting for the development. Local residents and consultees have expressed concern that lighting could have adverse effects on residential amenity and on wider landscape views. If permission is granted, it would therefore be appropriate to reserve details by condition so that the type and position of any external lighting can be controlled to ensure any potential nuisance from light pollution can be minimised. In addition, for the avoidance of doubt, it would be conditioned that no floodlighting shall be installed on site without the submission and determination of a full planning application. Subject to the imposition of these conditions, I do not consider that external lighting at the site would have a significantly detrimental impact on the wider landscape and/or residential amenity and, therefore, see no reason to refuse the application on these grounds.

Noise

46. Local residents have objected to the application on the grounds of potential noise pollution/disturbance. Although this in part could relate to evening and weekend use, details of which would be required pursuant to condition, as discussed above, it is important to note that the existing playing fields are currently used in the evenings and at weekends. However, the acoustic survey submitted in support of this application established the ambient noise levels along the boundary with local residential properties, and concluded that, due to road noise from the A28 Island Road, it is unlikely that residential properties would be affected by noise generated from the building and/or continued use of the playing fields. The County Council's Noise Advisor supports this view, and has raised no objection to the application. It is not considered that noise from the proposed development, including the sports pitches and MUGA, would be an issue at the closest residential properties, and I therefore see no reason to refuse the application on this ground.

Loss of Open/Amenity Space

47. Local residents state that the site is regularly used by local residents for dog walking and general amenity space, and object to its loss on this basis. However, the site is owned by the Academy and is private land, currently used by the Academy for playing fields. The agricultural land to the north, recently acquired by the Academy, is also in private ownership. There is no Public Right of Way across the land. The applicant advises that the Academy has previously tried to secure the boundary to safeguard students against public access and dog fouling, with little success. However, the Academy proposals do include the provision of the combined footway/cycleway, as discussed above. This would connect housing to the east of the site with Bredlands Lane to the west, allowing pedestrians and cyclists to safely access Bredlands Lane, and land beyond, without using Island Road. As the site is private land, objections on the ground of loss of open/amenity space cannot be considered in the determination of the application.

Archaeology

48. The County Archaeologist has concluded that in order to secure the appropriate level of evaluation and mitigation of archaeological potential at the site, a condition of consent

**Proposed new buildings for Spires Academy at land off Bredlands Lane, Sturry, Canterbury – CA/10/1790**

---

be imposed. It is requested that no development takes place until the applicant has secured and implemented archaeological field evaluation works and subsequent safeguarding measures to preserve/record archaeological remains. The field evaluation works shall be in accordance with a written specification which must be approved by the County Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development. Therefore, subject to the imposition of the required condition, I do not consider that this proposal would have a detrimental impact on archaeological remains.

Sustainable construction

49. The applicant advises that the project would achieve a minimum 'Very Good' rating under BREEAM for schools. The building would include a number of sustainable features and I consider that the applicant has given sufficient information within the planning application to demonstrate how the rating of 'Very Good' would be achieved. I therefore consider it sufficient and acceptable to condition that the development achieve at least a 'Very Good' rating.

Drainage and Land Contamination

50. The Environment Agency raises no objection to this application subject to the imposition of a condition regarding surface water drainage. In addition, advice is provided with regard to flood risk, land contamination, drainage, and the storage of fuel, oil and chemicals, and I consider it appropriate to draw the applicant's attention to this advice, should permission be granted. Therefore, I consider that subject to the imposition of a condition requiring the submission of a detailed surface water drainage scheme prior to the commencement of the development, and an informative drawing the applicant's attention to the advice provided, the development could be controlled to ensure that it would not result in unacceptable pollution levels, in accordance with the principles of Development Plan Policy.

