

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**

Proposed new building to accommodate six classrooms, a new playground, and additional car parking at Birchington Primary School – TH/15/845 (KCC/TH/0271/2015)

A report by Head of Planning Applications Group to Planning Applications Committee on 9 December 2015.

Proposed construction of a new two storey building on the school site to accommodate 6 new classrooms, studio hall, staff office and associated WC's and storage. A new playground is proposed on unused land within the site. Additional car parking is also proposed to accommodate staff and visitors and a new pupil drop-off area is to be provided, accessed via a new vehicular entrance from Park Lane at Birchington Primary School, Park Lane, Birchington - TH/15/845 (KCC/TH/0271/2015)

Recommendation: planning permission be GRANTED subject to CONDITIONS.

**Local Members:** Mr Roger Latchford

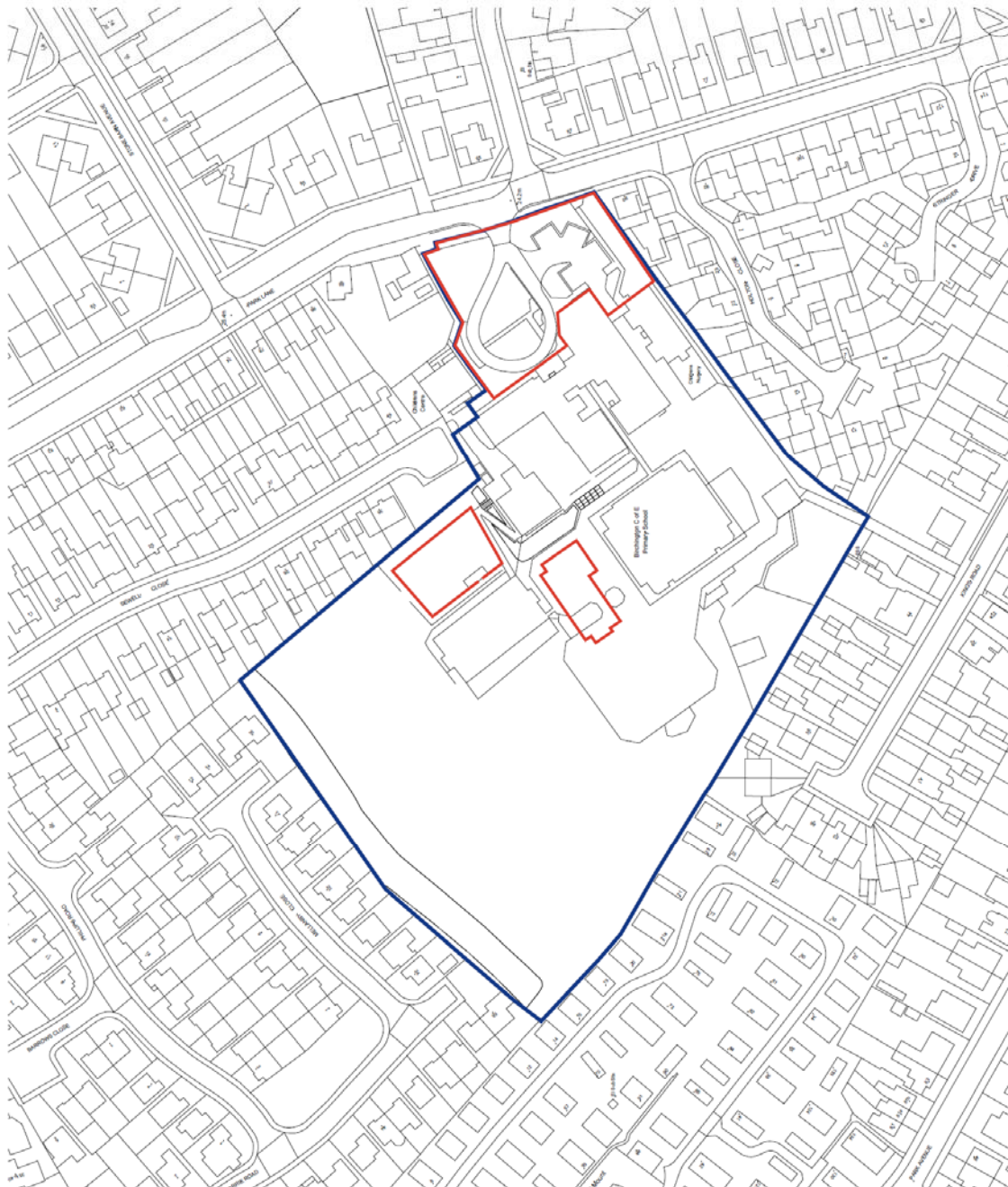
**Classification:** Unrestricted

**Site Description**

1. Birchington Primary School is a two form of entry (FE) school located to the north west of the Isle of Thanet, within the coastal village of Birchington-on-Sea. The primary school is located to the south of the urban area of Birchington-on-Sea, accessed via Park Lane (which leads to Quex Park). The A28 Canterbury Road/Park Lane junction and Birchington Square are located approximately 400 metres to the north of the school access. The school site is surrounded by a mix of single and two storey residential properties, with properties backing onto the site in Mellanby Close to the north, Holton Close to the south and Sewell Close and facing properties in Park Lane to the east. The northern half of the western boundary of the school site adjoins the Court Mount Park Home Estate, a chalet/mobile home development, with properties in Kings Road backing onto the site along the southern half of the western boundary. The main school entrance, and the only vehicular entrance to the site, is located on the eastern boundary (Park Lane). A pedestrian access to the site is located at the southern end of Sewell Close, and a further pedestrian and maintenance access is located in Kings Road to the west. A Sure Start Children's Centre is located to the southern end of Sewell Close to the north of the school boundary, which has pedestrian access from both Sewell Close and Park Lane.
2. The 2.9 hectare (7.16 acre) school site is essentially split in half, with playing fields, external hard play areas and a floodlit games area to the north, and the school buildings, further hard play, access and car parking to the south. Existing buildings on site vary in height and have both pitched and flat roofs, with brick finishes and white UPVC windows being the prominent material finish. Levels fall across the site from east to west, with buildings to the east therefore sitting at a higher level than those to the west. There are currently 39 car parking spaces on site, located to the east of the school building on the site frontage. *A site location plan is attached.*

