

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.

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**Item D1**

**Outline application for a Primary School, Children's Centre, Vocational Training Centre, Multi Use Games Area and Student Residential Accommodation at the Canterbury Campus, Canterbury – CA/07/836**

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A report by Head of Planning Applications Group to Planning Applications Committee on 12 February 2008.

Outline Application by The Governors of the Canterbury Campus and Kent County Council Children, Families & Education for a new 1Form Entry Primary School (capable of being converted to 2 form entry at a later date), Children's Centre, Vocational Training Centre, Multi Use Games Area and Student Residential Accommodation at the Canterbury Campus, Knights Avenue, Canterbury (Ref: CA/07/836)

Recommendation: Outline permission be granted subject to conditions.

**Local Member(s):** Martin Vye

**Classification:** Unrestricted

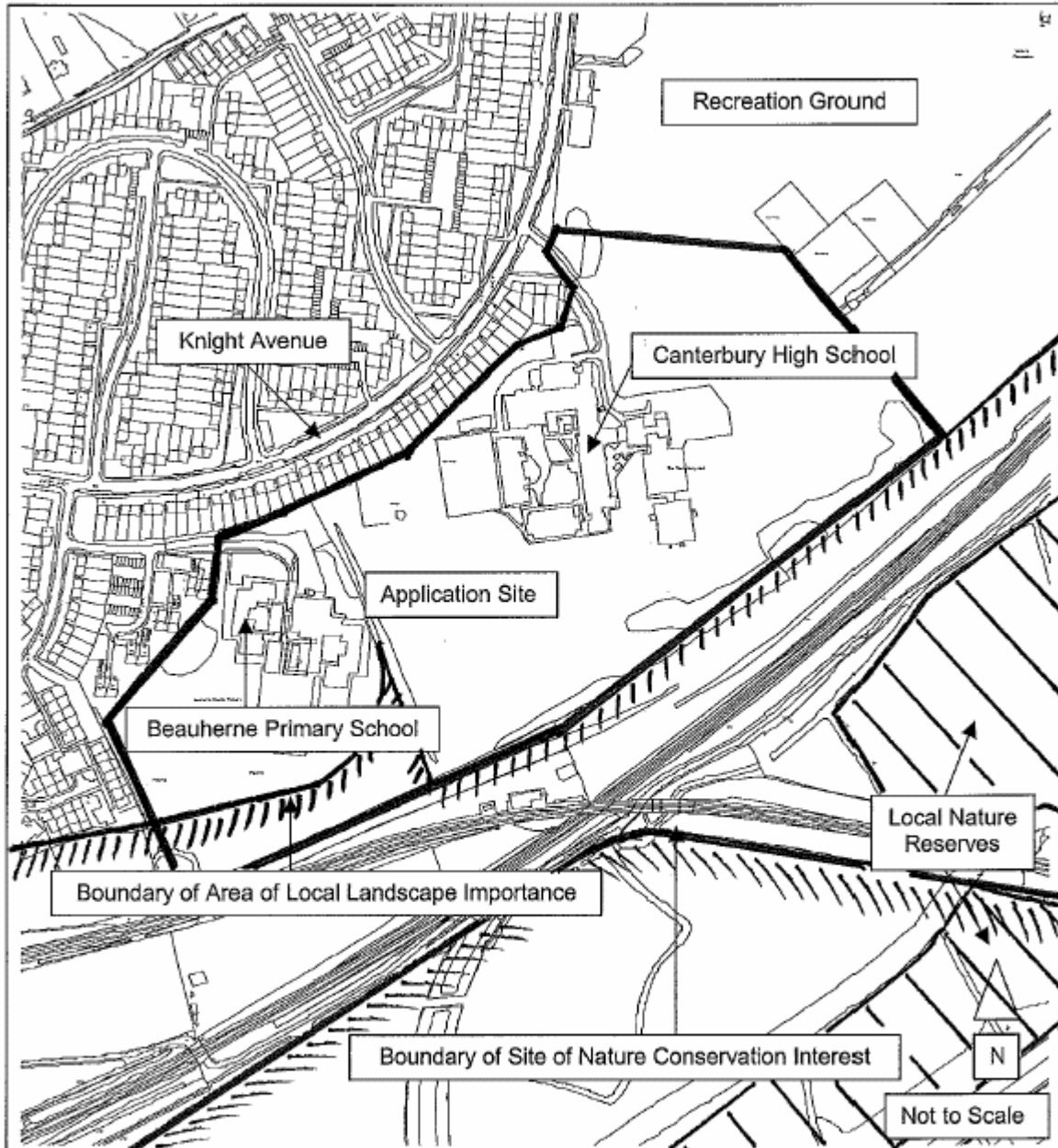
**Site**

1. The Canterbury Campus is located to the west of the City of Canterbury, accessed via Knight Avenue, to the south of the A2050 Rheims Way. The north and east of the campus site is bounded by residential properties, a recreation ground lies to the north east, and the River Stour Valley is located to the south, as are two railway lines. The site is generally a flat plateau of approximately 12 hectares, which overlooks the valley to the south, and the City of Canterbury beyond. To the immediate south of the Primary School playing fields, but within the boundary of the campus, is a lower and undeveloped area of grassland and bushes, bounded on the north by a row of mature poplars, and to the south by the railway lines, known as the banks. The banks, and land extending to the south, are designated as an Area of Local Landscape Importance. To the south of the site, although not adjacent, lie a Local Nature Reserve and a Site of Nature Conservation Interest. The whole of the campus is within the 'Boundary of Urban Area', and the playing fields are designated as 'Protection of Existing Open Space' within the adopted Canterbury District Local Plan.
2. The Canterbury Campus consists of the following integrated facilities:
  - Canterbury High School;
  - Beauherne Primary School;
  - Adult Education Centre;
  - Specialist Sports College;
  - All-weather running track; and
  - Tennis Centre

The running track lies to the north east of the campus, adjacent to the High School and Sports Centre. Playing fields extend to the south west of the High School, beyond which lies

