

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

2 Form Entry Amalgamated Primary School – Manor Community Primary School, Swanscombe – DA/08/982

A report by Head of Planning Applications Group to Planning Applications Committee on 7 October 2008.

Application by KCC Property Group for the construction of a new 2 form entry amalgamated primary school, on the site of the existing Sweyne Junior School in Swanscombe. One block of the existing accommodation is retained. The proposal also includes a new vehicular access off Swanscombe Street and areas of new hard play and car parking to replace the existing at the Manor Community Primary School, Keary Road, Swanscombe (Ref: DA/08/982)

Recommendation: permission be granted subject to conditions

Local Member(s): Mr Ivor Jones

Classification: Unrestricted

Site

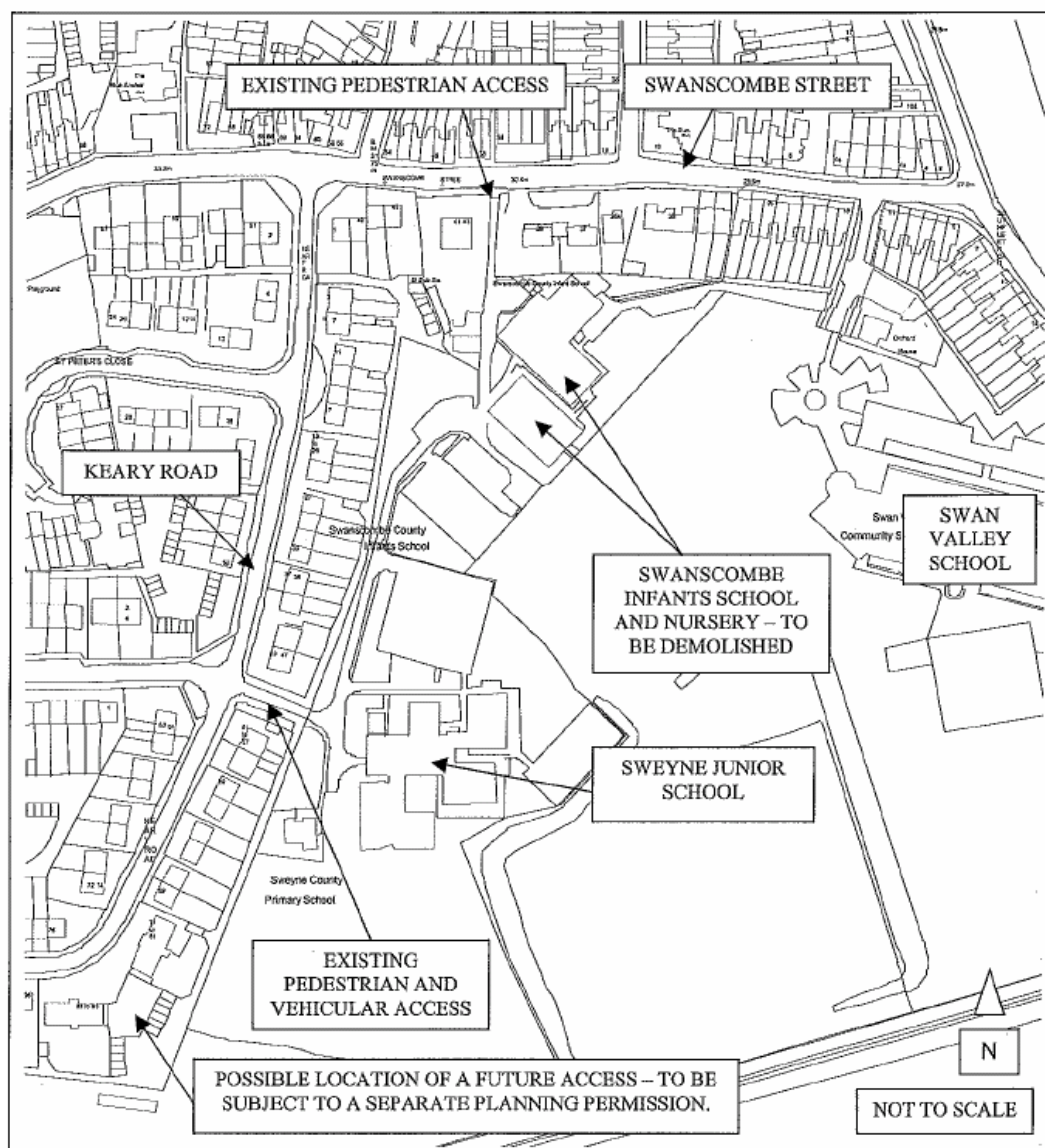
1. The Manor Community Primary School would be formed by the amalgamation of Swanscombe Infants School and Sweyne Junior School. These two schools occupy neighbouring sites in Swanscombe, with shared vehicular and pedestrian access from Keary Road, and a pedestrian only access from Swanscombe Street. The Junior School is located to the centre of the site, with playing fields extending to the south, and the Infants School to the north. A stand alone nursery building lies adjacent to the Infants School. The school site sits on the periphery of the suburban area, with residential properties in Keary Road bounding the eastern site boundary, and properties in Swanscombe Street bounding the northern boundary. To the east of the site lies the recently completed Swan Valley School, beyond which lies Southfleet Road and the Northfleet Landfill Site. Allotment gardens lie to the southern boundary of the site, beyond which a public footpath is located and thereafter open countryside. A site plan is attached.