Proposed new building to accommodate six classrooms, a new playground, and additional car parking at Birchington Primary School – TH/15/845 (KCC/TH/0271/2015)

Site Location Plan



Scale	1:1000
North	000°
East	090°
South	180°
West	270°

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BRISTOL 01179 474380  
EXETER 01392 432341  
PLYMOUTH 01752 228259  
SEVENOAKS 01752 869536  
TORQUO 01852 261688

Project  
Birchington CE Primary School  
Park Lane, Birchington-on-Sea  
Kent, CT7 9AS

Title  
Site Location Plan

Client  
Kent County Council  
County Hall, Maidstone  
Kent, ME14 1XQ

Drawn	Checked	DO NOT SCALE FROM THE DRAWINGS CHECK ALL DIMENSIONS ON SITE THIS DRAWING IS COPYRIGHT ©
CMH	FJB	
Date	Issue Date	
11.12.00@AS	09.06.15	Planning
Drawing No.	CU of	26317_S001.dwg
26317/01	Revision	

Proposed new building to accommodate six classrooms, a new playground, and additional car parking at Birchington Primary School – TH/15/845 (KCC/TH/0271/2015)

Proposed Site Plan



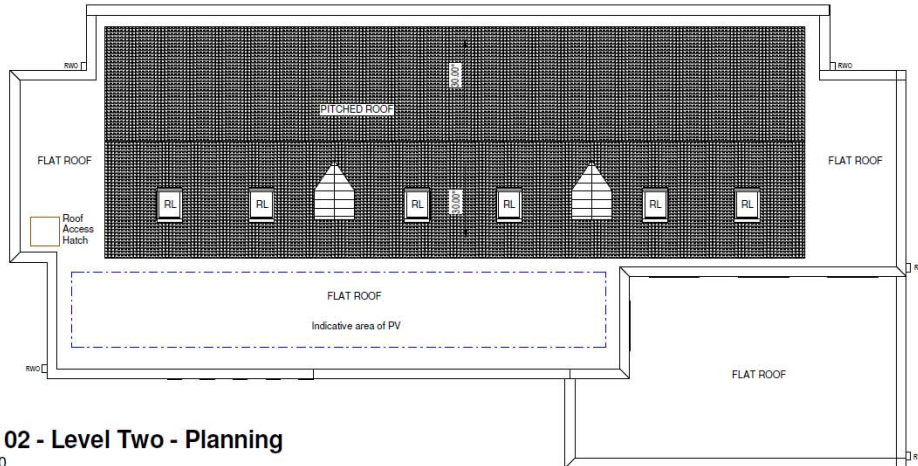
Proposed new building to accommodate six classrooms, a new playground, and additional car parking at Birchington Primary School – TH/15/845 (KCC/TH/0271/2015)

Proposed Works



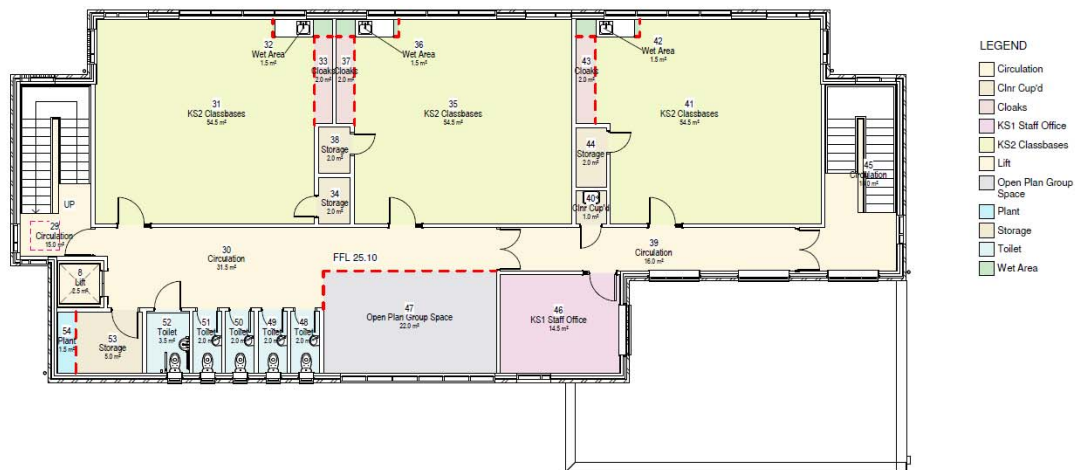
Proposed new building to accommodate six classrooms, a new playground, and additional car parking at Birchington Primary School – TH/15/845 (KCC/TH/0271/2015)