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Site Location Plan

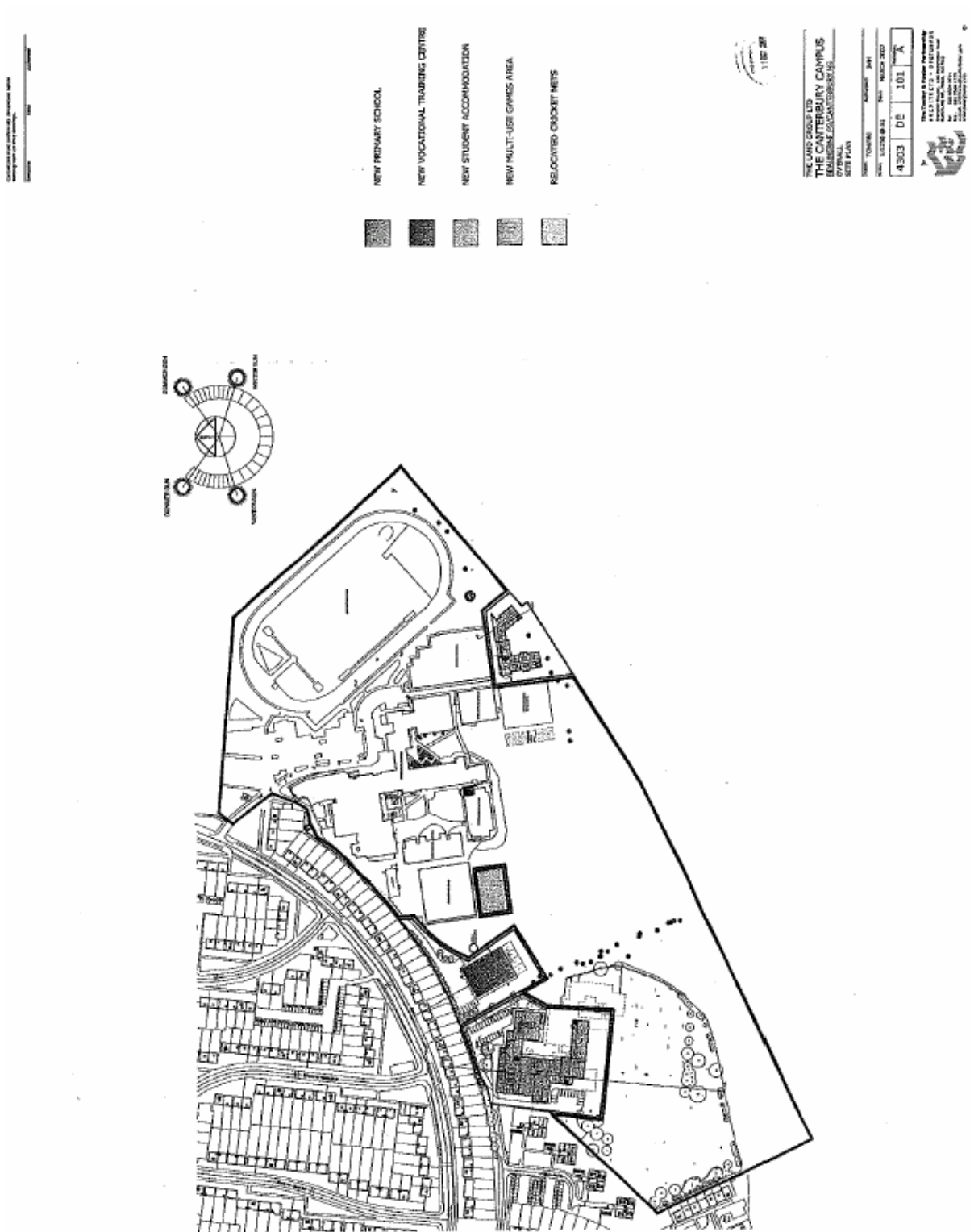


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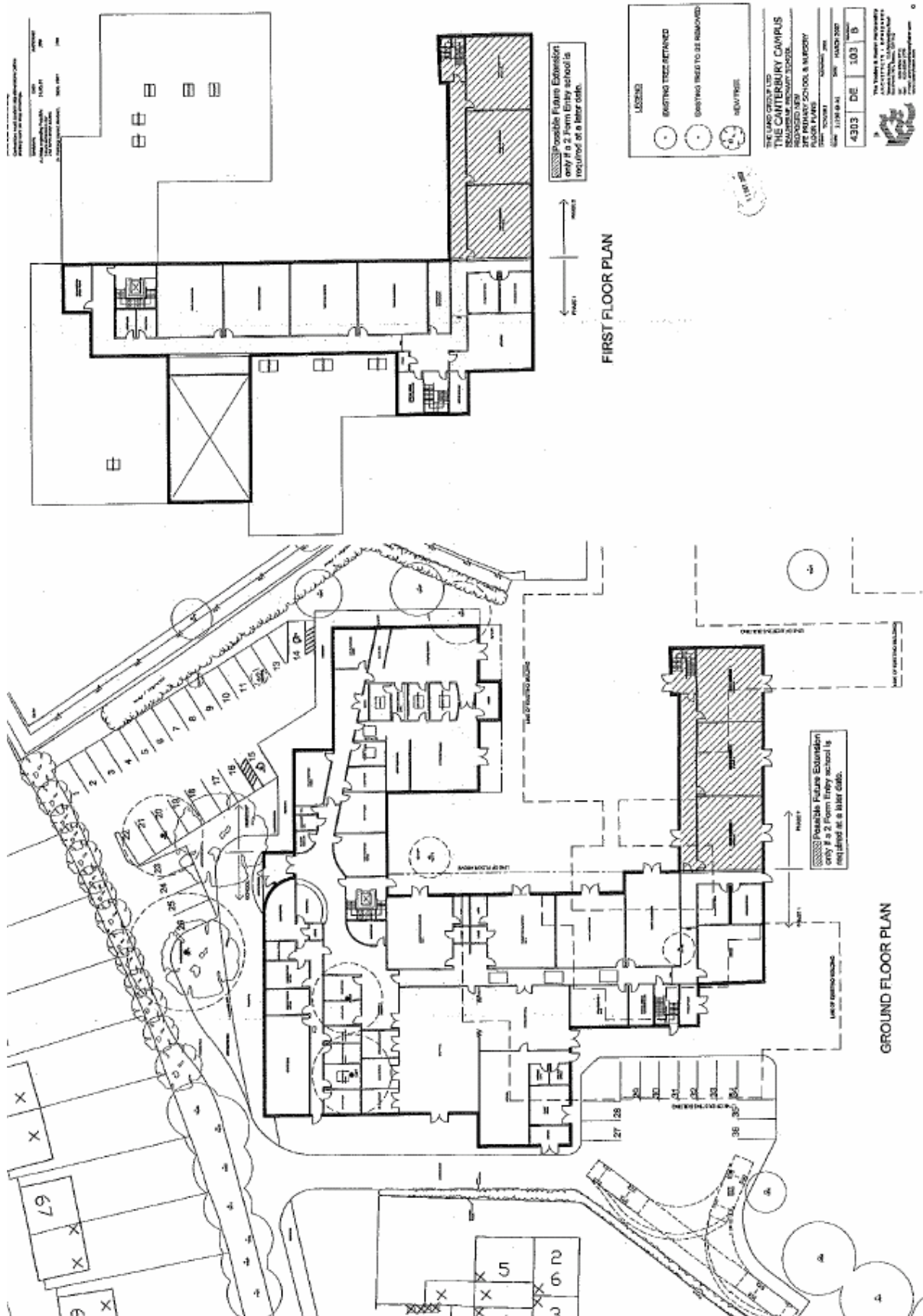
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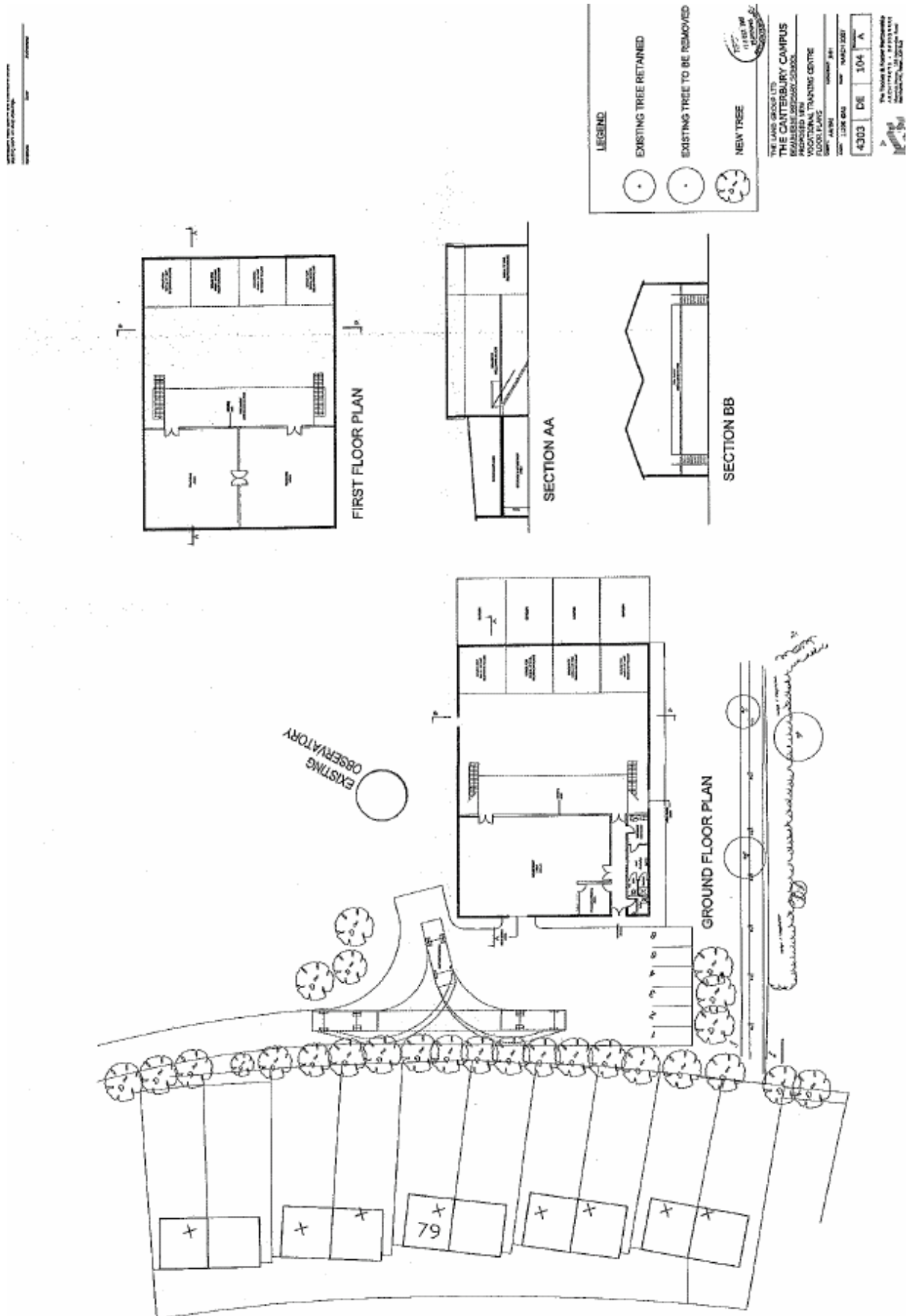
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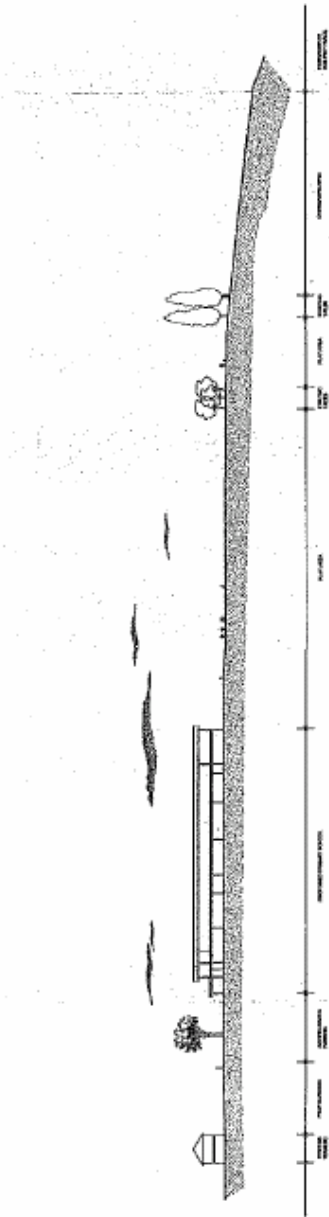
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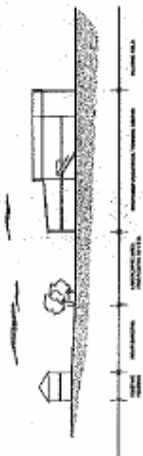
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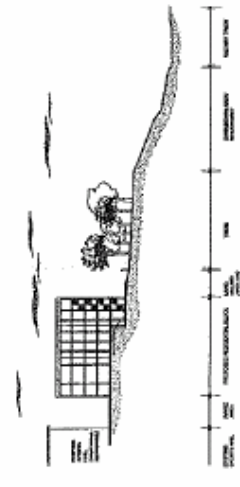
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**SECTION A**  
 THROUGH PRIMARY SCHOOL AND CHILDREN'S CENTRE