Proposal

2. This planning application has been submitted by Kent County Council Property Group and proposes the construction of a new 2 form entry amalgamated primary school, on the site of the existing Sweyne Junior School in Swanscombe. One block of the existing accommodation would be retained, and a new vehicular access would be created off Swanscombe Street. New areas of hard play and car parking would be provided to replace the existing. The current buildings of the two schools are approximately 40 years old and do not meet the needs of the curriculum in the 21st Century, with the classrooms being too small to allow a full range of teaching techniques and technology to be used. The applicant also advises that the condition of the buildings is poor, and as well as being situated remotely from each other, the building's heating, lighting and power supplies are not sufficient within the classrooms. Many facilities are poor, including the main hall space, which is substandard in size and does not allow the whole school to attend assemblies in one sitting. I am also advised that the buildings do not conform to the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

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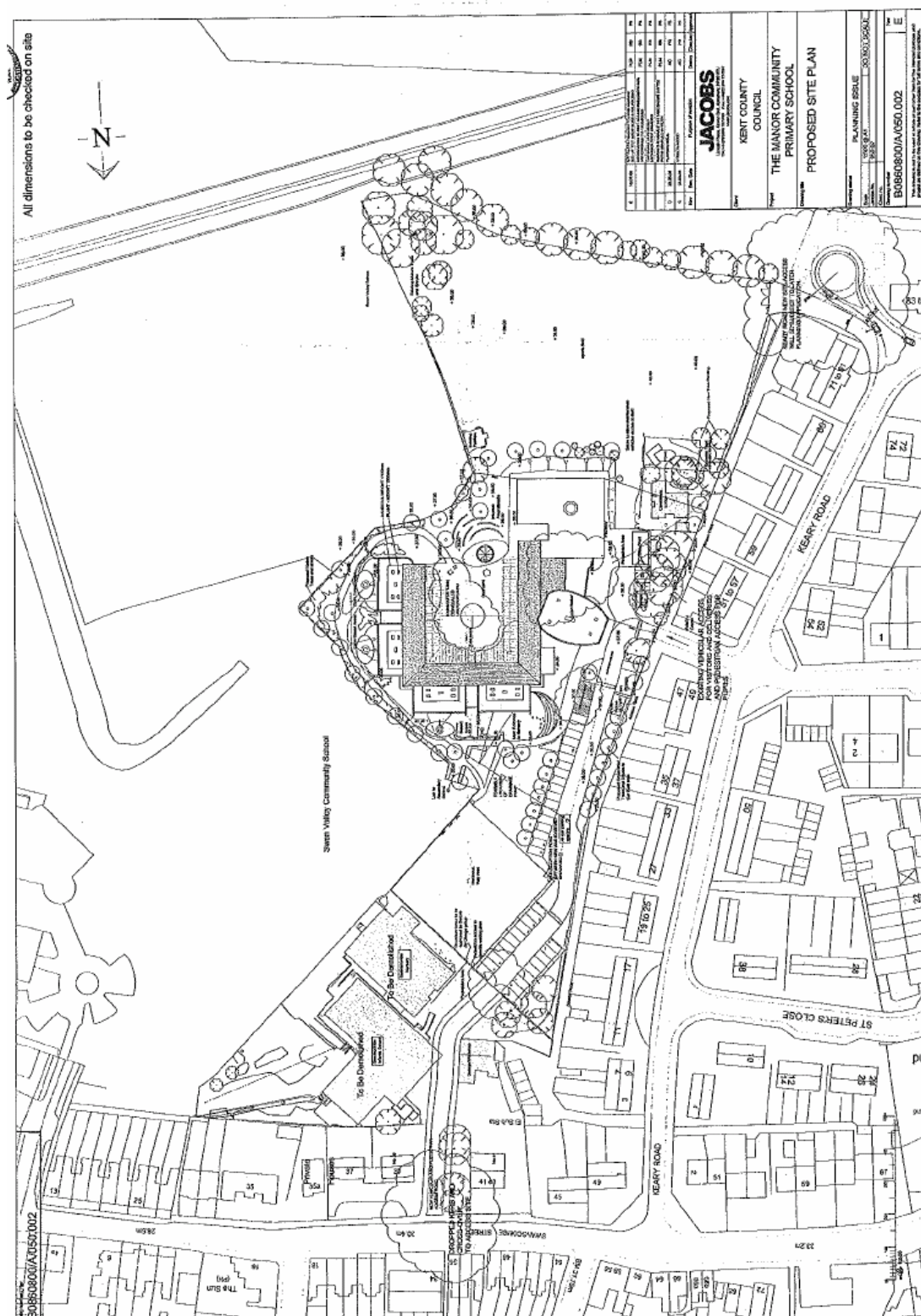
Site Location Plan