Floor Plans



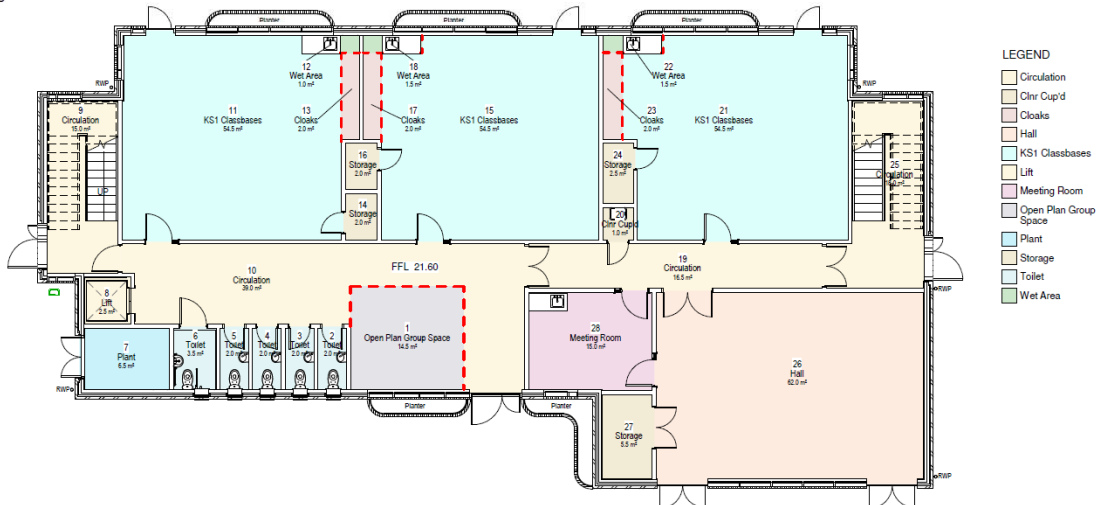
PL . 02 - Level Two - Planning

1 : 100



PL . 01 - Level One - Planning

1 : 100



PL . 00 - Ground Level - Planning

1 : 100

Proposed new building to accommodate six classrooms, a new playground, and additional car parking at Birchington Primary School – TH/15/845 (KCC/TH/0271/2015)

Proposed Elevations

**Notes**

1. This drawing is a proposed elevation and is not a construction drawing. It is intended to provide a visual representation of the proposed building design.
2. The proposed building design is based on the information provided in the planning application and is subject to the approval of the local planning authority.
3. The proposed building design is based on the information provided in the planning application and is subject to the approval of the local planning authority.
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10. The proposed building design is based on the information provided in the planning application and is subject to the approval of the local planning authority.

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**North Elevation - Planning**  
1 : 100

**East Elevation - Planning**  
1 : 100

**West Elevation - Planning**  
1 : 100

**South Elevation - Planning**  
1 : 100

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Kent, ME14 1XQ

Birchington CE Primary School, Park Lane,  
Birchington-on-Sea, Kent, CT17 0AS

Proposed Elevations

Example - Planning	Developed Design
26317	As indicated
Author	Checker
Approver	Approver
17.06.15	17.06.15

26317-006-G-002

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### Relevant Planning History

3. The application site has a limited planning history, with the most recent planning decisions listed below:
  - TH/08/788 – Construction of new Multi Use Games Area with floodlighting;
  - TH/07/1438 – Construction of a single storey modular building for use as a community Children’s Centre;
  - TH/05/943 – Timber structure to be used to provide shelter and to be used as an outdoor classroom.

### Amendments

4. When originally submitted, this current application met with concern from Kent County Council Highways and Transportation on the grounds that the development would exacerbate existing capacity problems through Birchington Square and the A28 Canterbury Road/Park Lane junctions. Following meetings between the applicant and Highways and Transportation, the application was amended and resubmitted to include an additional vehicular access into the school from Park Lane and the provision of a pupil drop-off area. Additional mitigation was also included within the amended submission in response to neighbour concerns raised regarding the proposed hard play area. It is the amended proposal that will be discussed throughout this report.

### Proposal

5. 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 construction of a new two storey building to accommodate 6 new classrooms, a studio hall, staff office and associated WCs and storage. A new playground is proposed on unused land within the site to replace that lost as a result of the siting of the new building. Additional car parking is also proposed to accommodate staff and visitors, and a new pupil drop off area is to be provided, accessed via a new vehicular entrance from Park Lane. The school is currently 2FE and has 420 pupils and 59 full time equivalent (FTE) staff. The school is proposed to expand to 3FE in September 2016, incrementally increasing pupils number by 30 per year until reaching full capacity (630 pupils and 73 staff) by 2022.
6. The proposed 6 classroom two storey building would be rectangular in shape, measuring approximately 31 metres (101ft) in length, and 13 metres (42ft) in width. The new building is proposed to the north west of the existing school buildings, to the south of the floodlit Multi Use Games Area (MUGA), upon an area of the existing playground. The building would be oriented east west, with circulatory stair cases at each end of the building. The south side of the building on both floors would house the circulation and group spaces, and the studio hall which would project from the building line of the south elevation (by 3 metres) to provide interest and visual relief. The classrooms are proposed to the northern side of the building, with three classrooms on each floor.
7. The applicant advises that the external appearance of the proposed new build has been developed to match and complement that of the existing buildings. The existing buildings feature yellow stock brick, with some red brick detailing and so the proposed building would be of a yellow stock brick construction with a clay tile roof to also match the existing. A cross would be detailed within the brickwork on the southern elevation

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using projecting dentil courses. The building would also have an area of flat roof, to the southern side of the building over the circulation space and studio hall, and at each end of the building over the staircases. An area for the provision of an array of PV panels has been indicated on the flat roof to the southern side of the building. The applicant advises that the mixture of pitched and flat roofs reflect the existing roof language across the site, and would keep the mass of the building as compact as possible. The windows and doors are proposed to be dark grey aluminium units with top or side hung openers. The studio hall would benefit from large windows with horizontal fin brise soleil to provide solar shading during the summer months. Passive ventilation units have also been proposed atop the pitched roof to ventilate the classrooms below. These would be hidden within small dormer structures to reflect the dormers on other buildings within the school site. The building has been designed to meet the principles of a BREEAM rating of Very Good.