**SECTION B**  
 THROUGH VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE

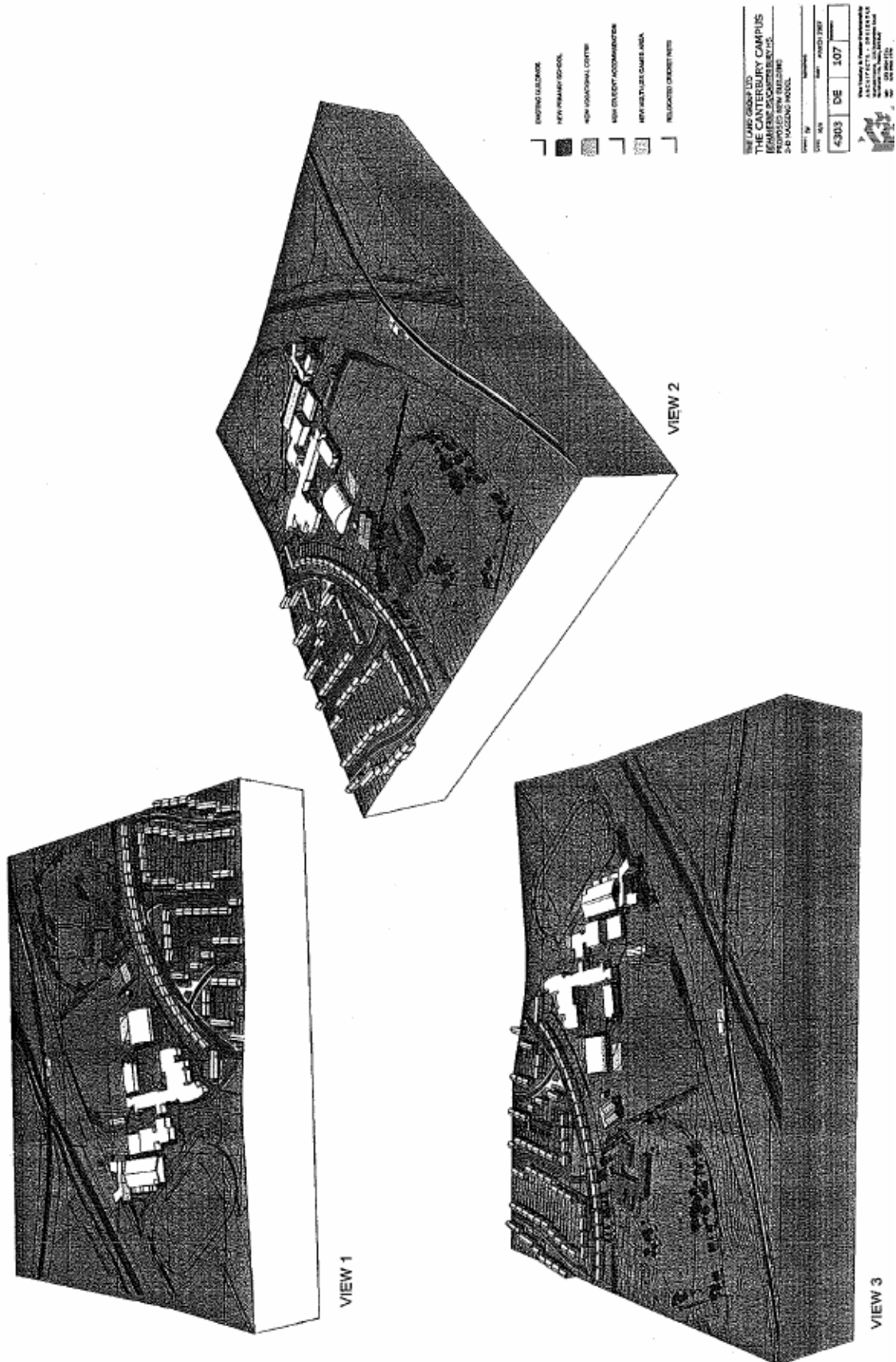


**SECTION C**  
 THROUGH STUDENT ACCOMMODATION

**Item D1**

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the Beauherne Primary School Site, which has an independent access and is screened from the remainder of the campus by a hedgerow and tree planting.

3. Canterbury High School is an all-ability co-educational Foundation School for 11-19 year olds. Over the past 10 years the School's facilities have been improved, including new curriculum accommodation and associated facilities of the Tennis Centre and Specialists Sports Centre. Early in 2006 an Adult Education Centre, enlarged hall, new School Kitchen and a Performing Arts Centre were completed. Canterbury High School particularly focuses on music development and is also a Specialist Sports College and the lead member of the Canterbury Sports Partnership. It is the training ground for the Charlton Athletic Women's Football Team and is due to become the European base for the Australian Athletics Team. All of the facilities outlined above are on the Canterbury High School Campus. Adjacent to the High School grounds is the 1 Form Entry Beauherne Primary School, which currently also houses a crèche and a specialist 'hospital' unit for learning difficulties.

#### **Proposal**

4. This application has been submitted by the Governors of the Canterbury Campus and the Kent County Council Children, Families and Education Directorate and proposes an outline scheme for the Canterbury Campus. The outline application proposes a new Beauherne 1-form entry Primary School (capable of being converted to 2-form entry at a later date), a Children's Centre, Vocational Training Centre, Multi Use Games Area and Student Residential Accommodation.
5. The existing Primary School is a system built single storey building, dating from the 1960's, which is now in a poor state of repair. Replacement, rather than refurbishment, is considered the most appropriate way forward. Initially the proposed Primary School would be built as a 1 FE School, but with 2 FE common facilities and infrastructure in order that it could become a 2FE school with the addition of further classrooms at a later date. The proposed Children's Centre, which would cater for 52 children, would be incorporated within the Primary School building. The existing 'hospital unit' would be relocated elsewhere in Canterbury.
6. The existing Primary School would need to remain fully operational whilst construction of the new school is underway. The replacement school is, therefore, proposed to the immediate north west of the existing school and would wrap around the edge of the existing building. Upon completion of the replacement school the existing building would be demolished. The proposed building would be part 2-storey, with the Primary School and Children's Centre accessed via a shared reception from the north side of the car park. The Primary School would be located to the west side of the building, with Infants on the ground floor and Juniors on the first. The end wing on both floors would not be built in phase 1 but, if required, would be completed in phase 2 and would turn the project into a full 2FE school. The Children's Centre would be single storey, located on the eastern side of the building, and would provide two nursery areas with common and shared facilities, one for 0-2 year olds and one for 2-4 years.
7. A new vocational training centre is proposed to the east of the Primary School, on an area of scrub grassland located between the Primary School and the High School, adjacent to an existing observatory. The applicant advises that the vocational centre would be a 'workshop' type building for teaching Primary School children practical

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building and constructional skills. Canterbury High School pupils would also use the centre, although to a lesser extent.

