

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

New building to accommodate 8 classrooms, new playground and additional car park at Singlewell Primary School, Gravesend – GR/15/893 (KCC/GR/0287/2015)

A report by Head of Planning Applications Group to Planning Applications Committee on 18 November 2015.

Proposed erection of a new building to accommodate 8 classrooms, a new studio hall, staff room, ICT suite, group room, plant room and associated storage and WC facilities, a new hard play area with access ramps and steps and a new car park at Singlewell Primary School, Mackenzie Way, Gravesend – GR/15/893 (KCC/GR/0287/2015)

Recommendation: planning permission be GRANTED subject to CONDITIONS.

Local Members: Mr Colin Caller & Mrs Jane Cribbon **Classification:** Unrestricted

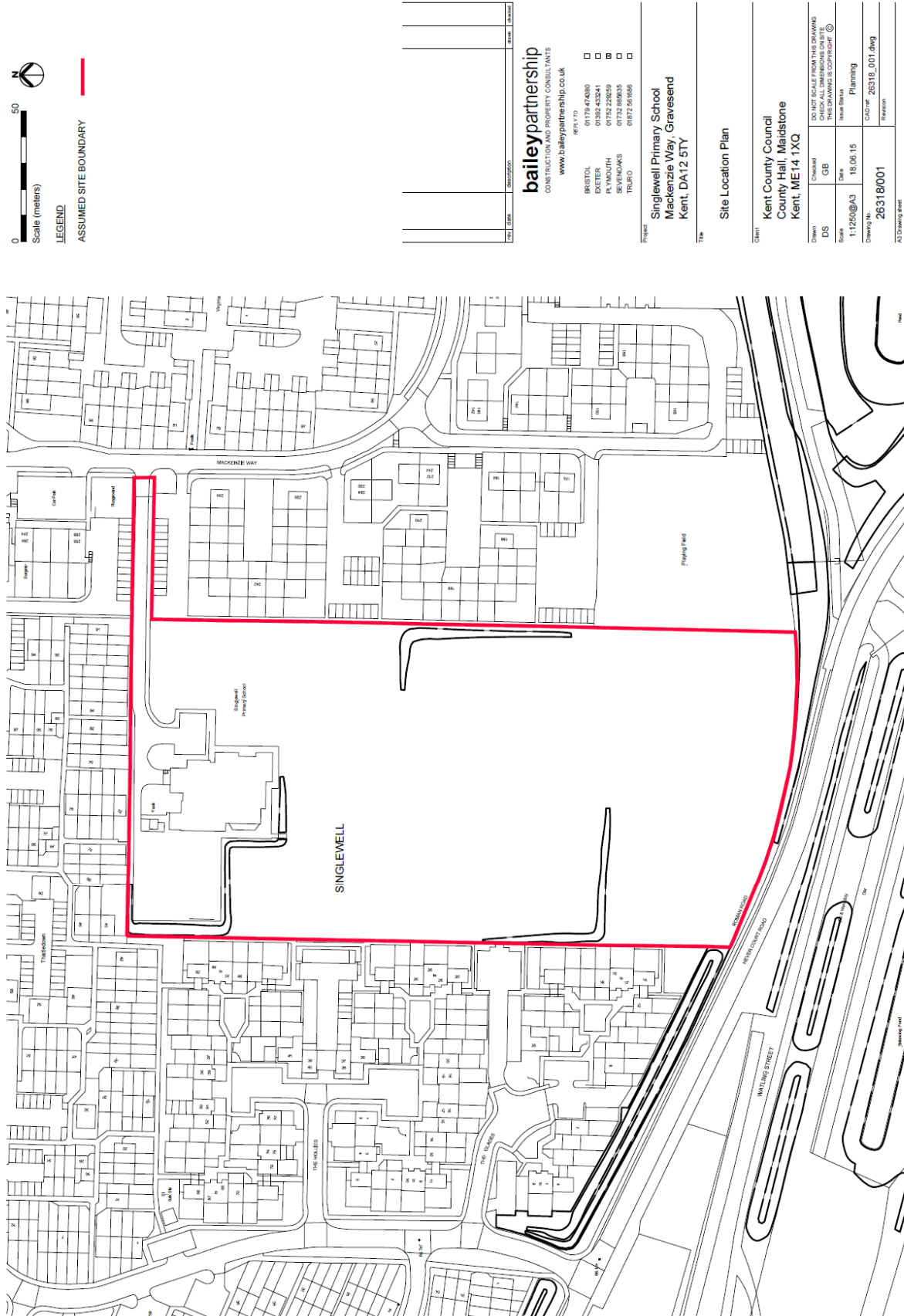
Site

1. Singlewell Primary School is located on the southern periphery of the town of Gravesend. The Singlewell area is bound by the A2 to the south, Singlewell Road to the west and Valley Drive to the East, with the Primary School located in the south eastern corner of this area of Gravesend. The Primary School is 1 form of entry (FE) at present, with built accommodation located to the north of the 3.05 hectare (7.5 acre) site. The school site is bounded to the north, east and west by residential properties backing onto the site, many of which do not have direct vehicular access. The properties to the northern boundary are accessed via Misken Way and Ifield Way, those to the east via MacKenzie Way, and those to the west via