8. To compensate for the loss of part of the existing playground due to the siting of the new building, a replacement playground for Year 6 is proposed. The new facility would be located to the east of the existing floodlit Multi Use Games Area (MUGA), on an area of unused scrub which the School call 'The Paddock'. The new playground would occupy the space between the MUGA and the eastern boundary of the site which runs to the rear of properties in Sewell Close. The area is distinguished from the wider playing field by an existing hedge, which would be retained, with additional hedge planting also proposed to the east of the playground, between the fencing of the playground and the boundary of the school site. A 2 metre (6.5ft) high green weldmesh fence is proposed along the eastern, southern and in part western sides of the playground, with ball stop nylon netting above this to prevent stray balls leaving the site. In addition, part of the school boundary fence in this area of the site is proposed to be replaced with 1.8 metre high close boarded timber fencing, to match the existing.
9. As outlined in paragraph 1 above, the vehicular access into the site is on Park Lane, with further pedestrian access points located on Sewell Close and Kings Road. As part of this proposal the applicant, following discussion with Kent County Council Highways and Transportation, is proposing to provide an additional access into the site on the Park Lane frontage to create a formal 'IN' and 'OUT' system with an on-site drop off/pick up loop. The new access point, which would be the 'IN', is proposed to the north of the existing, separated from an outbuilding/boundary of a neighbouring property by an existing pedestrian access into the Children's Centre. Existing fencing and a small (0.85metre/2.7ft) section of an existing hedge would need to be removed to provide the new access, and pedestrian guard railing and road markings would need to be relocated/added as necessary.
10. Internally, the car parking layout would be amended and an additional 8 car parking spaces provided, taking the total from 39 to 47. An additional 2 accessible bays would be provided and 2 mini bus bays (2 mini buses currently occupy 3 of the 39 bays on site). The drop off loop would accommodate 8 cars, and it is also intended that the school gates be left open all day to allow delivery drivers and visitors on site. The applicant advises that a member of staff would monitor the drop off/pick up loop in the morning and afternoon. A small number of trees would need to be removed to accommodate the revised car parking layout. However, the applicant is proposing the plant 3 replacement trees on site for each tree removed.



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*The application is supported by a Planning Statement, Design and Access Statement, Transport Assessment, School Travel Plan, Desk Based Heritage Assessment, Flood Risk Assessment, Phase 1 Contaminated Land Desk Study, Unexploded Ordnance RA, Plant Noise document, Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey, and Arboricultural Assessment/Method Statement.*

## Planning Policy Context

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

- (i) **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).

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, contributing to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity;
- consideration of whether the opportunities for sustainable transport have been taken up and safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people;

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 works with schools promoters to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted*

**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.

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(ii) **Development Plan Policies**

The adopted 2006 **Thanet District Council Local Plan (Saved Policies)**:

- Policy D1** All new development is required to provide high quality and inclusive design, sustainability, layout and materials.
- Policy D2** Development proposals will be well landscaped and maximise the nature conservation opportunities wherever possible.
- Policy HE12** Archaeological sites will be preserved and protected.
- Policy CF1** Planning permission will be granted for new community facilities if the proposals are not contrary to other Local Plan policies and the community use and location are demonstrated as acceptable.
- Policy TR12** Substantial development generating travel demand will be required to provide convenient and secure cycle parking and changing facilities.
- Policy TR15** Development proposals likely to generate significant travel demand and/or traffic movement will be required to demonstrate, through Green Travel Plans, specific measures to encourage and facilitate the use of walking, cycling and public transport in preference to private car travel.
- Policy TR16** Proposals for development will be required to make satisfactory provision for the parking of vehicles.

**Consultations**

12. **Thanet District Council** has no objection to the application.

**Birchington Town Council:** no comments received to date.

**Kent County Council Highways and Transportation** has no objection to the application, subject to conditions, and comments as follows:

- “1. The proposals are likely to generate additional traffic through Birchington Square and the A28 Canterbury Road/Park Lane junctions, particularly in the morning peak hour. These junctions suffer from congestion during this period and the additional movements will add to this congestion. It may be considered that the need to provide additional school places outweighs the impact of additional traffic.
2. The amount of on-street parking available is in reality significantly less than indicated in the Transport Statement and parents are currently not allowed to drop-off or pick-up pupils inside the school gates, giving rise to the inappropriate parking that occurs at times on the highway at present. The revised proposals now include provision of a new entry point and a loop drop-off/pick-up facility inside the school gates, which should mitigate the additional demand for parent parking arising from the school expansion. It is important that this facility is managed appropriately by the School to maintain

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the flow of vehicles and therefore the availability of spaces. Appropriate signage and markings would also be required to identify the proposed one-way working of the loop system. Improved pedestrian visibility splays would also be required at the exit point, as visibility for pedestrians crossing the exit to drivers emerging is currently obstructed by high hedges. A total of 51 staff car parking spaces are to be provided and this should be sufficient for the likely demand bearing in mind the existing demand and modal split of staff travel. The proposed 14 cycle parking spaces are also likely to be sufficient.

3. The provision of the new entry point would necessitate relocation of the school crossing patrol a few metres to the south of its current position. This in turn would require additional dropped kerbs and relocation of guardrailling. The existing double yellow lines on the east side of Park Lane will also need to be extended northwards to match the extent of the existing school zig-zag markings on the west side, to improve visibility at the crossing point.
4. The proposed Travel Plan would need to be expanded further and agreed with the School Transport Planner through the Jambusters system.
5. I note the construction logistics comments and clearly access from Park Lane and Sewell Close would need to be carefully managed with appropriate restrictions on delivery times, suitable signage, temporary restrictions on parking where necessary and temporary replacement parking within the site as necessary. Bearing in mind the existing parking situation outside the school at drop-off and pick-up times, adequate parking for site personnel and visitors during construction must either be provided within the site or at an alternative off-street location nearby.”

“Therefore, should planning permission be granted the following should be secured by condition:

- Provision and permanent retention of the vehicle parking spaces and drop-off/pick-up area shown on the submitted plans prior to the use of the site commencing.
- Provision and implementation of a management plan for the drop-off/pick-up area prior to the use of the site commencing in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority.
- Provision and permanent retention of secure, covered cycle parking facilities prior to the use of the site commencing in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority.
- Completion of the new vehicular access, new school crossing patrol point and associated highway works prior to the use of the site commencing in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority.
- Gates to open away from the highway and to be set back a minimum of 5 metres from the edge of the carriageway.
- Provision and maintenance of 2 metres x 10 metres pedestrian visibility splays behind the footway on both sides of the access with no obstructions over 0.6m above footway level, prior to the use of the site commencing.
- Provision and implementation of a Travel Plan prior to the use of the site commencing in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority.

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- Provision and implementation of a Demolition/Construction Management Plan to include the following:
  - i) Routing of vehicles to/from site.
  - ii) Timing of deliveries (it should be noted these are likely to be restricted to between 9.30 am and 2.30 pm).
  - iii) Parking and turning facilities for delivery vehicles.
  - iv) Parking for site personnel and visitors.
  - v) Wheel washing facilities.”