8. The building proposed is a 750 square metre single space, which would provide facilities for students to learn basic industry skills through the construction of 'parts of buildings'. Garden areas would also be included to develop skills in soft and hard landscaping. In addition, there would be two teaching areas for learning computer aided drawing and business skills, and internal climbing wall, a reception area and communal facilities.
9. The existing unmade roadway to the rear of the existing Tennis Centre would be extended and surfaced as part of this application, and would serve the Vocational Centre. The road would enable the delivery of plant and materials without affecting the general circulation areas of the High School, and an adequate turning and unloading area would be provided adjacent to the building.
10. Student residential accommodation is required for short and longer term residential courses run by the Campus, primarily on the sports side, and would also be used in part by Canterbury Christ Church University. The applicant advises that this element of the proposal has been the most difficult to locate within the campus. The applicant has considered various options, the majority of which were rejected on academic, visual, proximity or environmental impact grounds. The proposed site is to the immediate south of the existing sports hall, on an area of grassland, which slopes away to the south. The site is accessible to the rest of the campus, and to the City of Canterbury. The site is currently home to two existing cricket nets, which would be relocated to a site adjacent to the tennis courts.
11. The student residential building is proposed to be predominately 4 storeys in height, although a small lower ground floor, provided as a result of the change of site levels, would mean that the building would be 5 floors in part. The proposed accommodation would comprise of 73 individual bed-sitters, each with en-suite facilities, located within flats with their own communal space and kitchen facilities. In addition, there would be two 2-bedroom flats for guardians/house parents. The applicant advises that an estimated 41 sixth form students would occupy the accommodation, and it is proposed that the remainder of the accommodation would be used by students from Canterbury Christ Church University, and by students attending the various Elite Sports Academy courses.
12. In plan, the residential building would be an open 'U' shaped form which would provide each flat with views across the campus or across the valley towards the City of Canterbury. The applicant advises that the building has been designed to follow the existing levels, to be sensitive to views in and out of the site, and to retain the existing poplars along the boundary.
13. A 30m x 18.5m artificial multi use games area is proposed to the south of the existing tennis centre, which would be enclosed with chain link fencing. No floodlighting is proposed.
14. This application is an outline proposal and appearance and landscaping would be subject to reserved matters applications, for consideration in the future. Under the circumstances, this application seeks approval for the principle of the layout and scale of the development, and access. However, the applicant has provided indicative information with regard to landscaping and appearance.

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15. With regard to landscaping, it is the applicants' intent to retain trees and shrubs on the boundaries, and where individual trees need to be removed, they would be replaced in suitable locations. The 'Banks' area would remain unaffected, and the wild landscaping on the bank below the proposed student accommodation would be retained. Two new areas of landscaping are proposed - the northern boundary between the Primary School and the Children's Centre parking area and the rear gardens of residential properties, and similarly on the northern boundary to the north of the Vocational Training Centre. In both of these instances, the intention is to improve the privacy of the houses in Knights Avenue. All trees proposed for removal are identified within this application, and an Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Tree Protection Plan and Arboricultural Method Statement have been submitted.
16. With regard to external appearance, the applicants have provided the following indicative information. The Primary School and Children's Centre would have shallow pitched roofs in powder-coated profiled metal sheets, with rooflights, and areas of flat roof over the ground floor only. The walls would primarily be brick, with timber panels and render features at first floor level, and windows, doors and limited sections of curtain walling would be powder-coated aluminium. The Vocational Training Centre would have a shallow pitched roof, in powder-coated profiled metal sheet, and the side walls would be of the same materials above 2 metres in height, below which would be brickwork. The colour of the metal sheeting would be appropriate to the surrounding area. The section of the building facing the rear gardens of the houses on Knights Avenue would be lower in height.
17. The four storey, with part lower ground floor, Student Residential Accommodation would have a flat roof with oversailing eaves. The lower ground floor and ground floor would be brickwork, with a rendered first floor and Trespa or similar timber laminated panels above. Punched windows in the elevations, and external doors would be powder-coated aluminium.
18. There is no specific parking proposed for the Vocational Training Centre, which would not generate additional staff or pupils, or the Student Residential Accommodation, which the applicants claim would not require parking facilities. 36 parking bays would be provided for the Primary School and the Children's Centre.

*The following documents have been submitted in support of the application: Design & Access Statement; Site Investigation Report; The Canterbury Campus' Educational Rationale; Transport Assessment; Travel Plan; Extended Phase 1 Habitat Surveys; Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Addendum; Arboricultural Constraints Assessment; Arboricultural Method Statement; Reptile Survey; Bat Survey; Revised Travel Plans.*

*Reduced copies of the submitted drawings showing the site layout and access are attached.*

### **Planning Policy**

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

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(i) **The Kent & Medway Structure Plan: Adopted 2006:**

**Policy SS1** - The strategic development requirements of this plan should be met in a manner that provides for balanced and timely residential employment, retail and leisure development, and brings forward community facilities and infrastructure when they are needed, whilst at the same time conserving and enhancing the quality of Kent's environment.

**Policy SP1** - Seeks to conserve and enhance Kent's environment and ensure a sustainable pattern of development.

**Policy EN3** - Kent's landscape and wildlife habitats will be protected, conserved and enhanced. Where a need for development in the countryside is justified, important features and characteristics will be retained. Proposals should reflect the need for conservation, reinforcement, restoration or creation of countryside character and provide for the appropriate management of important features and the wider landscape.

**Policy EN7** - Development which would materially harm the scientific or nature conservation interests of County and/or Local Wildlife designations will not be permitted unless there is a need which outweighs the local conservation interest, and adverse impacts can be adequately compensated.

**Policy EN8** - Wildlife habitats and species will be protected, conserved and enhanced. Development likely to have an adverse effect, directly, indirectly or cumulatively, on important habitats or species, will not be permitted unless the adverse impact on an important nature conservation resource can be adequately mitigated and/or compensated.

**Policy EN9** - Tree cover and the hedgerow network should be maintained. Additionally, they should be enhanced where this would improve the landscape, biodiversity, or link existing woodland habitats.

**Policy QL1** – All development should be well designed and be of high quality. Developments should respond positively to the scale, layout, pattern and character of their local surroundings.

**Policy QL12**- Community Services, including schools and education provision, will be provided as long as there is a demonstrable need for them.

**Policy QL15** – Local Development Documents will make provision for sport, informal and formal recreation facilities, taking account of the potential for dual use and/or joint provision. All major new formal recreation and sports facilities should be designed to avoid nuisance from traffic, noise and lighting.

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**Policy TP19** - States that development proposals should comply with vehicle parking policies and maximum standards adopted by the County Council.

**Policy NR5** – The quality of Kent's environment will be conserved and enhanced. This will include the visual, ecological, geological, historic and water environments, air quality, noise and levels of tranquillity and light intrusion.

(ii) The adopted (2006) **Canterbury District Local Plan:**

**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 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 know, 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 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 Councils adopted Vehicle Parking Standards to development proposals.

**Policy C17** - The City Council will work with the Education Authority and school governors to ensure that the needs of primary and secondary schools are taken into account in the assessment of their development needs and proposals. Planning permission will be granted for proposals that are needed by the schools subject to design and highway safety considerations.

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**Policy C23** - Any relocation or expansion of an existing institution shall be determined according to a number of criteria, whilst having regard to the institution's existing facilities and transport links.

**Policy C24** - Proposals which would result in the loss of protected existing open space will only be permitted if:

- There would be no material harm to the contribution the protected open space makes to the visual or recreational amenity of the area;
- Where there would be material harm, this would be balanced against demonstrable need for the development;
- There is no alternative site available to accommodate the proposed development .....
- The open space has been assessed by the Council as making no positive contribution to its overall strategy on open space.

**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**

20. **Canterbury City Council:** comment's as follows:

"The City Council has no objection to the replacement Primary School, or multi use games area.