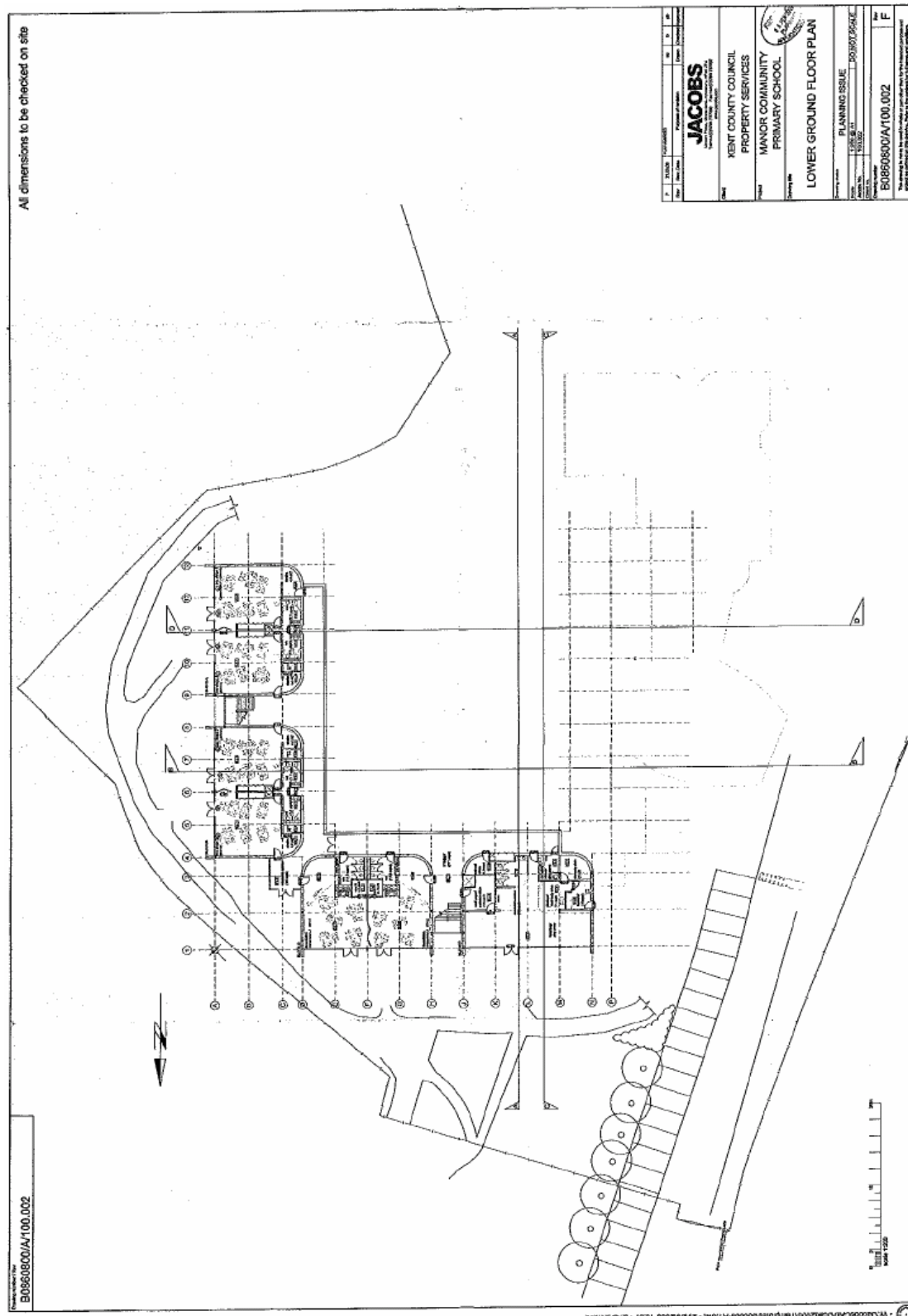
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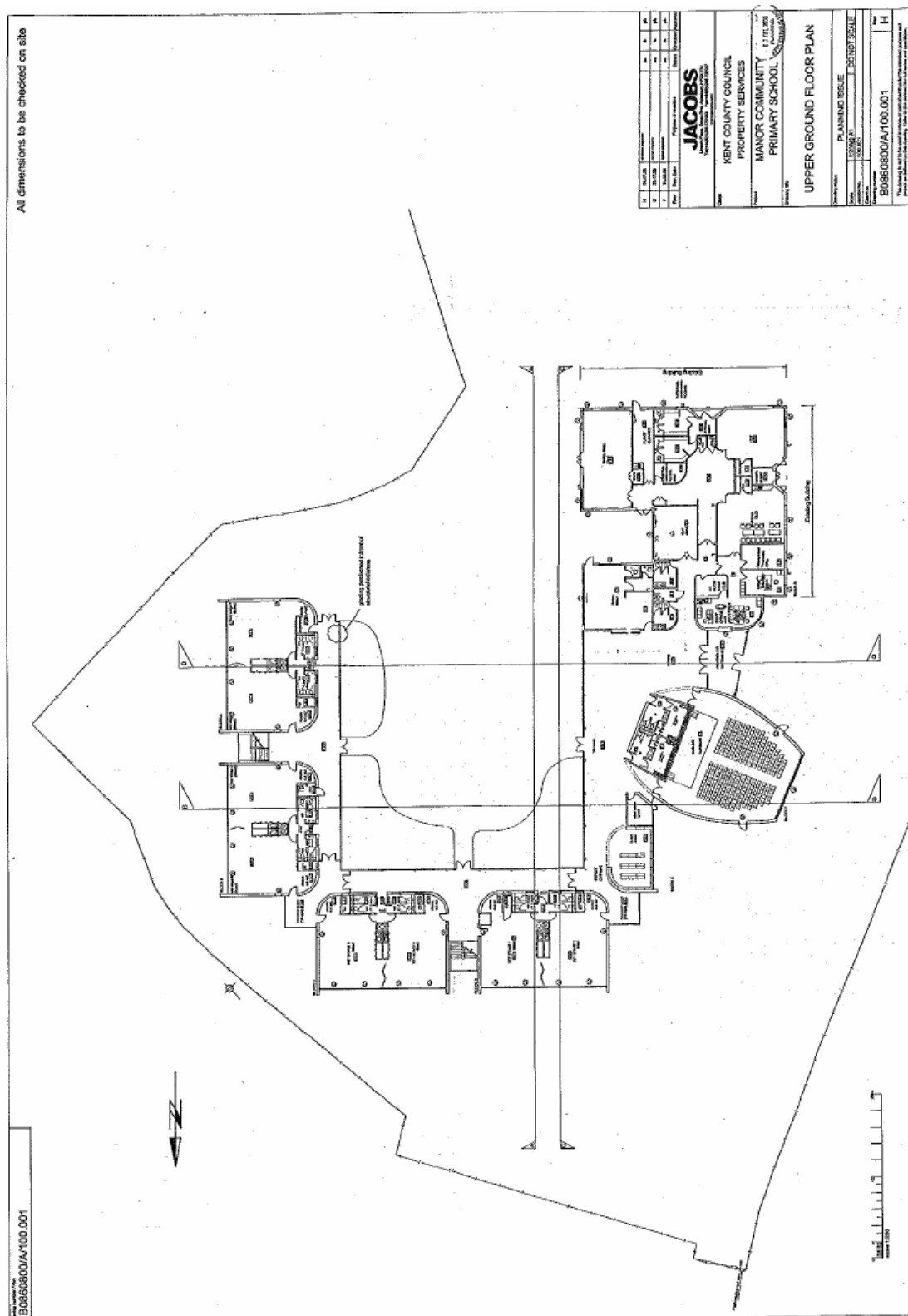