**Sport England** has no objection to the application.

**Environment Agency** has no objection to the application. The proposal is not considered to be high risk, but advice and guidance is provided with regard to land contamination and waste.

**The County Council's Biodiversity Officer** advises that the submitted survey information covers all of the areas of the site to be affected by the proposed development and, on that basis, advises that there is limited potential for ecological impacts. There is a potential loss of habitat for breeding birds, and the recommended measures within the submitted surveys to avoid impacts to breeding birds must be implemented. Bird and bat boxes should also be provided to provide additional wildlife opportunities, and this should be secured by condition.

**The County Council's Landscape Officer** has no concerns over the proposed development, and considers that the design of the new building has been sensitively undertaken in terms of respecting the character of the existing building and those found locally. A scheme of landscaping should be secured by condition, and it is requested that boundary planting uses locally appropriate and native species. In addition, the hedgerow around the proposed playground should be retained, and its protection during construction should also be secured by condition.

**County Archaeologist:** no comments received to date.

**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. The School is registered with the County Council's new *Jambusters* system, and the amended/updated Travel Plan should be prepared using that system.

#### Local Members

13. The Local County Council Member, Mr Roger Latchford, was notified of the application on the 19 August 2015, and notified of the amended proposal on the 22 October 2015

#### Publicity

14. The application was publicised by the posting of 3 site notices around the application site and the individual notification of 82 neighbouring properties. 21 neighbouring properties (those that could be affected by the access changes) were also notified of the amended proposal.

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## Representations

15. To date I have received 6 letters of representation, from 3 properties. The main points of concern/objection are summarised as follows:-

### Access and Highway Matters

- Parents/carers constantly park on double yellow lines, the grass verge, across driveways and in dangerous/inappropriate locations blocking visibility for pedestrians and drivers, and making access to property difficult and dangerous;
- Access to emergency vehicles is blocked at peak times;
- The School should enter into an agreement to allow parents to park at Quex Barn and then walk to the school
- Park Lane is a busy road, especially at peak school times;
- Sewell Close is narrow and cannot accommodate additional traffic. Parents park here to use the pedestrian access, and already block driveways park inconsiderately;

### Amenity Matters

- When the area proposed to be made into a playground was previously a playground, a neighbour experienced problems with pupils kicking balls into their garden, kicking the boundary fence, throwing rubbish and looking into the garden. They do not want the playground back at the end of their garden;
- The noise from the playground would also be intolerable, and alternative locations should be sought;
- The MUGA is rarely used – that should be used for the playground;
- If the playground goes ahead as proposed a metal fence and a replacement boundary fence should be provided;

### Other

- The draft Local Plan is not referenced in the supporting documentation, and KCC Highways have some plans for Park Lane which are not referenced;
- A planning application submitted to Thanet District Council (F/TH/15/0797) should also be considered, and future plans for housing off Park Lane should be taken into consideration;
- There are bats in the school site.

## Discussion

### Introduction

16. In considering this proposal regard must be had to the Development Plan Policies outlined in paragraph 11 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 Development Plan Policies, Government Guidance, including the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and other material planning considerations arising from consultation and publicity. In this case the key determining factors, in my view, are the impact upon the highway network, general amenity matters, and the policy support for the development of schools to ensure that there is sufficient provision to meet growing demand, increased choice and raised educational standards, subject to being satisfied on amenity and other material considerations.

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### Need

17. The expansion of Birchington Primary 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 the Government's view the creation and development of schools is strongly in the national interest and planning authorities should support this objective, in a manner consistent with their statutory obligations. In considering proposals for the creation, expansion and alteration of schools, the Government considers that there is a strong presumption in favour of state funded schools, as expressed in the National Planning Policy Framework and reflected in the Policy Statement for Schools. Planning Authorities should give full and thorough consideration to the importance of enabling such development, attaching significant weight to the need to establish and develop state funded schools, and making full use of their planning powers to support such development, only imposing conditions that are absolutely necessary. I therefore see no objection in principle to the proposed development, which is strongly supported by the general thrust of planning policy.

### Access and Highway Matters

18. As outlined in paragraphs 9 & 10 of this report, as part of this school expansion proposal (from 2FE to 3FE) the applicant, following discussion with Kent County Council Highways and Transportation, is proposing to provide an additional access into the site on the Park Lane frontage to create a formal 'IN' and 'OUT' system with an on-site drop off/pick up loop. Internally, the car parking layout would be amended and an additional 8 car parking spaces provided, taking the total from 39 to 47. An additional 2 accessible bays would be provided and 2 mini bus bays (2 mini buses currently occupy 3 of the 39 bays on site). The drop off loop would accommodate 8 cars, and it is also intended that the school gates be left open all day to allow delivery drivers and visitors on site. A small number of local residents (only two in fact) expressed concern over existing issues generated by school traffic, particularly inconsiderate parking by parents/carers. The highway and access implications of this application therefore need to be considered and address.

19. Kent County Council Highways and Transportation raise no objection to this application subject to the imposition of conditions (as outlined in paragraph 12 of this report). Although the Highway Authority recognise that the proposals are likely to generate additional traffic through Birchington Square and the A28 Canterbury Road/Park Lane junctions (approximately 400 metres to the north of the school), this impact is not considered severe enough to warrant an objection to the development. It should be noted that the National Planning Policy Framework indicates that Highway Authorities should only advise refusal of a planning consent where traffic problems are judged to be severe. It should also be borne in mind that the increase in pupil numbers would be incremental, and when balanced against the need for additional school places and the strong national and local Policy support for the provision of school places, such a small increase in traffic at an already congested junction would not, in my view, be reason to refuse this application.