Whilst a small part of the vocational building intrudes into land designated as open space, in view of the need for the facility, the opportunities it will offer and the size of the area of open space and the contribution it makes to the site as a whole, the City Council does not wish to raise an objection. I ask you to note, however, that some concerns have been expressed about the potential for increased disturbance to nearby dwellings from vehicular traffic to the building and noise emanating from it. The City Council therefore asks that these matters are given careful consideration during the determination of the application, and that consideration is given to imposing conditions requiring appropriate insulation to prevent the transmission of noise from the building and restricting the hours that vehicular traffic, in particular HGV deliveries, may use the access and parking/turning area.

The City Council, however, raises formal objection to the residential element of the proposal. The Council is not convinced that alternative accommodation to that proposed cannot be located elsewhere within the City, particularly during holiday periods, or that accommodation on the scale proposed is essential. If, however, the County Council accepts there is a proven need for such accommodation within the site, this Council believes an alternative location should be found as it does not consider development in the area of open space to be an appropriate solution. Whilst this area may not be suitable for sports use, it does have value as a pleasant undeveloped green area linking the north eastern most part of the campus with the more central playing fields. In addition, the building will be clearly visible in views

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across the valley, particularly from parts of Stuppington Lane from the where the sports hall and tennis dome can easily be identified. At five storeys the building will be clearly visible from the mainline railway below and from the homes of the residents of Brookside Caravan Park and beyond; its impact will be exacerbated by the way in which it extends towards and down the banking. During hours of darkness this impact will be increased by light emanating from the building emphasising its height and width and flooding out across the valley.”

**Divisional Transport Manager:** raises no objection subject to the imposition of a condition requiring the submission of updated Travel Plans with the detailed planning applications.

**The County Council's Landscape Advisor:** consider that the impact of this development on trees, in terms of arboricultural and landscape value, is slight. It would be possible to mitigate the tree removal through proposals for replacement tree planting, and a detailed scheme of landscaping should be submitted pursuant to planning condition. The Landscape Advisor is satisfied that there would be a significant amount of existing trees and vegetation retained throughout the site, as well as adequate space for mitigation planting. It is stated that the tree protection fencing does not appear to comply with BE 5837:2005 in terms of material, and it is recommended that this is addressed by the imposition of a relevant planning condition.

**Natural England:** recommends that, with regard to Great Crested Newts and Invertebrates, further survey information is obtained prior to determining this application. Therefore, Natural England objects to the above application pending submission of the results of a Great Crested Newt and Invertebrate Surveys. In addition, conditions and informatives regarding bats and reptiles are recommended.

**The County Council's Biodiversity Officer:** states that the conditioning of protected species surveys is not acceptable. Great Crested Newt and Invertebrate Surveys must be carried out prior to determination. In addition, the submitted Reptile Survey recommends that reptiles in the rough grassland to the north of the site would need to be translocated to a suitable receptor site elsewhere on site. It is recommended that a survey of the receptor site, including population estimates must be carried out prior to determination. Mitigation and enhancement measures should be submitted. It is also stated that at least one more activity survey for bats should be carried out (best practice guidance has not been followed) or further information should be provided explaining why bats are not expected to be in any of the buildings.

Further conditions and informatives are recommended with regard to protected species, biodiversity enhancement and landscaping.

**The County Council's Archaeologist:** requests that a condition be placed on any grant of planning permission requiring the securing of the implementation of a programme of archaeological work, in accordance with a written specification and timetable, which shall be submitted for the written approval of the County Planning Authority.

**The Environment Agency:** raises no objection in principle to the application, and requests that a number of conditions and informatives are placed on the decision regarding groundwater and land contamination.

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**Southern Water:** states that following initial investigations, there is currently inadequate capacity in the local network to provide foul sewage disposal or surface water disposal to service the proposed development. A number of informatives and conditions are requested, including conditions requiring the submission and approval of details of the means of foul sewerage and means of surface water disposal. In addition, a condition would be imposed to ensure that the student dwellings are not occupied until Southern Water, and the Planning Authority, are satisfied that the necessary infrastructure capacity is available to adequately service the development.

**Sport England:** raises no objection to the proposed development.

**Local Member**

21. The local County Member, Mr Martin Vye, was notified of the application on the 12 June 2007.

**Publicity and Representations**

22. The application was publicised by advertisement in a local newspaper, the posting of 2 site notices, and the individual notification of 78 nearby properties. Two letters of representation, from one neighbouring resident, have been received to date and the points of concern and objection are summarised below.

- Not a good idea having student flats close to residential properties due to noise and amenity concerns;
- More noise will be generated from the Primary School, and other new facilities on the Campus;
- The development would lead to a loss of view of the City and the Cathedral;
- Homes and a Community Hall are needed for all ages and members of the community, not just students;

**Discussion**

23. In considering this proposal regard must be had to the Development Plan policies outlined in paragraph (19) 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 impact upon residential and local amenity, and the wider landscape, and ecological concerns.

24. As detailed earlier in this report, this application proposes an outline scheme for the Canterbury Campus, in the form of a new Primary School, Children's Centre, Vocational Training Centre, Multi Use Games Area and Student Residential Accommodation. In this instance, the applicant is seeking approval for the principle of the layout and scale of the development, and access. Appearance and landscaping would be subject to reserved matters applications, for future consideration, and therefore do not need to be discussed in detail at this time. The applicant has, however, provided indicative information with regards to these reserved matters which is summarised in paragraphs 5-18 of this report.

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**Residential and Local Amenity**

25. The application site is bounded to the north and east by residential properties, and the impacts of this development upon the amenity of local residents needs to be addressed. Kent and Medway Structure Plan Policy NR5 seeks to conserve and enhance the quality of Kent's environment, including noise and levels of tranquillity, and light intrusion. Therefore, development proposals must seek to minimise levels of pollution, and be deemed to be acceptable in terms of impact upon local and residential amenity. It should be noted, however, that only one neighbouring resident raised objection to the proposal.
26. The existing Canterbury Campus is home to several educational institutions and facilities used on a regular basis by not only the two Schools, but various groups and the local community. This application proposes to provide a replacement Primary School, as the existing is substandard and in a poor state of repair, and additional facilities such as the Vocational Training Centre and Student Residential Accommodation. Of the facilities proposed, the replacement Primary School, Vocational Training Centre and Multi Use Games Area would be closest to residential properties and could therefore impact on local residential amenity.
27. The Multi Use Games Area is proposed to be located upon an area of grassland, situated between the existing indoor Tennis Centre and outdoor sports pitches. The Tennis Centre is a large domed building, which would screen the proposed Multi Use Games Area from residential properties in Knight Avenue, and act as a natural noise barrier. In addition, the Multi Use Games Area would not be floodlit, limiting its hours of use to that of the adjacent sports pitches. However, the artificial surface would allow sports to be played throughout the year, which may not otherwise be possible due to waterlogged pitches. As the proposed Multi Use Games Area would not be floodlit, and is adjacent to existing sporting facilities, I do not consider that it would have a detrimental impact on local residential amenity, given that its use would not extend beyond daylight hours.
28. With regard to the Vocational Training Centre, this is proposed to be located to the south of properties in Knight Avenue, between the existing Primary School and Tennis Centre, adjacent to an existing observatory (to be retained). The site is currently overgrown grassland/scrub. The 750 square metre building would have a shallow pitched roof, in powder coated profiled metal sheet, with the side walls being the same above 2 metres in height, below which would be brickwork. It is imperative that the colour of the metal sheeting is appropriate to the context of the site, and this would be considered in the determination of the reserved matters applications. The applicant advises that the section of building facing the rear gardens of houses on Knights Avenue would be lower in height, reducing its impact in terms of mass. The use of the building to train pupils in skilled manual trades could generate additional noise, but without a detailed application which would detail the design of the building a appropriate mitigation, the potential impact is hard to judge. The building is however approximately 14metres from the boundary, and an area of car parking would be located between the Vocational Training Centre and the boundary with the gardens of properties in Knight Avenue.
29. An existing unmade roadway to the rear of the Tennis Centre would be extended and surfaced as part of this application, and would serve the Vocational Training Centre. The road would enable the delivery of plant and materials without affecting the general circulation areas of the High School, and an adequate turning and unloading area would be provided adjacent to the building. Canterbury City Council expresses concern that