Construction

51. Given that there are neighbouring residential properties, if planning permission is granted it would, in my view, be appropriate to impose a condition restricting hours of construction for the academy project in order to protect residential amenity. I would suggest that works should be undertaken only between the hours of 0800 and 1800 Monday to Friday and between the hours of 0900 and 1300 on Saturdays, with no operations on Sundays and Bank Holidays. It is also good practice on school sites for contractors to be required under the terms of their contract to manage construction traffic/deliveries to minimise conflict with traffic and pedestrians at the beginning and end of the school day.
52. In addition, I consider it appropriate that details of a Construction Management Strategy be submitted for approval prior to the commencement of development. The strategy should include details of the methods and hours of working, location of site compounds and operative/visitors parking, details of site security and safety measures and details of any construction accesses. The provision of such a strategy would also address the conditions required by Kent Highway Services with regards to construction activities. Should permission be granted, a Construction Management Strategy would be required pursuant to condition and the development would thereafter have to be undertaken in accordance with the approved strategy.
53. In addition to the above, should permission be granted, conditions of consent would ensure that dust, mud on the local highway network, and other matters associated with

**Proposed new buildings for Spires Academy at land off Bredlands Lane, Sturry, Canterbury – CA/10/1790**

---

construction, would be mitigated as far as reasonably possible so as to minimise disruption to local residents.

**Conclusion**

54. 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, including those that seek to protect important countryside and landscape. I consider that, subject to the imposition of appropriate planning conditions, this proposal would not have a significantly detrimental effect on residential or local amenity, the character of the area, the local or wider landscape, or the local highway network. There are no material planning considerations that indicate that the conclusion should be made otherwise. However, I recommend that various conditions be placed on any planning permission, including those outlined below.

**Recommendation**

55. Subject to further views from Sport England, I RECOMMEND that PLANNING PERMISSION BE GRANTED SUBJECT to conditions, including conditions covering:

- the standard time limit;
- the development to be carried out in accordance with the permitted details;
- the submission of details of all materials to be used externally;
- details of all external lighting;
- a scheme of landscaping, including hard surfacing, its implementation and maintenance;
- measures to protect trees to be retained;
- details of fencing, gates and means of enclosure, including colour finishes;
- no tree removal during the bird breeding season;
- development to accord with the recommendations of the ecological surveys;
- the submission of a reptile mitigation strategy;
- archaeological field evaluation works and subsequent safeguarding measures;
- a BREEAM rating of 'Very Good' to be achieved;
- submission of a detailed surface water drainage scheme;
- submission of details regarding ground conditions and playing field quality;
- retention of playing field land to the north of the existing buildings on the west of Bredlands Lane;
- sports hall to be designed and laid out in accordance with Sport England guidance;
- MUGA to be constructed in accordance with Sport England Technical Design Guidance Notes;
- submission of a report setting out expected community use of the indoor and outdoor facilities, including hours of use;
- the provision of pedestrian and vehicular visibility splay;
- provision of access, car parking, pick-up/drop-off, circulatory space, and cycle parking prior to first occupation, and subsequent retention;
- car parking on site to be available out of school hours to accommodate evening and weekend use;
- combined footway and cycle route to be provided prior to first occupation, and subsequent retention, and to be kept available for public use;
- submission of a revised School Travel Plan, its implementation and ongoing review;
- no flood lighting shall be erected on the multi-use games area, or elsewhere on the site, without the written permission of the County Planning Authority;

## Item D1

### **Proposed new buildings for Spires Academy at land off Bredlands Lane, Sturry, Canterbury – CA/10/1790**

---

- hours of working during construction and demolition to be restricted to between 0800 and 1800 Monday to Friday and between the hours of 0900 and 1300 on Saturdays, with no operations on Sundays and Bank Holidays;
- construction management plan, including access, parking and circulation within the site for contractors and other vehicles related to construction and demolition operations;
- measures to prevent mud and debris being taken onto the public highway.

56. I FURTHER RECOMMEND THAT the applicant BE ADVISED of the following informatives:

- Account should be taken of Environment Agency's advice relating to flood risk, land contamination, drainage, and the storage of fuel, oil and chemicals.
- The applicant is advised that planning permission does not convey any approval for the required vehicular crossing or any other works within the highway for which a licence must be obtained.

Case officer – Mary Green	01622 221066
---------------------------	--------------

Background documents - See section heading
--