Misken Way, The Glades, The Hollies and Cobsdene. Marling Cross Library and a small parade of shops lie to the north east of the school site, on the junction of Ifield Way and MacKenzie Way. To the south of the site lies Hever Court Road, with the eastern tapered end of the wider Cyclo/A2 Activity Park beyond, before reaching the A2 itself.
2. The school site is accessed from MacKenzie Way, via a drive way located between a children's play area, local shops and residential garages to the north, and residential parking and garages to the south. The access is located to the north eastern corner of the site, and leads to a small car parking area with 10 marked bays, with further unmarked car parking located along the access road. A pedestrian only access is also located to the north west of the site. The existing school building is located to the centre of the northern section of the site, with a hard play area to the west. The remaining two thirds of the site are playing field/open space, with the site boundaries well screened by mature hedging and tree planting.
3. This application proposes development to the north west of the school site, between the existing school building and the site boundary to the west. Further associated development is proposed to the south of the access road adjacent to the sites eastern boundary.

A site location plan is attached.

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Site Location Plan



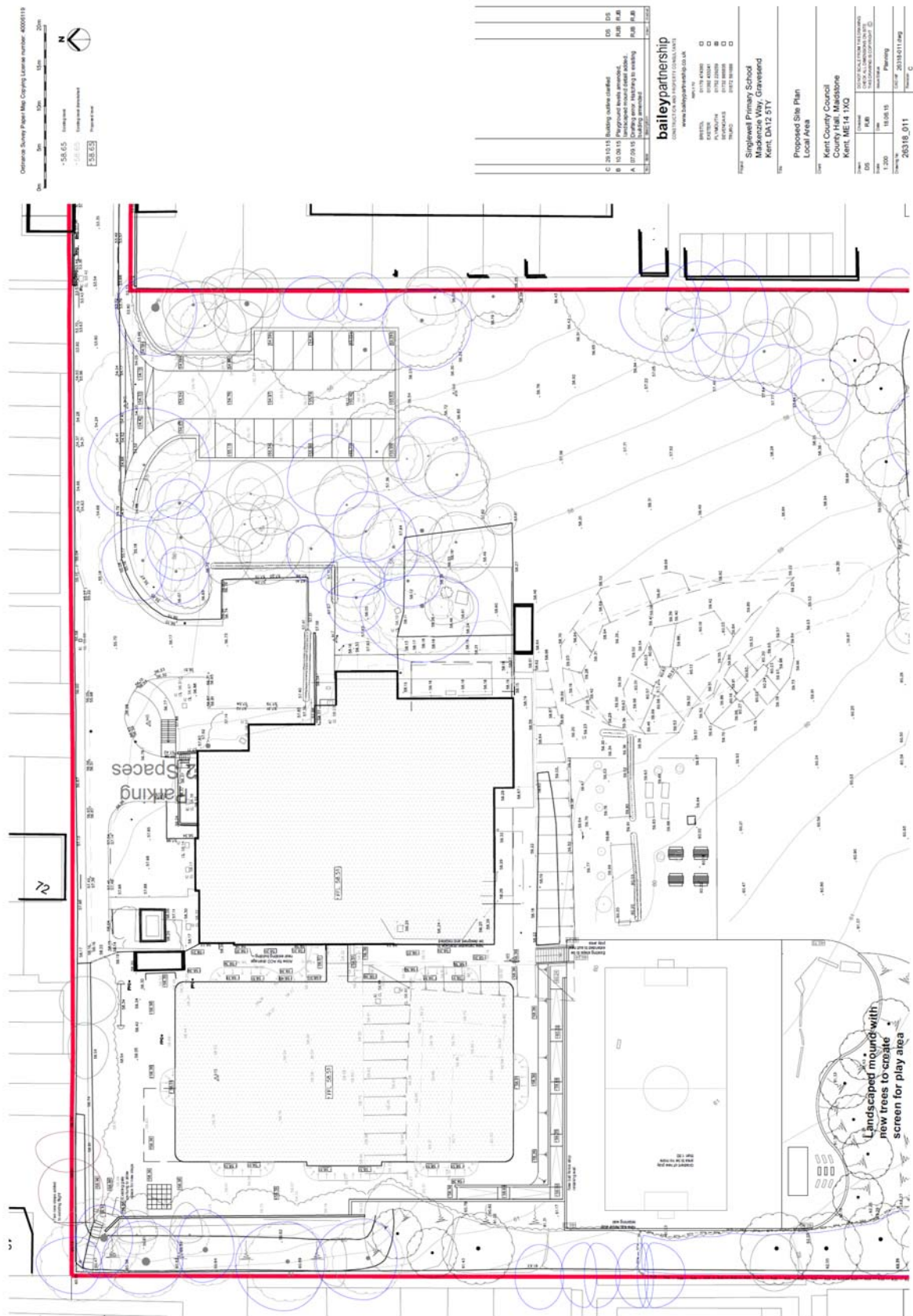
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Existing Site Plan