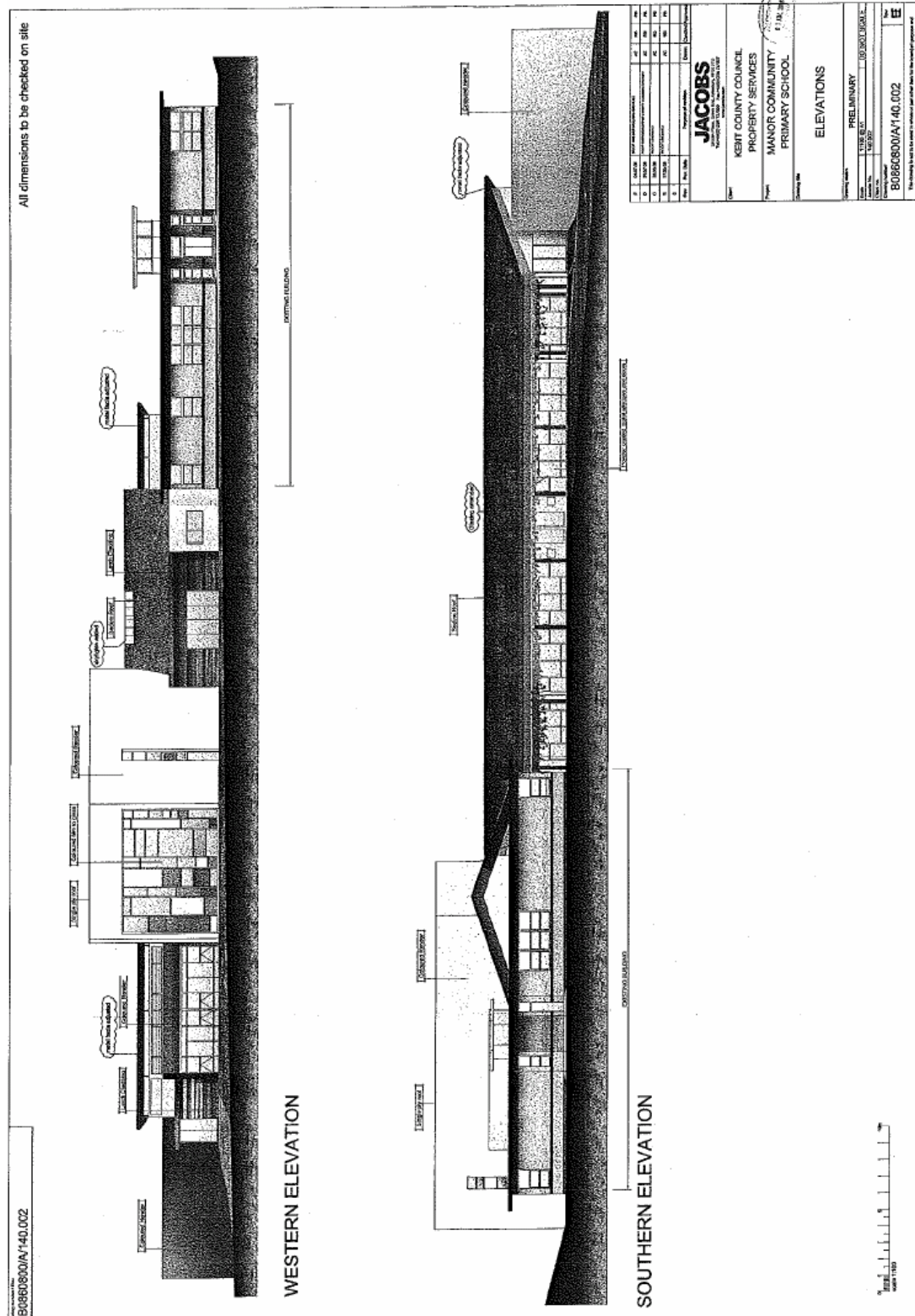
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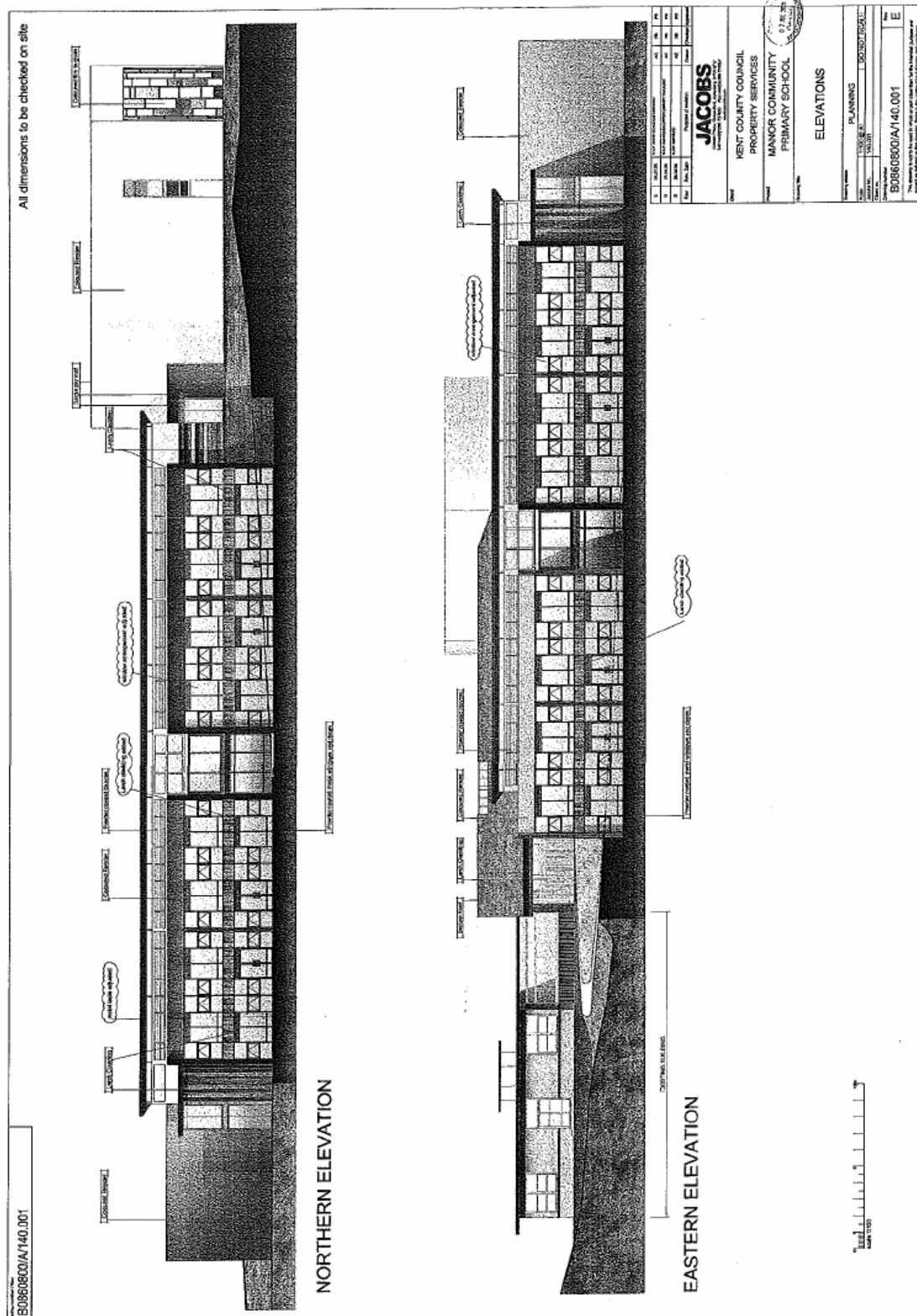
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3. The applicant states that the new development would meet the statutory duty to provide safe and appropriate primary school accommodation by replacing the existing building stock with more efficient and fully accessible buildings. It is proposed that the existing junior, infants and nursery buildings (except the recent extension to the junior school which is to be retained) be demolished, and a new school be built upon the site of the existing junior school. The existing caretakers lodge would also be retained. The retained 'L' shaped block of the junior school would be refurbished and incorporated into the new amalgamated primary school building. The new primary school would be a 2 form entry with a 2 class nursery. The applicant does not therefore envisage an increase in pupil numbers beyond the existing 420 place capacity of the 2 schools.
4. Part of the northern area of the school site, where the infants school building is currently located, is not included within the boundary of the new school site. Future intentions for this area of the site are currently unknown and any future development of it would need to be subject to a separate planning application. The main part of the proposed development would, therefore, be contained within the southern portion of the site. Analysis of the site, the required schedule of accommodation for the new school building and the need to construct the school within the existing school campus, whilst it continues to deliver the nation curriculum, have all informed the siting of the building and the detailed design proposals. The siting of the building adjacent and linked to the existing retained block would perform a number of functions, including:
 - the new building would be highly visible from the site entrance and would signal new capital investment in the school, raising its profile within the community;
 - the location best suits the constraints of the site, allowing minimum disruption to the running of the school whilst it has decanted to the infants school and temporary accommodation;
 - the location would allow a simple connection to the retained block, providing one continuous, easily accessible building;
 - separating the classroom blocks, whilst connecting them by means of a circulation street, would provide a clear identity for the year groups but full integration with the rest of the school;
 - the layout of the building would be highly rational, intuitive to users by providing clearly defined and efficient enclosed circulation serving separate and flexible classroom blocks or clusters arranged around a new external landscaped courtyard space;
5. The new school would accommodate a nursery, 2 foundation classrooms, 4 Key Stage 1 classrooms, 8 Key Stage 2 classrooms, a SEN room and 3 resource spaces. In addition a 280 seat performance hall, a small hall, ICT suite, library and other ancillary accommodation would be provided. This accommodation would be provided over 2 floors in part. However, as the floor level of the existing block is used as a datum, by using the existing topography of the site the lower ground floor would be tucked in underneath the ground floor. Therefore, from certain elevations the building would appear to be single storey. The proposed hall would lie approximately 3 metres closer to the boundary than the existing buildings on site, but would still be 15 metres from the boundary, and over 25 metres from the rear façade of the closest residential property. The remainder of the new building would be further from the boundary than the existing.
6. The classrooms are designed over the two floors in a modular framed arrangement, allowing flexibility of internal layout to meet future needs. The upper ground floor accommodation would link directly with level access to a new courtyard space, whilst the lower ground floor accommodation would link directly with level access to external spaces to the north and east of the proposed building. An internal 'street' would link to

