

Multi-use sports arena and activity hall to facilitate the partial relocation of facilities from the Pier Sports Centre to Herne Bay High School, Bullockstone Road, Herne Bay – CA/09/680

A report by Head of Planning Applications Group to Planning Applications Committee on 18 August 2009.

Application by Kent Local Education Partnership 1 for the partial demolition of existing school buildings and alterations and extension to form multi-use sports arena and activity hall (to relocate some of the existing facilities from the Pier Sports Centre, including roller sports facilities) and creation of additional car parking spaces at Herne Bay High School, Bullockstone Road, Herne Bay (CA/09/680)

Recommendation: Planning permission be granted subject to conditions

Local Member(s): Mrs. J. Law & Mr. D. Hirst

Classification: Unrestricted

Site

1. Herne Bay High School lies within the urban confines of Herne Bay, south of the A299 Thanet Way, in Greenhill. Residential properties surround the site to the north, south, east and west. Bullockstone Road and the main school vehicular entrance and car park is located to the east of the site, whilst Greenhill Road and a secondary car park used mainly for community activities and on-site nursery is located to the north of the site. A third car park off Bullockstone Road is used for main deliveries and kitchen staff parking. Chestnut Drive and Oaks Avenue are residential streets which border the western side of the site, whilst Kingfisher Court, Bridleway and Eider Close are all residential streets which are located to the east of the site and separated by the main Bullockstone Road. The main school buildings are located to the north of the site with the playing fields to the south. The school land is set in a fairly open landscape, with the land falling away gently to the south of the site. The sports fields of the school are a Protected Open Space as identified in the adopted Local Plan. *A site location plan is attached on page D2.2*
2. Major building works are currently taking place at the site, under the Building Schools for the Future programme, as discussed in the Background section (paragraphs 3-5 below).

Background

3. As identified above, Members will note that building works are currently being undertaken at the High School site to redevelop the former campus facilities under the Government's Building Schools for the Future (BSF) initiative. The Planning Applications Committee resolved that planning permission be granted for this redevelopment at its meeting on 24 June 2008, which comprised of the partial demolition of existing school buildings, the extension and refurbishment of the former High School to create new teaching and circulation space, a new sports and activity hall for school and community use together with ancillary works including the creation of a contractor's compound, landscaping works and temporary accommodation during the construction phase. It is expected that these works will be completed by June 2011.

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Site Location Plan

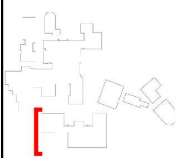


Site Location Plan – Herne Bay High School Campus
Scale 1:5000



Provision of multi-use sports arena and activity hall at Herne Bay High School, Bullockstone Road, Herne Bay - CA/09/680

Proposed North Elevation



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Herne Bay High School

North Elevation

As of 15/03/2024, the proposed sports hall extension will be constructed on the site of the existing sports hall. The site is located on the eastern side of the school grounds, adjacent to the existing sports hall. The proposed sports hall extension will be a two-story building with a total floor area of approximately 1,500 sqm. The building will be constructed using a combination of brickwork and aluminium cladding. The proposed sports hall extension will be a two-story building with a total floor area of approximately 1,500 sqm. The building will be constructed using a combination of brickwork and aluminium cladding.

On 15/03/2024, the proposed sports hall extension will be constructed on the site of the existing sports hall. The site is located on the eastern side of the school grounds, adjacent to the existing sports hall. The proposed sports hall extension will be a two-story building with a total floor area of approximately 1,500 sqm. The building will be constructed using a combination of brickwork and aluminium cladding.

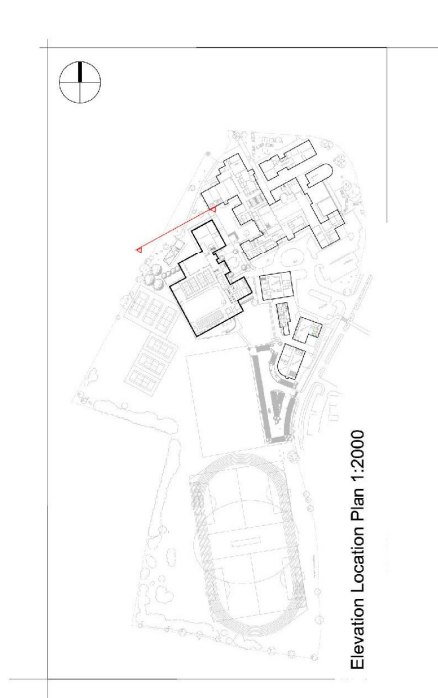
Herne Bay High School, Bullockstone Road, Herne Bay, Kent, TN11 8JG