Item D1

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Background/Relevant Planning History

4. This application proposes to provide the accommodation required to cater for an expansion of Singlewell Primary School from 1FE to 2FE. The applicant advises that due to changing demographics in the area, with an increasing birth rate and immigration, there is an increase in demand for primary school capacity. The Kent Commissioning Plan 2014-2019 forecasts that the increased demand for primary school places shows no signs of reducing over the forecast period. Singlewell Primary School has been assessed under current guidance as having sufficient external site area to accommodate an additional form of entry. The area analysis of the site also indicated that the existing school lacks some basic teaching space. The applicant advises that that lack of teaching space would be addressed concurrently within the new build proposals.
5. Apart from a small single storey extension to create a new entrance and reception area in 2003 (GR/03/713), there have been no planning applications at the site in recent years.

Proposal

6. This application has been submitted by Kent County Council Property and Infrastructure Support and is part of the County wide Basic Needs Programme. The application proposes the erection of a new single storey building to accommodate 8 classrooms, a studio hall, staff room, ICT suite, group room, plant room and associated storage and WC facilities. The existing school building is also proposed to be extended slightly which, in conjunction with internal remodelling, would bring the existing classrooms in line with current size guidelines. A new hard play area is proposed to the south of the proposed classroom block, to provide a replacement facility for that lost due to the siting of the new building. A new car parking area is also proposed which would accommodate an additional 16 parking spaces. The school is currently 1FE and has 210 pupils and 32 full time equivalent (FTE) staff. The school is proposed to expand to 2FE in September 2016, incrementally increasing pupil numbers by 30 per year until reaching full capacity (420 pupils and 64 staff) by 2022.
7. The proposed 8 classroom flat roofed single storey building would be rectangular in shape, measuring approximately 40 metres (131ft) in length, and 21 metres (69ft) in width. The new building is proposed to the west of the existing school building, upon the existing playground, and would be linked to the existing school via a glazed covered walkway. The building entrance area, staff spaces and the studio hall occupy the centre of the building, with circulation areas extending to the north and south. The classrooms are proposed to the outer edges of the building, four to the north and four to the south of the central core area. Externally, the studio hall would protrude slightly from the east elevation to provide interest and relief, and each of the four corners of the building would be rounded to soften its appearance and provide unique visual detail.
8. The applicant advises that the external appearance of the proposed new build has been developed to match and complement that of the existing building. The existing school building features red stock brick, and to contrast with this the applicant is proposing to construct the new building using a brown brick. The studio hall would be clad in vertically oriented timber, and would be slightly taller than the rest of the building. Windows and doors would be powder coated dark grey, with full height coloured spacer panels. The applicant advises that the curved brick corners and protruding bricks above the main glazing areas (dentil coursing), in addition to the materials palette, would give

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the appearance of a modern, contemporary building. Rooflights would provide additional natural light and ventilation to the internal spaces, and the building has been designed to meet the principles of a BREEAM rating of very good.

9. The existing building is proposed to be extended which, in conjunction with internal remodelling, would bring the existing classrooms in line with current size guidelines. The stepped south western corner of the building is proposed to be 'squared off', and a small recess adjacent to the existing entrance on the eastern elevation would be infilled. The extensions would be constructed using materials which match the existing.
10. To compensate for the loss of the existing playground due to the siting of the new building, a replacement hard court/playground is proposed. The new facility would be located to the south of the existing, on an area of amenity grass which currently houses an adventure play area/equipment and a small number of trees. That play equipment would be relocated to the south of the new playground, beyond which a landscaped mound is proposed with tree planting. The applicant is proposing to plant 3 replacement trees for every tree removed. The new play area would be enclosed by ball stop fencing which, due to level changes across the site, would be located on top of a retaining wall in places.
11. As outlined in paragraph 2 above, the school site is accessed from MacKenzie Way, with the access point located in the north eastern corner of the school site. The access leads to a small car parking area with 10 marked bays. The applicant states that approximately 24 cars park on the site at the moment, with 14 parked in non-marked bays, including parallel parking along the access road (the submitted Transport Assessment suggests that the site could currently accommodate up to 30 vehicles). The applicant is proposing to provide 16 additional parking spaces, 2 of which would be fully accessible for disabled users. The proposed tarmac car parking area would be located to the east of the school's existing formal car parking, adjacent to the site's eastern boundary. A small number of trees would require removal to accommodate the proposed car park, but those along the site boundary would be retained. An additional 10 space cycle shelter is also proposed within the new car parking area.