20. The applicant has however, as detailed in paragraph 18 above, made provision for additional staff car parking, and created a drop off/pick up area within the school site to reduce the amount of on-street parking at peak school times. Highways and Transportation consider that the proposed access improvements should mitigate the additional demand for parent parking arising from the school expansion. The applicant

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has confirmed that a member of staff would manage the facility during morning and afternoon peak school times, and that the gates would be left open during the school day to allow access and use of the drop-off spaces by visitors and delivery drivers. In addition, as required by Highways and Transportation, a management plan for the drop off/pick up area should be submitted for approval prior to occupation of the development and, should permission be granted, this would be required pursuant to condition. The number of car parking spaces proposed (47 spaces, 2 accessible spaces and 2 mini bus spaces), and the retention of the 14 existing cycle parking spaces, is also considered by Highways and Transportation to be sufficient for the likely demand. Again, should permission be granted a condition of consent would require the provision of the car parking and the drop off/pick up area prior to first use of the development. Subject to these conditions, I am satisfied that the development would not have a significantly detrimental impact on the local highway network.

21. However, to further reduce the impact of the school expansion on the local highway network, and to satisfy the requirements of Highways and Transportation and the County Council's School Travel Plan Advisor, an updated School Travel Plan should be submitted prior to occupation of the development, and thereafter subject to ongoing monitoring and review. This process should be done via the County Council's new *Jambusters* system. A draft 2015 School Travel Plan (not prepared using the *Jambusters* system) was submitted with this application and this should form the basis of the final Travel Plan. Initiatives such as walking buses and 'park and stride' are included within that draft, with the School confirming that permission has been gained from the Parish Council for parents to use the Albion Road and Quex Barn car parks (the latter was suggested by a local resident in their letter of representation). Such initiatives would further reduce parents parking in local roads, including Park Lane and Sewell Close, and I am satisfied that the School are actively securing and promoting the implementation and use of 'park and stride' facilities, amongst other matters. The requirement for a final Travel Plan, with ongoing monitoring and review, will ensure that this good work continues.
22. Lastly, Highways and Transportation require a number of conditions to be imposed regarding the new access point on Park Lane. The new access point, which would be the 'IN', is proposed to the north of the existing, separated from an outbuilding/boundary of a neighbouring property by an existing pedestrian access into the Children's Centre. Existing fencing and a small (0.85metre/2.7ft) section of an existing hedge would need to be removed to provide the new access, and pedestrian guard railing and road markings would need to be relocated/added as necessary. Highways and Transportation require the new access gates to open away from the highway and be set back a minimum of 5 metres from the edge of the carriageway, the provision and maintenance of 2m x 10m pedestrian visibility splays behind the footway on both sides of the access, in addition to details of the new crossing patrol point and associated highway works. I consider that a condition of consent should be imposed to require the submission and approval of details of the new access point, including all of the points referred to above. Once approved, the access and associated works/infrastructure should be completed and fully operational prior to occupation of the development. Subject to that condition, I consider the proposed new access to be acceptable.

#### Design/Siting/Massing and Resulting Amenity Matters

23. Development Plan policies promote high quality design, sustainable development, and significant improvements to the built environment. Although no objections to the design

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and general principle of the proposed development (excluding the relocated playground (to be discussed below)) 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 two storey new building would, in my view, relate well to the existing buildings on the school site in terms of siting, whilst also remaining separated from the site boundaries by existing amenity space, hard play, existing buildings (to the south and east) 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 buildings. The location of the teaching block also links well with the existing buildings and facilities on site, especially when considering the level changes across the site.

24. The new building has been designed to respect the features of the existing school buildings whilst providing a modern design solution. The existing buildings feature yellow stock brick, with some red brick detailing and so the proposed building would be of a yellow stock brick construction with a clay tile roof to also match the existing. The building would also have an area of flat roof, to the southern side of the building over the circulation space and studio hall, and at each end of the building over the staircases. In my view, the mixture of pitched and flat roofs reflects the existing roof language across the site, and would keep the mass of the building as compact as possible. In my view, the new building would complement the existing school buildings, 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.
25. In addition to the proposed new building, as discussed in detail above, a new car parking area and improved access arrangements are also proposed. I consider the siting of the car parking area to be logical and, in considering that existing car parking is provided in the same broad location, and given the degree of separation from neighbouring properties and the level of boundary planting/screening, consider that location of the car parking to be acceptable in amenity terms. In addition, trees to be removed here would be replaced on site, with 3 trees planted for each tree removed. A scheme of landscaping would be secured by planning condition to ascertain the location of the replacement planting on the site and to ensure that locally appropriate and native species are provided.
26. Lastly, a replacement Year 6 playground is also proposed, and this element of the proposed development has met with objection from a local resident on amenity grounds. As outlined in paragraph 8 of this report, to compensate for the loss of part of the existing playground due to the siting of the new building, a replacement playground for Year 6 is proposed to the east of the existing floodlit Multi Use Games Area (MUGA), on an area of unused scrub which the School call 'The Paddock'. The new playground would occupy the space between the MUGA and the eastern boundary of the site which runs to the rear of properties in Sewell Close. A local resident has raised objection to the siting of the playground as, when the area was previously a playground, it is stated that the neighbour experienced problems with pupils kicking balls into their garden, kicking the boundary fence, throwing rubbish, making noise and looking into the garden. It is suggested that alternative locations for the playground should be sought, but that if the playground goes ahead a metal fence and a replacement boundary fence should be provided.



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27. First, as confirmed by the neighbour, the area proposed to accommodate the replacement playground has previously been a playground which does, in my view, set a precedent for such a development in this location. However, the matters raised must be considered and addressed. With regard to alternative locations, the applicant advises that there are no alternative locations within the school site that would work operationally and would not encroach onto the usable playing field. It should be noted that Sport England has no objection to the development, including the location of the replacement of the hard play area. Alternative playground locations would more than likely meet with objection from Sport England, which makes the location as proposed the best possible option in terms of school operation and the support of Sport England. I therefore consider the proposed location of the replacement playground to be logical and practicable.
28. With regard to the amenity impacts of the proposed relocated Year 6 playground, first it is important to note that use of the facility would be limited to break times during the school day, during term time only. I cannot agree that noise from such limited use, and by one year group at play, would be to an unacceptable level. In addition, following receipt of the neighbours concerns, the applicant provided additional detail with regard to the proposed fencing of the playground and boundary treatment. 2 metre (6.5ft) high green weldmesh fencing is proposed along the eastern, southern and in part western sides of the playground, with ball stop nylon netting above this to prevent stray balls leaving the site. In addition, part of the school boundary fence in this area of the site is proposed to be replaced with 1.8 metre high close boarded timber fencing, to match the existing. A hedgerow is also proposed to be planted between these two fence lines to extend the existing hedgerow located the north and west of the proposed playground. It should be noted that submission of details of the protection of the existing hedgerow and the planting of the new hedgerow would be required as part of the landscaping scheme, to be submitted pursuant to condition.
29. The provision of such fencing and planting would, in my view, negate issues of pupils kicking balls into neighbouring gardens, kicking the boundary fence, and looking directly into the garden due to the physical degree of separation and the height/type of the fencing proposed. In any instance, the proposals meet the neighbour's request for the provision of a metal fence and a replacement timber boundary fence. Subject to the imposition of a condition requiring the installation of the playground and boundary fencing prior to first use of the playground, I do not consider that the playground would have a significantly detrimental impact on the amenity of local residents. I therefore see no reason to refuse this element of this proposal.