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noise from the building, and the associated access, has the potential to generate increased disturbance for nearby dwellings. The Centre is not proposed for wider community use, or Adult Education. Use would be by existing pupils of the High School and Primary School only, most of which would be during school hours. Therefore, the potential impact of noise generation is limited to during the school day, although this will still need to be addressed. As this application is in outline form, details of mitigation in terms of noise insulation, design and landscaping are not provided at this stage. However, I consider that subject to conditions requiring details of noise insulation to the Training Centre, details of the design and colour finish, and details of landscaping and boundary planting to be submitted at the reserved matters stage, that the building should not have a detrimental impact upon the amenity of local residents.

30. The last element of the proposal that could impact upon the amenity of local residents is the replacement Primary School. As the existing Primary School would need to remain fully operational whilst construction of the new Primary School took place, it is proposed to build the replacement school immediately to the north west, wrapping around the edge of the existing building. Upon completion, the existing school would then be demolished. The existing building is single storey, whereas the proposed building would be part single part two storey. However, this would not be out of scale with adjoining residential properties and apartment blocks. The school's capacity would remain as existing, although facilities would be provided which could cater for a 2 Form Entry. However, this would be discussed and considered in more detail at the time of submitting the reserved matters applications.
31. At this outline stage, consideration needs to be given to the principle of the siting and access only. Access would be as existing, although the parking arrangement would be altered to accommodate the construction of the new school. The replacement school would be in closer proximity to properties to the north and west of the existing primary school. However, the elements of the scheme closest to the boundaries are single storey and the applicant intends to retain boundary planting and screening. In addition, details of further screening and boundary planting would be required to be submitted pursuant to planning condition. In order to allow the School to continue to operate during construction, the replacement school cannot be constructed upon the footprint of the existing. To build to the south of the existing school would lead to a loss of playing field (protected open space), move the development closer to an Area of Local Landscape Importance and designated sites of ecological importance, and would also result in a large area of unusable space upon demolition of the existing. The proposed siting of the replacement school is the only logical solution, in terms of maximising space and allowing the school to continue to function. In principle, I do not consider that by moving the school to the north west that the amenity of local residents would be significantly adversely affected subject to a detailed design which minimises the height of the replacement school, retains and improves boundary planting and is designed in a manner which is sympathetic to the residential location (i.e. consideration to window locations)
32. In summary, I do not consider that the proposed outline development would have a significantly detrimental effect on local residential amenity. In addition, all of the elements of this outline proposal would need to be subject to reserved matters applications. These applications would provide details of design, appearance and landscaping and would be subject to consultation with statutory consultees and neighbouring residents. Should concerns be expressed at the time of determining the reserved matters applications, these can be addressed through appropriate mitigation

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and the imposition of planning conditions. In addition to the measures outlined above, hours of working during construction would be conditioned in an effort to minimise the impact upon local residential amenity.

**Scale/Siting of Development**

33. The scale and siting of the replacement Primary School and Multi Use Games Area has not been questioned, and is considered to be appropriate. In addition, the Vocational Training Centre is of a scale appropriate for its use and, although a small part of the building would extend onto an area designated as Open Space, I consider that the need for the Centre and the facilities it would offer outweigh the loss of this small area, which actually is overgrown and not a usable open space. This is a view supported by Canterbury City Council.
34. However, Canterbury City Council has raised a formal objection to the residential element of the proposal, as detailed in paragraph 20 of this report. First, the City Council is not convinced that alternative accommodation to that proposed cannot be located elsewhere within the City, or that accommodation of the scale proposed is essential. The applicant states that the school have identified a need for residential accommodation to support the various sports activities and academies that use the facilities on the campus. At present students either have to live with members of staff or travel significant distances into the school on a daily basis (some current students are from Bexleyheath and Sevenoaks whilst one is from Northern Ireland). As courses offered by the High School, in conjunction with Canterbury Christ Church University, continue to develop, and now lead directly onto a degree course at the University, the School believes that the number of study bedrooms proposed are essential, together with accommodation for resident 'house parents' to the elite sports students. The School plans for one section of the accommodation to be for sixth form students under the supervision of house parents, and the rest to be for Christ Church University Sports Academy students, who would use the sporting facilities on site. During school holidays the study bedrooms would be used to accommodate participants in the Summer Schools the Campus intend to run for elite performers and/or for those attending residential courses delivered by Adult Education. The School have determined the number of rooms based on the estimate of potential demand and income balanced against the maintenance costs, and believe that the block as proposed would be the minimum size it can be to be cost effective.
35. The accommodation would be managed by the Canterbury Campus, and the Governors would control the arrangements and use of the accommodation. The applicant advises the because students would continue their training into the evenings, and to eliminate unnecessary travel, a location on site is the only logical and cost effective solution. It would be managed accommodation and needs to be on-campus to be appropriately supervised. Furthermore, the applicant advises that parents of young adults attending the courses would not be happy for their children to be accommodated off campus. In light of the information given by the applicant, I consider that the scale of the development proposed has been justified, and its location on campus is a logical and suitable option.
36. However, Canterbury City Council states that should the County Council be satisfied that accommodation of this scale is needed on site, then an alternative location within the campus should be found. The proposed location for the Student Residential Accommodation is within an area designated as Open Space within the Canterbury

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District Local Plan (Policy C24). The City Council acknowledges that the proposed location for the accommodation is not suitable for sports use, but considers that it has value as an undeveloped green area linking the north eastern most parts of the campus with the more central playing fields. Although I am minded to agree that this area does have value as a link within the site, the applicant states that the site is a 'dead' area, not used for any school activities or recreation. In addition, the applicant has considered use of alternative sites within the campus and these have had to be rejected for various reasons.