The application is supported by a Planning Statement, Design and Access Statement, Transport Assessment, Desk Based Heritage Assessment, Flood Risk Assessment, Phase 1 Contaminated Land Desk Study, Unexploded Ordnance RA, Plant Noise document, Phase 1 Habitat Survey, and Tree Survey and Plans.

Planning Policies

12. **National Planning Policies** – The most relevant National Planning Policies are set out in the **National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)**, and the **National Planning Policy Guidance (March 2014)**, which set out the Government's planning policy guidance for England at the heart of which is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The guidance is a material consideration for the determination of planning applications but does not change the statutory status of the development plan which remains the starting point for decision making. However the weight given to development plan policies will depend on their consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the development plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

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

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

- achieving the requirement for high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;
- minimising impacts on biodiversity, and protecting and enhancing valued landscapes;
- promoting sustainable transport.

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

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

Development Plan Policies

(i) Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)

Policy CS01 Sustainable Development - States that a positive approach will be taken which reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework and in the Core Strategy.

Policy CS10 Physical and Social Infrastructure – States that support will be given to proposals that protect, retain or enhance existing physical and social infrastructure, including schools.

Policy CS11 Transport – States that new development should mitigate their impact on the highway and public transport networks as required. As appropriate, transport assessments and travel plans should be provided and implemented to ensure the delivery of travel choice and sustainable opportunities for travel.

Policy CS12 Green Infrastructure – Amongst other things seeks to protect, conserve and enhance biodiversity, habitats and species.

Policy CS19 Development and Design Principles – Sets out criteria for new development, that includes (amongst other things) the need to avoid causing harm to the amenity of neighbouring occupants, including loss of privacy, daylight and sunlight, and avoid adverse

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environmental impacts in terms of noise, air, light and groundwater pollution and land contamination. New development should be visually attractive and locally distinctive, and must conserve and enhance the character of the local built, historic and natural environment.

Consultations

13. **Gravesham Borough Council** raises no objection to the application, and recommends that the following matters be covered by condition(s):
- submission of a School Travel Plan;
 - submission of a Construction Management Plan; and
 - submission of hard and soft landscaping details

Kent County Council Highways and Transportation raise no objection to the application, subject to conditions covering the following matters:

- 1 An updated/revised Travel Plan should be submitted to and approved prior to occupation of the proposed facilities.
- 2 Provision of construction vehicle loading/unloading and turning facilities prior to commencement of work on site and for the duration of construction.
- 3 Provision of parking facilities for site personnel and visitors prior to commencement of work on site and for the duration of construction.
- 4 Construction vehicle deliveries shall not occur between 8:30am and 9:30am or between 2:30pm and 4:00pm during school working days.
- 5 A Construction Management Programme shall be submitted to and approved prior to the commencement of any construction work on the site.
- 6 Provision and permanent retention of the cycle parking facilities shown on the submitted plans prior to the use of the development commencing.
- 7 Provision and permanent retention of the vehicle loading/unloading and turning facilities shown on the submitted plans prior to the use of the development commencing.

Sport England raises no objection to the application. Sport England considers that the proposed building and car parking would be located upon areas incapable of accommodating a playing pitch or part thereof. The proposed hard play area would be sited upon an area of existing playing field but, as that aspect of the proposal is for the provision of outdoor sports/play facilities, the provision of which would be of benefit to the development sport, the proposals meet Sport England Policy exception tests.

Environment Agency raises no objection to the proposal subject to the imposition of a condition of consent regarding land contamination.

The County Council's Biodiversity Officer raises no objection to the application and is satisfied that sufficient ecological information has been submitted. However, a condition of consent is required to ensure that there is no tree removal during the bird breeding season, unless supervised by a suitably qualified ecologist.

The County Archaeologist raises no objection subject to a condition being placed on any grant of planning permission requiring the securing of the implementation of archaeological field evaluation works and any subsequent safeguarding measures, to be undertaken in accordance with a written specification and timetable which should be submitted for prior approval.

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The County Council's Landscape Advisor raises no objection to the application, and has no concerns regarding the potential landscape and visual impact of the proposals. However, conditions of consent should be imposed requiring the submission of a Tree Protection Plan to ensure that existing trees and hedges could be adequately protected, and the submission of a detailed scheme of landscaping/replacement tree planting which should consider both local landscape character and learning outcomes (the use of landscaping for well-being and educational purposes).

The County Council's School Travel Plan Advisor considers that an amended/updated School Travel Plan should be submitted as the current Travel Plan is not up-to-date. It is advised that the School register with the County Council's new *Jambusters* system, and prepare the Travel Plan using that purpose built data base.

Local Member

14. The local County Members, Mr Colin Caller and Mrs Jane Cribbon, were notified of the application on the 27 August 2015.

Publicity

15. The application was publicised by the posting of 3 site notices and the individual notification of 92 neighbouring properties.

Representations

16. To date, I have received a total of 5 individual letters of representation, 2 of which have been submitted by one resident on behalf of two of his neighbours.