#### Biodiversity

30. With regard to ecology, an Ecological Scoping Survey Report has been submitted which concludes that the development would not have a detrimental impact on biodiversity, subject to precautionary approaches with regard to bats, hedgehogs and reptiles. The County Council's Biodiversity Officer is satisfied with the level of information provided. However, should permission be granted, conditions of consent should be imposed requiring that the development is undertaken in accordance with the recommendations and precautionary measures as detailed within the submitted Ecological Scoping Survey Report. Biodiversity enhancement measures, such as the provision of bird and bat boxes, should also be explored, and I consider that this matter could be dealt with by way of a further condition.

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### Sustainable Construction

31. As outlined in paragraph 7 of this report, the building has been designed to meet the principles of a BREEAM rating of very good. The building has been designed to include a number of sustainable features and I consider that the applicant has given sufficient information within the planning application to demonstrate how the principles of a 'Very Good' rating would be achieved. In addition, although not necessarily required to meet energy efficiency targets and building regulation requirements, given the height and orientation of the building, the applicant has included an array of PV panels within the scheme in this instance, with an indicative area marked on the roof plan. For further information on the sustainable credentials of this scheme, including the costs and payback period for the PV panels, please see the statement provided by the applicant in Appendix 1 (end of pg 3 and pg 4). I have no objection to the proposals in this regard.

### Other matters

32. A local resident states that a planning application submitted to Thanet District Council (F/TH/15/0797) should be considered in the determination of this application. Having checked the District Council website that application, which was for a vehicular access into land south east of Quex Barn, was refused permission by the District Council. In addition, the same resident suggested that future plans for housing off of Park Lane should also be taken into consideration. However, there are no live planning applications for housing developments at this time and, in any instance, the District Council would need to consider any such application on its own merits in consultation with the Highway Authority.
33. Further, the resident states that the draft Local Plan is not referenced in the supporting documentation, and that Kent County Council have some plans for Park Lane which are not referenced. With regard to the latter, Highways and Transportation have been consulted on this application, and as discussed in detail above, have no objection to the proposal. Any plans that the Highway Authority may have for Park Lane that would conflict with this proposal would have been considered within their consultation response. With regard to the draft Local Plan, the District Council is in the process of preparing this document. The document, and the policies therein, remain to be approved and subsequently adopted. The District Council does not, therefore, list this document as part of Thanet's 'current Planning Policy'. I am therefore satisfied that all relevant and adopted Planning Policies have been considered in the determination of this application.

### Construction matters

34. Given that there are neighbouring residential and industrial properties, if planning permission is granted it would, in my view, be appropriate to impose a condition restricting hours of construction to protect residential amenity. I would suggest that works should be undertaken only between the hours of 0800 and 1800 Monday to Friday and between the hours of 0900 and 1300 on Saturdays, with no operations on Sundays and Bank Holidays. It is also good practice on school sites for contractors to be required under the terms of their contract to manage construction traffic/deliveries to minimise conflict with traffic and pedestrians at the beginning and end of the school day.
35. 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

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wheel washing facilities, details of how the site access would be managed to avoid peak school times, and details of any construction accesses. Such a strategy would also address the conditions required by Highways and Transportation with regard to the construction of the development. 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.

36. 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

37. In summary, I consider that, subject to the imposition of appropriate planning conditions and the completion of the improved access, parking and drop-off facilities, this proposed development constitutes sustainable development, with an appropriate standard of design and layout, which would not have significantly detrimental effects on the local highway network or residential amenity. 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, as well as the National Planning Policy Framework. I am aware of no material planning considerations that indicate that the conclusion should be made otherwise. Therefore, I recommend that permission be granted subject to appropriate conditions

### Recommendation

38. 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;
  - the submission of the scheme of landscaping and tree planting, including details of the protection of the hedgerow adjacent to the proposed playground during construction and planting of the new hedgerow;
  - provision of the playground and boundary fencing prior to first use of the playground;
  - the provision and permanent retention of the car parking, drop off/pick up and turning/loading/unloading areas as shown on the submitted plans;
  - submission of a management plan for the drop off/pick up area;
  - submission of further details of the new access point on Park Lane, including associated works/infrastructure, and subsequent provision prior to occupation of the development;
  - submission of an updated Travel Plan within 6 months of the date of occupation;
  - the development to be undertaken in accordance with the recommendations of the Ecological Scoping Survey;
  - the provision of bird and bat boxes;
  - 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;

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- the submission of a Construction Management Strategy, including the location of site compounds and operative/visitors parking, details of site security and safety measures, lorry waiting and wheel washing facilities, and details of any construction accesses & management of the site access to avoid peak school times;
- measures to prevent mud and debris being taken onto the public highway.

39. 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 contaminated land and waste.

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

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## Appendix 1

### Birchington Primary School – Sustainability Statement

Birchington Primary School will feature an array of passive sustainable design aspects and practices, as well as being additionally supplemented with the installation of active onsite renewable energy generation to reduce load on grid energy supply and the use of non-renewable fuels.