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classrooms, and would be constructed using a powder coated aluminium curtain walling system, with glazing. Feature panels of coloured glass are proposed to run the length of the 'street', adding colour and interest to the façade. The classroom spaces would be single aspect with large glass walls spanning the full extent of the external wall.

7. Externally the class modules would be constructed from a palette of self coloured render, with aluminium powder coated windows. The roof would be hidden from view by a parapet, but would be a sedum or similar green roof, emphasising the green credentials of the design. A key element of the schools design is the new school hall, which would be sited opposite the entrance from Keary Road. The hall would be curved in plan, a functional requirement for the performance space, and a deliberate contrast to the other more regular blocks.
8. The applicant is proposing to improve the site access as part of this proposal. The existing site access from Keary Road would be retained and used for visitor and delivery vehicle access, as well as a pedestrian access for pupils. A new vehicular access is proposed by way of upgrading and widening an existing pedestrian access to the north of the site, from Swanscombe Street, which would run through the area which currently accommodates the Infants School to a new access gate and car parking area to the north of the proposed school site. This access would be used for staff access, together with pedestrian access for pupils. The applicant is also considering the opportunity for a third site access, to the south-west corner of the site, which could provide for a drop-off/pick-up facility. This third access is subject to land ownership issues and may be considered as a separate planning application.
9. The design proposals would be developed in line with the principles of the BREEAM School's requirement. It is proposed that a rating of 'very good' would be the minimum standard achieved, and the BREEAM assessment would be used to inform the detailed design development of the proposals.
10. Landscaping would form an integral element of the overall design of the school and site masterplan. The quality of landscaping would enhance the building proposals and form the link with the site and context. Although detailed landscaping proposals would be drawn up at a later date, the applicant has provided indicative details at this stage. Landscaping would be concentrated within the courtyard that the new buildings would create, the external play areas to the lower ground floor classrooms and in the area of the main entrance. A total of 39 trees would need to be removed as a result of this development, all of which are well within the site, and only 4 of which are considered to be of high quality and value. All boundary planting is to be retained where possible, and protected in accordance with BS5837; Trees in relation to construction.
11. The applicant is proposing wider community use of the school buildings and grounds. Adult Education is proposed to take place in the library and the first 'pod' of teaching accommodation adjacent to it. Adult Education would take place during the school day and out of hours. External sports clubs are expected to use the sports facilities and pitches, both after school hours and at the weekends. Use of the performance hall is anticipated by local drama clubs and community groups, during evenings and possibly weekends. Overflow parking would be provided on the hard playground if required. The applicant advises that the use of amplified music is not envisaged, however, recorded and live instrumental performance would be likely, by the school during school hours, and both by the school and community users out of hours and at weekends. Social evenings for bingo in the performance hall are planned for local residents, which has emerged following consultation by the applicant with the local community. Seasonal social events would be subject to further discussion with the local community, as would the holding of fetes, BBQs, craft shows and sporting events. Hours of evening and weekend use have not been provided by the applicant.

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12. The following documents have been submitted in support of the planning application: *BS5837: Tree Report, School Travel Plan (and revisions), Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment, Archaeological Desk Top Assessment (Palaeolithic), Field Evaluation (Palaeolithic), Geotechnical Survey Report & a Geo-Environmental Desk Study.*

Reduced copies of the submitted drawings showing the site layout, elevations and floor plans are attached.