A summary of the main issues raised/points made to date are set out below:

Access and car parking

- Expansion of the school would create further issues with parking and traffic in local roads, which are in a poor state of repair and cannot accommodate additional traffic;
- The proposed parking is for staff only. It will not address the issue of parents parking in local roads and on street parking should not be assumed by the School;
- Parents park irresponsibly and dangerously, blocking drives and garages;
- The attitude of some parents towards local residents is poor;
- The school access is narrow, and footpaths are not safe. Access for 420 pupils would be dangerous;
- A new access should be provided to the school via Hever Court Road onto the school field. There is ample room for a car park for parents with a footpath to the school buildings;
- The parking figures provided are inaccurate. There are only 8 spaces on site, not 30. 1 space should be provided for each member of staff (64) plus 10%. 70 spaces are therefore required, not 46;
- The School shuts its gates during the day so staff, visitors and parents cannot access the site;
- The only parking locally available is in front of the shops, but this is for users of the shops, not the school;
- Parking bays have been identified as available for use by parents within the submitted reports. Parking spaces are intended for local residents as some local roads have parking restrictions in place;

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- The School does not have a Travel Plan;
- How will construction traffic be managed and routed? Will local roads be blocked?

Amenity Aspects

- Construction of the proposed development would create a considerable amount of noise and traffic;
- There are a large number of overhanging trees on the school site which need to be managed and reduced in height/size. Residents have been told previously that these trees need to be retained, and the School have refused to maintain them. Other trees on the site, that are not a problem for residents, are now being removed to make way for this development;
- The application refers to additional boundary planting. The School cannot manage the existing boundary planting, additional planting may cause further concern;

Other matters

- Local residents should have been consulted earlier and given chance to comment before the application was submitted;
- The School has a very poor record of interacting with the local community;
- Some of the submitted reports are misleading and statistics are incorrectly used.

Discussion

17. In considering this proposal regard must be had to the Development Plan Policies outlined in paragraph 12 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, including the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and other material planning considerations arising from consultation and publicity. Issues of particular relevance include need, design and layout considerations, parking and access, landscaping and ecology, and residential amenities.

Need

18. The expansion of the school is part of the targeted Basic Needs programme to provide new school places across Kent, and the whole country, to cater for the demand created by the previously underestimated national demographic changes. In West Kent this demand is increased by the in-migration of pupils either moving out of London or opting to send children to schools in Kent rather than neighbouring London Boroughs. The National Planning Policy Framework, together with the Planning for Schools Development Policy Statement, strongly promote the provision of new or expanded schools and exhort local planning authorities to work with developers to overcome obstacles in the securing of planning consents. I therefore see no objection in principle to the proposed development, which is strongly supported by the general thrust of planning policy.

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Design and Siting

19. Development Plan policies promote high quality design, sustainable development, and significant improvements to the built environment. Although no objections to the design and general principle of the proposed development have been received, it is important to discuss these matters to ensure that the proposal is in accordance with the general design principles expressed in Development Plan policies. The proposed single storey new building would be linked to the main school building via a glazed covered walkway, and separated from the site boundaries by existing amenity space and boundary planting. I consider that the proposed location of the teaching block would not be particularly prominent from surrounding residential properties and the scale and massing as proposed is, in my opinion, appropriate and acceptable, complementing the existing school building. The location of the teaching block also links well with the existing building and facilities on site.
20. The new building has been designed to respect the features of the existing school buildings whilst providing a modern design solution. The existing school building features red stock brick, and to contrast with this the applicant is proposing to construct the new building using a brown brick. The studio hall would be clad in vertically oriented timber, and would be slightly taller than the rest of the building. Windows and doors would be powder coated dark grey, with full height coloured spacer panels. The curved brick corners and protruding bricks above the main glazing areas add interest to the building and, in addition to the materials palette, would give the appearance of a modern, contemporary building. In my view, the new building would complement the existing school building, enhancing existing facilities on site and visually lifting the design of the school in general. Subject to the imposition of a condition requiring the submission and approval of all materials to be used externally, I consider the design of the building to be acceptable and in accordance with Development Plan policies.
21. In addition to the proposed new building, a new car parking area and a replacement area of hard play/sports court are proposed. I consider the siting of both of these elements of the proposal to be logical and, given the level of boundary planting and degree of separation from neighbouring properties, further consider the location to be acceptable in amenity terms. It should also be noted that Sport England have no objection to the development, specifically the location of the replacement hard play area/sport court which would be sited on an area considered by Sport England to be playing field, as the proposed use complies with the necessary Sport England exception tests.

Parking and Access

22. Local residents have expressed concern regarding this application on the grounds that the increase in staff and pupils would exacerbate existing highway and access problems. As outlined in paragraph 16 of this report, local residents are concerned that local roads cannot accommodate additional traffic, and are frustrated by parents parking inconsiderately in local roads. This application was accompanied by a Transport Assessment, and the highway and access implications of the application have been considered and addressed in detail by Kent County Council Highways and Transportation, who raises no objection to the development subject to the imposition of conditions. However, the points raised by the local community need to be considered and discussed.