#### - Energy/CO2 Emissions

Our M&E team carry out Building Physics and Part L Compliance modelling as a matter of course on all our projects at pre-planning stage. The design as submitted even without roof top solar photovoltaics complies with and exceeds the Approved Document Part L2A (2013) emissions criteria for new buildings by approximately 5% compared with the notional building criteria.

Our design focuses on promoting natural daylighting, with large glazing units and south-east facing rooflights to naturally maximise internal illumination.

Our total implementation of passive ventilation and additional passive heat exchange ventilation units across the proposal will allow the building to exchange warm stale air for cool fresh air using just buoyancy and wind loading as required.

South facing brise soleil provide shading and reduce summer over-heating.

The combined effect of the strategies above will create a well balanced and pleasant internal environment for all occupants year round.

#### - Water resource use

Birchington Primary School proposed works will seek to reduce water consumption where possible during both construction and use with the implementation of construction management plans and the installation of efficient eco-flush toilets and aerating taps.

#### - Materials

The materials proposed in the design of Birchington Primary School achieve BRE Green Guide Ratings no lower than B.

Category / Sub-category	Description	Summary Green Guide Rating
External wall - Brickwork	Brickwork, cement mortar, plywood (temperate EN 636-2) sheathing, insulation, structural block work, vapour control layer, plasterboard on battens, paint	A+
External Wall - Curtain Walling.	Extruded aluminium stick type curtain wall, laminated sealed glass unit.	B
Windows generally	Aluminium windows	A
Insulation generally	Stone wool insulation—density 45kg/m <sup>2</sup>	A+



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Insulation—to external walls	Rigid thermoset insulation	A+
Insulation to single ply roof	High performance rigid thermoset insulation	A
Insulation to ground floor	Rigid polyisocyanurate foam and zero ozone depletion potential (ODP) blowing agents with low global warming potential (GWP) and low emissivity aluminium foil facings on both sides	A+
Internal Walls	Studs insulation and 2 x 12.5mm plasterboard each side	A

### - Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems

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According to the Flood Risk Assessment prepared by AGB Environmental, the existing site of Birchington Primary School has a Very Low RoFRaS Flood Risk Rating pertaining to flood caused by nearby water courses.

According to JBA modelling, Pluvial flood risk is unclassified (negligible).

AGB Environmental outline that the reason for the negligible flood risk is due to the sites moderately permeable chalk geological formation.

Despite the permeability of the existing site, it is still prone to occasional water logging in heavy weather. For this reason we propose that the new building will drain into the existing drain pipes to adequately take water away from the site.

### - Waste

A Construction Phase Management plan will be developed prior to construction. KPI targets will be agreed by all design members and the principal contractor. Contractors will update this document as on site works continue and their progress will be monitored at regular intervals.

Waste air from the building will be passively extracted from the building during use via rooftop wind catchers within the pitched roof dormers and openable rooflights. These use the buoyancy of the internal air and the pressure differences caused as wind passes over them to extract stale air and draw fresh new air in. As the warm stale air rises through the wind catcher it passes through a high efficiency heat exchanger that uses the heat from the exhaust air to pre-warm the cool incoming air. This process allows for high air change rates to keep internal areas fresh and reduces heating and cooling loads by matching the internal environment temperature.

### - Pollution

Sustainably sourced and built materials have been proposed to reduce pre-construction pollution.

Lead free, low odour and low VOC paint will be used throughout.

On site construction will reduce waste where possible, but where waste is inevitable; it shall be either recycled or safely and correctly disposed of with careful attention not to pollute existing ground or water systems with any on site construction materials.



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## Appendix 1

### - Health & Wellbeing

The proposed works at Birchington Primary School solve much needed local demand for primary school places and as such relieve educational pupil place stress of surrounding schools. The proposed works will create a warm and welcoming internal environment, making its daily use a pleasure. These proposed works will be used long into the future by future pupil and staff generations.

The passive systems outlined above will greatly improve the internal environment by providing:

- Long hours of bright and clear natural lighting,
- Maintaining clean temperature matched fresh air,
- Temperature control thanks to heat exchange ventilation, considered glazing and placement of brise soleil,
- And robust construction to reduce noise transfer between occupied spaces.

### - Transport

A robust travel plan will be developed by the school with the assistance of traffic consultants to promote healthy modes of travel.

### - Ecology

The opportunities for biodiversity on site will be maintained and improved following the development thanks to planting of new trees and the instalment of bird and bat boxes on trees across the site.

### - Management

The school staff and site management will be issued with a Building Operation & Maintenance Manual following completion of works that will detail how to use the building and its sustainable services correctly. Instructions to outline the use of the heating and ventilation strategies will be described and will help the school comfortably use the spaces provided while minimising energy usage.

Optimal building efficiency will of course depend on users following the methods outlined in the Building Operation & Maintenance Manual.

Such practices will include:

- Minimising use of artificial lighting.
- Replacing bulbs with LEDs when necessary.
- Using opening windows to control indoor climate and ventilation.
- Using artificial heating only when required.

In addition to all of the already glowing points above, we are still proposing to include rooftop solar PV panels atop the flat roof above the group and staff room.

This location would be ideal as the array would be on the tallest part of the proposal and therefore affords the array a number of benefits:



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## Appendix 1

- Height of array would provide most visual screening thanks to the parapet.
- Height of array would have least chance of accidental damage and make vandalism or theft difficult.
- Height and orientation of installation would result in minimal shading.

In this location up to 50m<sup>2</sup> plan area of PV could be installed.

Preliminary calculations suggest that an array of this size at 37° tilt and 0° azimuth would be between 3.8-4.8kWp (kilo watts at peak performance at noon on a sunny day) and would generate between 3.75-5mWh per year. (3750-5000kWh)

Calculations suggest this would offset carbon emissions to the effect of more than 35% improvement over the notional building criteria.

Using the current feed in tariff and the buildings estimated Energy Performance Certificate grade, this array would earn around £625/year.

Estimated cost of the array is in the order of £25,000 (subject to change following full and thorough quotation process) – therefore the resultant payback period is 40 years.

This array would provide roughly 20% of the buildings electrical energy needs each year.