Planning Policy

13. The Development Plan Policies summarised below are relevant to the consideration of the application:

The Kent & Medway Structure Plan 2006:

Policy SP1	Seeks to conserve and enhance Kent's environment and to ensure a sustainable pattern of development.
Policy SS6	Seeks to improve the built and natural environment, the functioning and appearance of the suburbs, including the provision of services and facilities that serve local needs.
Policy QL1	Seeks to ensure that all development is well designed and of a high quality that responds positively to the local character. Development, which would be detrimental to the built environment, amenity, function or character of the area, will not be permitted.
Policy QL7	Where important or potentially important archaeological remains may exist, developers will be required to arrange for archaeological assessment and/or field evaluation to be carried out in advance of the determination of planning applications.
Policy QL11	Provision will be made to accommodate additional requirements for local community services in response to growth in demand from the community as a whole. The services will be located where they are accessible by walking, cycling and by public transport.
Policy TP3	States that the local planning authority should ensure that development sites are well served by public transport, walking and cycling.
Policy TP19	States that development proposals should comply with vehicle parking policies and maximum standards adopted by the County Council.
Policy NR5	Development should not result in an unacceptable level of pollution i.e. noise levels.

The adopted (1995) Borough of Dartford Local Plan:

Policy S2	Encouragement will be given to the provision of community facilities.
Policy T19	Proposals for development will not normally be permitted where they are not appropriately related to the highway

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network and generate volumes of traffic in excess of the capacity of the highway network.

Policy B1 The following factors will be taken into account in considering development proposals:

- Proposed Use, which should be appropriate for its location and should not have a detrimental effect on the local area through visual impact, traffic generation, noise or other factors.
- Design, which should be of a high standard and respect and integrate with the surroundings. Particular attention should be paid to the mass, form and scale of the proposed development and its impact on the environment and neighbouring uses.
- Materials, which should be of good quality, pleasing in appearance and durable.
- Amenity of adjoining properties, particularly in the case of residential properties, should not be materially detracted from by development proposals. This includes the loss of daylight or sunlight, and overlooking from habitable rooms.
- Access and parking.

Policy B12 Development proposals may be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the site can be preserved either in situ or by making a detailed record of it for future archaeological reference. Appropriate conditions would be attached to any planning permission.

Policy CF3 The Borough Council will encourage and support the provision of social, community, educational and cultural facilities and infrastructure to meet the current and future needs of the Borough.

Consultations

14. **Dartford Borough Council:** raises no objection subject to the imposition of conditions requiring the submission of a landscaping scheme and a contaminated land assessment. In addition, the Borough Council consider that Kent Highway Services should be satisfied over parking and access arrangements.

Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council: strongly object to the planning application on the grounds that the safety of children, parking, transport and access arrangements are not suitable for the local area.

The Town Council suggest that the access points be reconsidered and that a more suitable location would be between the flats in the top corner of Keary Road. This has an area which used to be occupied by garages and a wall, and is sufficiently wide enough to get a road through. The Town Council also consider that it would be possible to include parental parking areas/drop off zones within this area which would relieve the congestive parking currently experienced. The proposed entrance in Swanscombe Street is not a beneficial one and is dangerous as many children use this road.

Divisional Transportation Manager: raises no objection to the development subject to the submission of a revised Travel Plan.

The Environment Agency: raises no objection to the proposal subject to the imposition of conditions and informatives regarding surface water drainage and contaminated land.

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County Archaeologist: states that the site lies in a very sensitive area archaeologically. There is a high potential for important palaeolithic remains to survive on site. Formal archaeological investigation works at the adjacent Swan Valley School located significant palaeolithic remains and important Roman remains. An Archaeological Deskbased Assessment, including a palaeolithic specialist assessment has been undertaken. On the basis of this information the County Archaeologist has agreed appropriate next steps for early field evaluation works. These include a borehole survey, monitoring of geotechnical works and evaluation trial trenching.

The County Archaeologist advises that it is important that these evaluation works are undertaken prior to determination of the application. I am advised that trial trenching is yet to be undertaken as the specification needs to be informed by the results of the borehole and geotechnical works, especially the specialist palaeolithic works.

The County Archaeologist recommends that this application is not determined until further appropriate archaeological fieldwork has been undertaken.

The County Councils Landscape Advisor: comments as follows:

“A significant amount of existing trees and vegetation would require removal to accommodate the proposals, much of which is semi mature/mature. Two of the trees to be removed are identified as being of high arboricultural/amenity value (Tree Report, Jacobs, June 2008). The amount of necessary tree removal would cause an adverse effect, although some critical existing vegetation would be retained. It is recommended that the landscape proposals include adequate tree planting to mitigate the necessary removal, and that some trees are specified as heavy standards. Tree protection fencing to BS5837: 2005 Trees in Relation to Construction should be erected prior to any delivery/demolition/construction work beginning on site.

Landscape Impact

We understand that landscape proposals are being developed for the site and recommend that a native hedgerow is planted along the western boundary of the site as well as standard trees, north of the existing access off Keary Road, to provide a stronger visual buffer between housing along Keary Road and the extended car parking area. We also suggest that any new boundary fencing is supported with hedgerow planting, to soften the visual impact of the fencing.

Visual Impact

The proposal involves building the new amalgamated school building partly across the footprint of an existing building to be demolished. The scale and massing of the proposed building would not be vastly different to that of the building to be demolished, although the design and layout would be. Whilst the change in layout would not cause any significant visual impact, we consider that some of the proposed exterior colour treatment to be rather bright and contrasting, and recommend that more subtle colours are considered, especially on those elevations which are overlooked by neighbouring residential properties.”

Local Member

15. The local Member Mr. I Jones was notified of the application on the 17 June 2008.

Publicity

16. The application was publicised by the posting of 2 site notices, advertisement in a local newspaper and the individual notification of 78 nearby properties.