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23. First, it is considered by local residents that the parking figures provided are inaccurate, that additional on-site car parking should be provided and that on-street car parking should not be assumed by the School. In addition, local parking spaces, including those at the shopping parade, should not be considered as available for use by parents as these are for local residents/users of the shops only. As outlined in paragraph 11 of this report, there are 10 marked parking bays on site at the moment, and approximately 24 cars in total park on site, with 14 in unmarked bays. The submitted Transport Assessment states that the site could accommodate up to 30 cars. An additional car park is proposed as part of this proposal, which would accommodate 16 parking spaces, including 2 accessible spaces. This would bring the total maximum site car parking capacity up to 46.
24. Although it is recognised that parents of pupils do park on the local highway, which can be a nuisance for local residents, Kent County Council Highways and Transportation are of the opinion that this proposal would not significantly increase on-street car parking over and above the existing due to sibling numbers and future School Travel Plan initiatives (to be discussed below). Unfortunately, parents parking in local roads is an issue associated with all schools and, although considered by some local residents to be dangerous and a nuisance, in this instance Kent County Council Highways and Transportation do not consider it to be a highway safety concern. It needs to be borne in mind that the local roads are part of the public highway network and, as such, are there for the use of the public as a whole, and are not for the sole use of local residents, however irritating that might seem. In addition, the applicant has confirmed that the Transport Assessment only refers to off-site parking spaces which are deemed to be safe, legal and unrestricted (not clearly signed or allocated to specific dwellings).
25. A local resident suggests that 70 onsite car parking spaces should be provided (1 space per member of staff plus 10%), in accordance with parking standards. However, the site would not reach maximum capacity (64 staff) until 2022, and parking standards are a maximum entitlement and not a minimum requirement. Highways and Transportation are satisfied that sufficient onsite car parking is proposed, and subsequently raise no objection to the application subject to conditions. I therefore consider that the provision of a total 46 parking bays (marked and non-marked) is acceptable. However, should Members be minded to permit, I would wish to impose conditions regarding the provision and permanent retention of the car parking, covered cycle parking and turning/loading/unloading areas as shown on the submitted plans prior to occupation/first use of the new classroom building.
26. The capacity and condition of local roads is also questioned by local residents, and it is pointed out that the School do not have an up-to-date Travel Plan. It is also suggested that a new access should be provided into the school site via Hever Court Road to the south. With regard to the latter, Members will be aware that the application must be considered in the form as it is submitted. However, an entrance from Hever Court Road has been investigated by the applicant. It was, however, deemed to be unviable due to a likely objection from Sport England regarding loss of green space and playing fields. Furthermore, associated costs of such a change would increase the project cost to an unachievable level within the current Basic Need Programme, which is to provide Primary School places. In the event that playing fields are encroached upon for non-sports purposes, improved land/facilities must be provided elsewhere in the scheme i.e. indoor sporting facilities. Again, these additional works would make the project unviable. The applicant further advises that the associated turning circles, correct visibility splays and pull-in points required for a new car park, as well as the proposal already using part of the playing field with a new playground, would result in a significant impact on the

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amount of playing field. Therefore it would be difficult to meet the specific requirements of Sport England exception tests to mitigate an additional car park development in order for Sport England to be satisfied. Moreover, Hever Court Road is remote from the school buildings and existing car parking, and to create an access here would encourage more car journeys to the school from those that might otherwise walk. In addition, there is no requirement for such a facility as Highways and Transportation are satisfied with the application as proposed. I therefore see no reason to pursue this matter further.

27. With regard to the capacity and condition of local roads, the submitted Transport Assessment illustrates that there is sufficient spare capacity on the roads adjoining the school to accommodate any increase in traffic associated with the expansion of the school. In addition, based on site visits and observations, the applicant has confirmed that there are no significant defects or a general problem with the quality of the roads and/or pavements around the school such as to presume against this development.
28. The applicant recognises that the implementation of a robust School Travel Plan is essential, and confirms that the School is currently in the process of preparing that. As required by Highways and Transportation and the County Council's School Travel Plan Advisor, should permission be granted an updated School Travel Plan would be required by condition, to be submitted prior to first use/occupation of the classroom building, and thereafter subject to ongoing monitoring and review. The applicant states that the School Travel Plan would predominantly focus on encouraging a shift away from car travel to sustainable 'active' travel modes in the future. To this end new secure and covered cycle parking is proposed to be provided as part of this development (secured by condition outlined in paragraph 25 above), and cycle training and road safety training could be organised and/or introduced to the curriculum to facilitate this travel choice.
29. With regard to the behaviour of a small number of parents, who may park irresponsibly, blocking drives and reducing visibility for other road users, and in some instances being rude to local residents, this is not a matter which the Planning Authority can control, since all drivers have to take responsibility for their own actions. However, the County Council's School Travel Planner and the School may be able to provide information to parents explaining the importance of safe parking and general highway safety. This is an important message that the School should relay to parents, in addition to the need to consider local residents when parking. The applicant has further confirmed that the school would identify areas which would be used for 'Park and Stride' purposes within the Travel Plan. The use of 'Park and Stride' locations would be actively encouraged and promoted through the Travel Plan and would aid in easing peak period pick-up/drop-off congestion by spreading out car trips over a wider area, rather than on the roads immediately adjoining the site.
30. In considering the above, and in light of the views of the Highway Authority, I consider that subject to the imposition of conditions regarding the submission of an updated Travel Plan and the provision and permanent retention of the car parking, covered cycle parking and turning areas as shown on the submitted plans, that the development would not have a significantly detrimental impact overall on the local highway network. I therefore see no justification to refuse this application on highway and parking grounds.