37. First, the overgrown landscaped areas to the south of the Primary School playing fields was considered. However, this was deemed to be environmentally unacceptable and would be too distant from facilities. This area, known as 'the banks' is now proposed to be developed as a biodiversity area, a more suitable use considering this part of the site is designated as an Area of Local Landscape Importance. The boundary to the west of the Primary School was considered but discounted as the development would be too close to the adjacent residential flats, and would result in a critical loss of playing fields. In addition, the site proposed is close to the sports facilities but far enough away from the School itself to give students some separation between learning and relaxation areas. It is also within close proximity to the existing 'sports café', giving students access to catering facilities. The proposed site also has the advantage of being close to the City Centre, which can be easily accessed on foot without the need to use Knight Avenue, thus minimising disturbance to local residents. The location of the accommodation itself also avoids possible interference to neighbouring residents as it overlooks the railway lines and is screened from residential properties by existing buildings on the Campus. The applicant has, therefore, demonstrated that the site proposed is the only suitable site within the campus, and that the proposed site makes little or no contribution to the recreational value of the protected open space.
38. In addition, the City Council considers that the proposed building would be clearly visible in views across the Valley, particularly from parts of Stuppington Lane, where the sports hall and tennis dome can easily be identified. The City Council states that at 5 storeys, the building would be clearly visible from the mainline railway below, and from Brookside Caravan Park and beyond. Concern is also expressed that lighting would exacerbate the impact of the development at night. First, it is important to note that the proposed residential accommodation would be 4 storeys in the most part, with a small fifth storey which would be below the existing ground level. The applicants state that because of the tree line at the perimeter of the site, the accommodation would be virtually invisible from outside of the site, and that the height of the Student Residential Accommodation would not be higher than the ridge line of the sports hall. The existing sports hall is of poor quality design and the proposed residential accommodation has the potential to screen this building and improve the view of the campus from outside of the site, including from the localities that the City Council is concerned about. The important existing poplars on the boundary would be retained, and the large trees on the campus boundary would continue to feature predominately in the landscape.
39. Policy C24 of the Canterbury City Local Plan states that proposals which would result in a loss of protected open space would only be permitted if certain criteria were met. First, I do not consider that the proposal would harm the contribution that this small area of protected open space makes to the visual or recreational amenity of the area. In fact, the proposal has the potential to improve the visual amenity of the area by providing a high quality design which would, in part, screen the sports hall. The applicant has demonstrated a need for the development, and has considered alternative sites within

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the campus, all of which were unacceptable. Lastly, I do not consider that the loss of this area of open space would impact upon the City Council's overall strategy for open space. I do not, therefore, consider that the proposed Student Residential Accommodation would be contrary to Policy C24 of the Canterbury District Local Plan.

40. On balance, I consider the massing and siting of the proposed development to be acceptable. The various elements of the proposal would not give rise to any significant harm and are in accordance with the general thrust of Development Plan Policies with regards to siting, massing, local landscape importance and loss of protected open space.

#### **Highway implications**

41. This application was accompanied by a Transport Assessment and a Travel Plan, and revised Travel Plans for Canterbury High School and Beauherne Primary School have been submitted throughout the determination process. The existing hospital unit would be relocated elsewhere within the City. There is no specific parking proposed for the Vocational Training Centre, which would not generate additional staff or pupils, or the Student Residential Accommodation, which the applicant claims would not require parking facilities. 36 parking bays would be provided for the Primary School and Children's Centre. Kent Highway Services has raised no objection to this application subject to the submission of updated Travel Plans with the detailed planning applications. Therefore, subject to conditions, I cannot see any reason to refuse this application on the grounds of highway implications.

#### **Environmental Implications – including designations**

42. As outlined in paragraph 1 of this report, the campus is located in close proximity to a Local Nature Reserve and a Site of Nature Conservation Interest. In light of that, the applicant submitted Extended Phase 1 Habitat Surveys, which identified the need for further detailed survey work to be undertaken. To date, a Reptile Survey and Bat Survey have been submitted. However, due to the specific seasons within which certain protected species surveys have to be undertaken, Great Crested Newt and Invertebrate Surveys are still awaited. In addition, a survey of a suitable receptor site for Reptiles needs to be submitted, along with details of mitigation and enhancement measures. A number of conditions and informatives with regards to bats, further protected species, biodiversity enhancement and landscaping are also requested by the County Council's Biodiversity Officer and Natural England.
42. Both Natural England and the County Council's Biodiversity Officer raise objection to this application on the basis that the conditioning of protected species surveys is not acceptable. In most instances I would agree with this, as the granting of planning permission without establishing the presence or otherwise of protected species means that not all material considerations have been taken into consideration in the determination process. However, in this instance, by determining outline planning permission the applicant does not have permission to start any works on site without further planning consent(s). Only the principal of the development would be approved in terms of siting and access and detailed applications would need to be submitted and approved before any works could commence on site. Therefore, ecological interests would not be adversely affected by a determination at this particular stage in my view.

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43. Under the circumstances I consider that, providing all relevant and required ecological surveys were undertaken and submitted prior to the submission of the reserved matters applications, then biodiversity interests would not be compromised. At this time, depending on the outcome of the surveys, mitigation, enhancement and management strategies may well be required. It is important to note however, that were this application not an outline proposal, then this matter might well need to be considered differently so that species surveys are not deferred as post decision conditional requirements.
44. I cannot see any reason why the proposed development should be refused on the grounds of environmental concerns. Subject to the imposition of conditions to ensure that the outstanding protected species surveys, and subsequent mitigation and enhancements, are submitted and approved prior to the granting of permission for the reserved matters applications, I do not consider that the proposed development would have a detrimental effect on the local environment or biodiversity interests.

**Conclusion**

45. In summary, I consider that this proposal would not have a significantly detrimental effect on the amenity of local residents, protected open space or ecological interests. Should Members be minded to permit, subject to the conditions outlined below, no development on site could commence until reserved matters applications were submitted and approved due to the outline nature of this application. In my view, the principle of the development 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 outline planning permission, including those outlined below.

**Recommendation**

28. I RECOMMEND that OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION BE GRANTED SUBJECT TO conditions covering:
- the standard time limit for outline permissions;
  - the submission of details relating to the reserved matters of design and external appearance of the proposed building, and landscaping and boundary treatment of the site;
  - hours of working during construction and demolition;
  - detailed ecological surveys assessing the potential of the site to house protected species, namely Great Crested Newts and Invertebrates;
  - the submission of mitigation and enhancement measures for Reptiles, including a survey of the receptor site;
  - submission of ecological enhancement measures for the whole site;
  - tree protection and clearance of the site outside of bird breeding seasons;
  - submission of updated Travel Plans;
  - implementation of a programme of archaeological work;
  - submission and approval of details of foul sewerage and surface water disposal;
  - no occupation of the development until southern water are satisfied that the necessary infrastructure is in place;
  - submission of a desktop study regarding land contamination;
  - submission of a scheme for the disposal of foul and surface waters;

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Case officer – Mary Green

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Background documents - See section heading.