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Representations

17. 6 letters of representation have been received in response to the proposal, 4 in support and 2 objecting. The main points of objection are summarised as follows:

- Residents do not want parents parking in Keary Road;
- Swanscombe Street already has double yellow lines and traffic from the A2, additional traffic and parking cannot be accommodated;
- The position of the school may have been acceptable when originally built but the surrounding area is totally inadequate for the traffic that the school now generates. There are few places to park legally so many drivers delivering/collecting children park with little regard to the law or consideration to local residents;
- The proposal for the new vehicular access onto Swanscombe Street is a cause for concern. The entrance/exit of the proposed access is in an area of traffic calming measures, incorporating road humps and width restrictions;
- It is noted from the plans that the area of the present infants school has been fenced off. It would be interesting to know what is happening to this area;

The main points of support are summarised as follows:

- The community benefits of this scheme would bring opportunities and education to the people of Swanscombe, and provide 1st class facilities that the school currently lacks. The building would be a valuable community asset;
- With the school's strong links to Swan Valley Community School, the campus would be able to offer a doctors surgery, dentist, children's centre and new primary and secondary school's;
- The design is exciting, environmentally aware, and would be a joy for the staff and students to use;
- Whilst the traffic difficulties in the area are appreciated, this scheme actually provides greater access to the site than the single access currently available in Keary Road. This is not a new school site so any problems with access already exist and the details of this scheme go a long way to reduce the impact on local residents;

DiscussionIntroduction

18. In considering this proposal regard must be had to the Development Plan policies outlined in paragraph (13) above. Section 38(6) of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act states that applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Therefore, this proposal needs to be considered in the context of the Development Plan Policies, Government Guidance and other material planning considerations arising from consultation and publicity. Issues of particular relevance include siting & design, impact upon residential amenity, archaeology and access and parking.
19. Policy QL1 of the Kent and Medway Structure Plan and Policy B1 of the Dartford Borough Local Plan require new developments to be of a high quality and well designed, and not to lead to a loss of residential amenity. Further, consideration should be given to the Kent and Medway Structure Plan Policy QL12 and the Dartford Borough Local Plan Policy CF3 that encourage decision makers to make provision for community facilities. In conjunction with these and other relevant policies, these issues are considered and discussed below. In principle, I see no overriding objection on planning policy grounds, on the basis that site is already well established for the accommodation of educational services.

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Siting and design

20. The siting and design of the proposed buildings has not met with objection, in fact, letters from local residents endorsing the design of the new school have been received. Although the proposed hall would project approximately 3 metres closer to the boundary than the existing building, the remainder of the new building would be further from residential properties than the existing. The school hall would be 15 metres from the boundary of the site, and over 25 metres from the rear facades of properties in Keary Road. These distances fall well within the distances specified within the Kent Design Guide, and draw me to the conclusion that the siting of the building would not have a detrimental impact upon the locality. The County Council's Landscape Advisor considers that the scale and massing of the building would not be vastly different to that of the building to be demolished. The changing levels of site mean that the lower ground floor can be inserted under the ground floor, reducing the massing of the building, and maintaining a single storey appearance from the site entrance from Keary Road. As the site is surrounded by 2 storey residential development and Swan Valley School, which is 5 storey in part, the height and massing of the proposed building is not out of character with surrounding development. In light of the above, I consider that the scale, massing and siting of the development is acceptable and would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the local landscape or the amenity of local residents.
21. However, the County Council's Landscape Advisor has questioned the design of the school, in terms of the exterior colour treatment, which they consider to be rather bright and contrasting. It is recommended that more subtle colours are considered, especially on those elevations which are overlooked by neighbouring residential properties. Although the applicant has given an indication of the materials that they would like to use, and specified an intention to use coloured glazing and feature panels, exact details of external materials could be required under planning condition. I consider it appropriate to condition that details of all external materials be submitted for approval prior to the commencement of development, at which time colour finishes can be considered in greater detail, ensuring that they would not have a detrimental impact upon the amenity of the locality. Subject to the imposition of this condition, I do not consider that the design of the school would be detrimental to the amenity of the locality. In fact, the modern design, which incorporates many sustainable features, could improve the visual amenity and landscape value of the area, having a positive influence on the community as a whole.
22. As outlined in paragraph 4 of this report, part of the northern area of the school site, which currently accommodates the infants school, would not form part of the amalgamated school grounds. Local residents have questioned what the future of this area of the site will be. I am advised by the applicant that the future intentions for this area of the site are unknown at this time. However, any future development would need to be subject to a separate planning application, at which stage neighbouring local residents would have an opportunity to comment.

Access and Car parking

23. Neighbour objection to the proposed development is solely based on the traffic and highway implications of the scheme. Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council also raise strong objection on the grounds that parking, transport and access arrangements are not suitable for the local area. It is important to note that this application is proposing to amalgamate two existing schools, which are both currently accessed by a vehicular and pedestrian access from Keary Road and a pedestrian only access from Swanscombe Street. Should permission be granted, staff and pupils numbers would not increase and the two schools would merely be amalgamated into one new building.

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Existing highway concerns, although regrettable, would not be exacerbated by the proposed development. In fact, the widening of the existing pedestrian access on Swanscombe Street to create a vehicular access would aid in alleviating local congestion around peak school times. Parents already use this access as a drop off/pick up point, and this would not change by upgrading the access to accommodate vehicles. However, the provision of two vehicular access points would aid in alleviating congestion in the local area, especially around the existing single vehicular access on Keary Road. The applicant proposes that the existing site access would be retained for use by visitors and delivery's, and the new access would be used by staff only. This would split the vehicle movements associated with the school, potentially alleviating existing congestion around peak school times.

24. The applicant is proposing that the new vehicular access would run through the area which currently accommodates the Infants School to a new access gate and car parking area to the north of the proposed school site. A total of 49 car parking spaces would be provided on site, extending existing parking provision thereby alleviating parking on local residential streets. Kent Highway Services have not raised any objections to the application, but do recommend that a revised Travel Plan be submitted for approval. I therefore consider that, should Members be minded to grant permission, a condition of consent be the submission of an updated Travel Plan, which should be subject to ongoing monitoring and review. In addition, it should be conditioned that the car parking and access arrangements shown on the submitted plans be completed and fully operational prior to the first occupation of the new buildings. As there would be no increase in staff or pupil numbers as a result of this application, and existing access arrangements and parking on site would be improved, I consider that subject to the imposition of the conditions outlined above, the proposed development would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the local highway network. I therefore see no reason to refuse the application on highway grounds.
25. Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council have suggested that the access points to the site be reconsidered, and that a more suitable access location would be between the flats in the top corner of Keary Road. The Town Council considers that this area is wide enough to accommodate an access and a drop off/pick up zone. The applicant advises that they are considering the provision of an access to the site between the flats in the top corner of Keary Road, and that this may be pursued in the future, pending resolution of land ownership and highway considerations. This would require a separate planning application and would need to be considered on its own merits at the time of submission. However, it is important to note that the highway implications of this application, as discussed above, are not considered significant enough to warrant recommending refusal of the proposal without the provision of an access between the Keary Road flats.