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Landscaping and Ecology

31. Local residents have expressed concern with regard to existing trees on site and a lack of maintenance leading to overhanging branches and amenity issues for those living adjacent to the site. Although not directly relevant to the determination of this application as that is a school management and maintenance matter, the applicant has advised that an arboriculturist has been engaged to provide recommendations regarding tree removal/pruning, and the County Council's Project Manager has been in direct contact with local residents in this regard. Although outside of the remit of this application and not a matter for the County Planning Authority to consider in this instance, I am satisfied that the matter is being directly addressed by the applicant.
32. The proposal necessitates the removal of some trees within the school site, which is regrettable but unavoidable given the extent of trees on the site and the lack of alternative space within the grounds which is not needed for other purposes. Nevertheless, I am satisfied that there would sufficient trees retained within the site to not unduly alter the existing landscape character. In addition, replacement trees are proposed to be planted as part of the proposals. As requested by the County Council's Landscape Advisor, should planning permission be granted conditions of consent should be imposed requiring the submission of a Tree Protection Plan to ensure that existing trees and hedges would be adequately protected, and the submission of a detailed scheme of landscaping/replacement tree planting which should consider both local landscape character and learning outcomes (the use of landscaping for well-being and educational purposes). In addition, a further condition of consent would ensure that there is no tree removal during the bird breeding season, unless supervised by a suitably qualified ecologist. Such conditions would also meet the requirements of Gravesham Borough Council, and would ensure that further boundary planting would not be provided where it could cause further nuisance to adjoining residents. Subject to the imposition of the conditions outlined above, I am of the view that the development would not have a detrimental impact on the local landscape, trees on site, or ecology/biodiversity.

Archaeology

33. The County Archaeologist has concluded that in order to secure the appropriate level of evaluation and mitigation of archaeological potential at the site, a condition of consent should be imposed. It is requested that no development takes place until the applicant has secured the implementation of archaeological field evaluation works and any subsequent safeguarding measures, to be undertaken in accordance with a written specification and timetable which should be submitted for prior approval. I consider that the suggested condition would be an appropriate requirement in ensuring an acceptable level of evaluation and mitigation of the archaeological potential of the site. Therefore, subject to the imposition of the required condition, I do not consider that this proposal would have a detrimental impact on archaeological remains.

Land contamination

34. The Environment Agency raises no objection to the proposal, however requests a condition be attached to any consent regarding how works should proceed should any contamination be found during construction. Therefore, should permission be granted, a condition would be imposed covering this matter. In addition, the Environment Agency's advice and guidance regarding surface water drainage should be covered by way of an informative. That would ensure that the development would not result in an

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unacceptable level of pollution, in accordance with the principles of Development Plan Policy.

Sustainability

35. As outlined in paragraph 8 of this report, the building has been designed to meet the principles of a BREEAM rating of 'very good'. In addition, the building design would meet, and exceed, the energy calculations required under Building Regulations Part L 2013. The design focuses on promoting natural daylighting, with large glazing units and north facing rooflights proposed to maximise internal illumination. Passive ventilation and passive heat exchange ventilation units would allow the building to exchange warm stale air for cool fresh air using just buoyancy and wind loading as required. South facing breeze soleil and north facing pitched rooflights would also provide shading and reduce summer over-heating. In addition, measures such as eco-flush toilets and aerating taps are proposed to minimise water resource use, and external materials have high sustainable credentials in terms of sourcing and performance.
36. Although roof mounted solar PVs are not proposed in this instance, the applicant has given sound reason for this. First, the proposals were designed from the ground up with efficiency and building sustainability in mind. As such, the applicants early building modelling indicated that external renewables were not necessary to augment the design, as the building would exceed energy emissions criteria by approximately 10% compared with the notional building criteria. The applicant further advises the total building height was purposely kept to a minimum so as not to impose on the views and amenity of the surrounding properties, and to remain visually subservient to the existing building. Due to the two storey height of local properties which surround the site, and the single storey height of the proposed building, the roof would be overlooked. PVs may therefore have also created a glare issue for nearby properties. Lastly, due to the raised nature of the surrounding site and playing field, roof mounted PV's in this instance could be subject to vandalism and theft, and/or accidental play time damage. It is also important to note that the absence of such technology does not mean that the proposed building would be of low energy efficiency and high grid energy use. In considering the sustainable design credentials of the proposed building, and given the reasoning provided for not providing solar PVs in this case, I am of the opinion that the building design is sustainable and that the provision of further renewable technologies is not necessary in this particular instance.