Residential Amenity

26. The applicant is proposing that the school and its grounds be available for wider community use, as detailed in paragraph 11 of this report. Adult Education is proposed to take place during the school day and out of hours. External sports clubs are expected to use the sports facilities and pitches, both after school hours and at the weekends. Use of the performance hall is anticipated by local drama clubs and community groups, during evenings and possibly weekends. In addition, social evenings for bingo in the performance hall are planned for local residents, which has emerged following consultation by the applicant with the local community. Seasonal social events would be subject to further discussion between the school and the local community, as would the holding of fetes, BBQs, craft shows and sporting events.

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27. However, precise hours of evening and weekend use have not been provided by the applicant. Given the sites location, within a residential area, it is essential that community use of the facility does not have an adverse impact upon the amenity of local residents. I do not consider it reasonable to condition hours of use at this stage as the applicant has not provided any indicative hours and, therefore, should hours be conditioned they may be to restrictive or to lenient. Therefore, I consider it would be more appropriate that a condition of consent be the submission for approval of a report, detailing proposed community uses and hours of use, including details of management etc, prior to the first occupation of the development. This would allow hours of use to be considered in detail, ensuring that the amenity of local residents would not be adversely affected by the development.

Landscaping

28. As outlined in paragraph 10 of this report, this application would result in the removal of 39 trees, all of which are well within the site boundary and would have little impact on screening of the site. A total of 101 trees were surveyed on site, and of the 39 to be removed, four trees were graded A, which are of high quality and value, 12 graded B, which are of moderate quality and value, and the remainder graded C, which are of low quality and value. The submitted tree survey details the methods that would be adopted to protect the trees to be retained and, should permission be granted, tree protection measures would form a condition of consent. The County Council's Landscape Advisor state that the amount of necessary tree removal would have an adverse effect, although some critical vegetation would be retained. It is recommended that adequate replacement tree planting be provided, some of which should be at heavy standards. The Landscape Advisor makes further suggestions regarding replacement planting, all of which have been forwarded to the applicant. In addition, Dartford Borough Council raise no objection to the proposed development, subject to the submission of a scheme of landscaping. There, I consider that should permission be granted, a detailed scheme of landscaping be submitted, to include replacement tree planting and the recommendations of the County Council's Landscape Advisor, prior to the commencement of development at the site. Subject to the conditions outlined above, I consider that any detrimental impact resulting from tree removal on site can be mitigated by replacement planting and additional landscaping.

Archaeology

29. As outlined in paragraph 14 of this report, the County Archaeologist considers that the application site lies in a very sensitive area archaeologically, and that there is a high potential for important palaeolithic remains to survive on site. An Archaeological Desk Based Assessment was submitted in support of this application, but the County Archaeologist considers that further more detailed survey work needs to be undertaken prior to the determination of this application. It is considered that a borehole survey, monitoring of geotechnical works and evaluation trial trenching all need to be undertaken. The applicant advises that the trial trenching is yet to be undertaken as the specification needs to be informed by the results of the borehole and geotechnical works, especially the specialist palaeolithic works.
30. Without the completion of the trial trenching, and the submission of a subsequent report, the County Archaeologist recommends that this application is not determined. The applicant has advised that the trial trenching is being undertaken at the time of writing this report, and that the subsequent results/report will be submitted to the County Archaeologist before the Planning Applications Committee Meeting on the 7 October 2008. Providing this report is submitted in the timeframe advised by the applicant, the

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County Archaeologist anticipates that formal comments on the application will be made prior to the Planning Applications Committee Meeting, allowing final comments to be reported verbally to Members. Therefore, as this is the only outstanding matter, the recommendation is subject to the final views of the County Archaeologist.

Land Contamination and Pollution of Controlled Waters

31. The Environment Agency initially objected to this application on the grounds that there was insufficient information to demonstrate that the risk of pollution to controlled waters was acceptable. In light of this objection, the applicant undertook further survey work and submitted a Geotechnical Survey Report and Geo-Environmental Desk Study. Following the submission of this additional information, the Environment Agency withdrew its objection subject to the imposition of conditions and informatives. Dartford Borough Council have also raised no objection to the application subject to the imposition of a condition regarding the submission of further survey work concerning land contamination. Therefore, I consider that subject to the imposition of a condition requiring the submission of a scheme to deal with the risks associated with contamination of the site prior to the commencement of the development, the development could be controlled to ensure that it would not result in unacceptable pollution levels. In addition, at the request of the Environment Agency, should permission be granted a condition would be imposed to ensure that no infiltration of surface water drainage into the ground be permitted other than with the express consent of the County Planning Authority. Again, this would ensure that the development would not result in an unacceptable level of pollution, in accordance with the principles of Policy NR5 of the Kent & Medway Structure Plan.

Conclusion

32. In summary, I consider that the proposal would provide a welcome increase in the provision of new and modern education & community facilities. Subject to the views of the County Archaeologist, I am satisfied that subject to the imposition of conditions, this proposal would not have a significantly detrimental effect on the amenity of local residents, the character of the local landscape or the local highway network. In my view it would not give rise to any significant material harm and is in accordance with the general thrust of relevant Development Plan Policies. 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

33. I RECOMMEND that subject to the views of the County Archaeologist PERMISSION BE GRANTED SUBJECT to 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, its implementation and maintenance;
- measures to protect trees to be retained;
- details of fencing, gates and means of enclosure, including colour finishes;
- contaminated land assessment;
- details of surface water drainage;
- development to accord with the recommendations made in the submitted Ecological Scoping Survey;
- revision of the School Travel Plan;

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- the provision of car parking and access prior to occupation;
 - the provision of overflow parking out of school hours, should in be required;
 - details of community use, including hours of use;
 - hours of working during construction;
 - prevention of the deposition of mud on the local highway network;
- In addition, any conditions required by the County Archaeologist would be incorporated into the planning permission.

Case officer – Mary Green	01622 221066
Background documents - See section heading	