Residential Amenities and Construction Matters

37. Other than off-site traffic and parking issues, and the maintenance of trees, no issues of specific residential amenity have been raised by objectors, and I am satisfied that the proposed development is sufficiently distanced from neighbouring properties to avoid any adverse impacts. However, concern has been expressed regarding disruption and noise resulting from the construction of the development, in addition to the routing of construction traffic. Unfortunately, construction activities can be disruptive, and there is a potential for noise and other issues during the construction of the development. However, this is not a reason to refuse a development. Instead, controls should be applied to minimise the disruption and to protect as far as practicably possible the amenity of local residents. If planning permission is granted it would, in my view, be appropriate to impose a condition restricting hours of construction in order to protect residential amenity. I would suggest that works should be undertaken only between the hours of 0800 and 1800 Monday to Friday and between the hours of 0900 and 1300 on Saturdays, with no operations on Sundays and Bank Holidays. It is also normal on

New building to accommodate 8 classrooms, new playground and additional car park at Singlewell Primary School, Gravesend – GR/15/893 (KCC/GR/0287/2015)

school sites for contractors to be required under the terms of their contract to manage construction traffic/deliveries to minimise conflict with traffic and pedestrians at the beginning and end of the school day.

38. In accordance with the requirements of Highways and Transportation, and to address concerns raised by local residents regarding management and routing of construction traffic, I also consider it appropriate that details of a full Construction Management Strategy be submitted for approval prior to the commencement of development. That should include details of the methods and hours of working, location of site compounds and operative/visitors parking, details of site security and safety measures, lorry waiting and wheel washing facilities, details of how the site access would be managed to avoid peak school times, and details of any construction accesses. Therefore, should permission be granted, a Construction Management Strategy would be required pursuant to condition and the development would thereafter have to be undertaken in accordance with the approved strategy.
39. In addition to the above, should permission be granted, conditions of consent would ensure that dust, mud on the local highway network, and other matters associated with construction, would be mitigated as far as reasonably possible so as to minimise disruption to local residents.

Conclusion

40. In my view, the development would not give rise to any significant material harm and is in accordance with the general aims and objectives of the relevant Development Plan Policies. The development is in accordance with the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning Policy Statement for Schools (2011). Subject to the imposition of the conditions outlined throughout this report, I consider that the proposed development would not have a significantly detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the local area, the local highway network or the amenity of local residents, and would accord with the principles of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF. Therefore, I recommend that permission be granted subject to appropriate conditions

Recommendation

41. I RECOMMEND that PLANNING PERMISSION BE GRANTED SUBJECT TO conditions, including conditions covering:
- the standard time limit;
 - the development to be carried out in accordance with the permitted details;
 - the submission of details of all materials to be used externally;
 - a scheme of landscaping, including hard surfacing, its implementation and maintenance;
 - submission of a Tree Protection Plan;
 - no tree removal during the bird breeding season;
 - submission of an updated Travel Plan prior to occupation, and thereafter ongoing monitoring and review. Updated Travel Plan to include measures to promote safer and more considerate parking by parents associated with the school amongst other matters;
 - provision and retention of car parking, cycle parking & circulatory routes;
 - measures to address any land contamination;

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- the implementation of archaeological field evaluation works and any subsequent safeguarding measures;
- hours of working during construction and demolition to be restricted to between 0800 and 1800 Monday to Friday and between the hours of 0900 and 1300 on Saturdays, with no operations on Sundays and Bank Holidays;
- construction management strategy, including access, lorry routing, parking and circulation within the site for contractor's and other vehicles related to construction and demolition operations;
- measures to prevent mud and debris being taken onto the public highway.

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

- With regard to the requirement to prepare and submit a (revised/amended) School Travel Plan, the applicant is advised to register with Kent County Council's Travel Plan Management system 'Jambusters' using the following link <http://www.jambusterstpms.co.uk>. Jambusters is a County Wide initiative aiding Schools in the preparation and ongoing monitoring of School Travel Plans.
- The applicant's attention is drawn to the letter from Highways and Transportation in which it is noted that it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all necessary highway approvals and consents where required are obtained.
- The applicant's attention is drawn to the letter from the Environment Agency in which advice and guidance is provided with regard to surface water drainage.

Case officer – Mary Green	03000 413379
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Background documents - See section heading
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