Project No: 19255A | IBB/HAL-20-X05 | A

Scale: 1:100 | CLAGUE

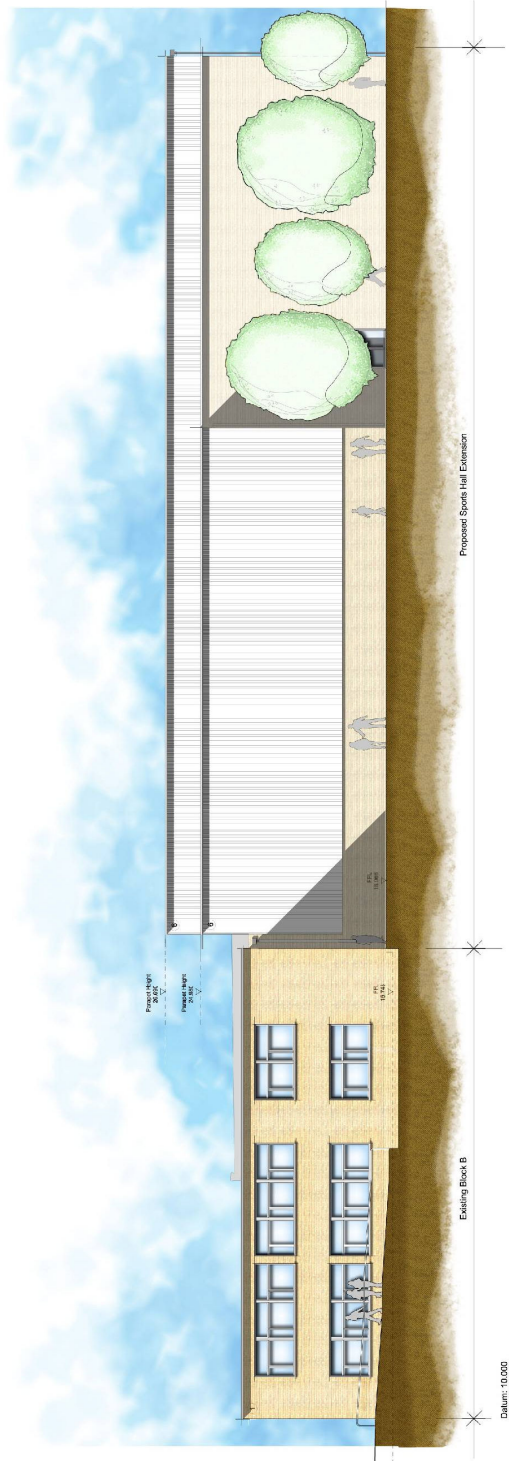
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CLAGUE



Materials Legend

- 1 Facing yellow brickwork in stretcher bond to match with existing
- 2 8mm Thick cladding panels in white with horizontal and vertical 10mm shadow gaps (1500 X 1500mm, 750 X 750mm)
- 3 Double glazed aluminium system (White Frame)
- 4 8mm Thick cladding panels in white with horizontal and vertical 10mm shadow gaps.
- 5 Through coloured render in white
- 6 PPC metal sheet with vertical profile



Proposed North Elevation

Provision of multi-use sports arena and activity hall at Herne Bay High School, Bullockstone Road, Herne Bay - CA/09/680

Proposed South Elevation



LandSecurities
Herne Bay High School

Kent Council

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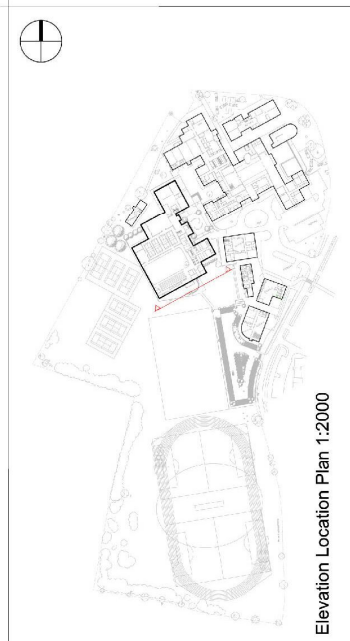
Herne Bay High School
Kent BSF

South Elevation

Project No: 19205A_HBH-HAL-20-X03
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C.L.A.G.U.E.



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| ① | Existing yellow brickwork in stretcher bond to match with existing |
| ② | Brick. Thick cladding panels in white with horizontal and vertical 10mm shadow gaps (1500 x 1500mm, 750 x 750mm) |
| ③ | Double glazed aluminium system (White Frames) |
| ④ | Brick. Thick cladding panels in white with horizontal and vertical 10mm shadow gaps. |
| ⑤ | Through coloured render in white |
| ⑥ | PFC metal sheet with vertical profile |

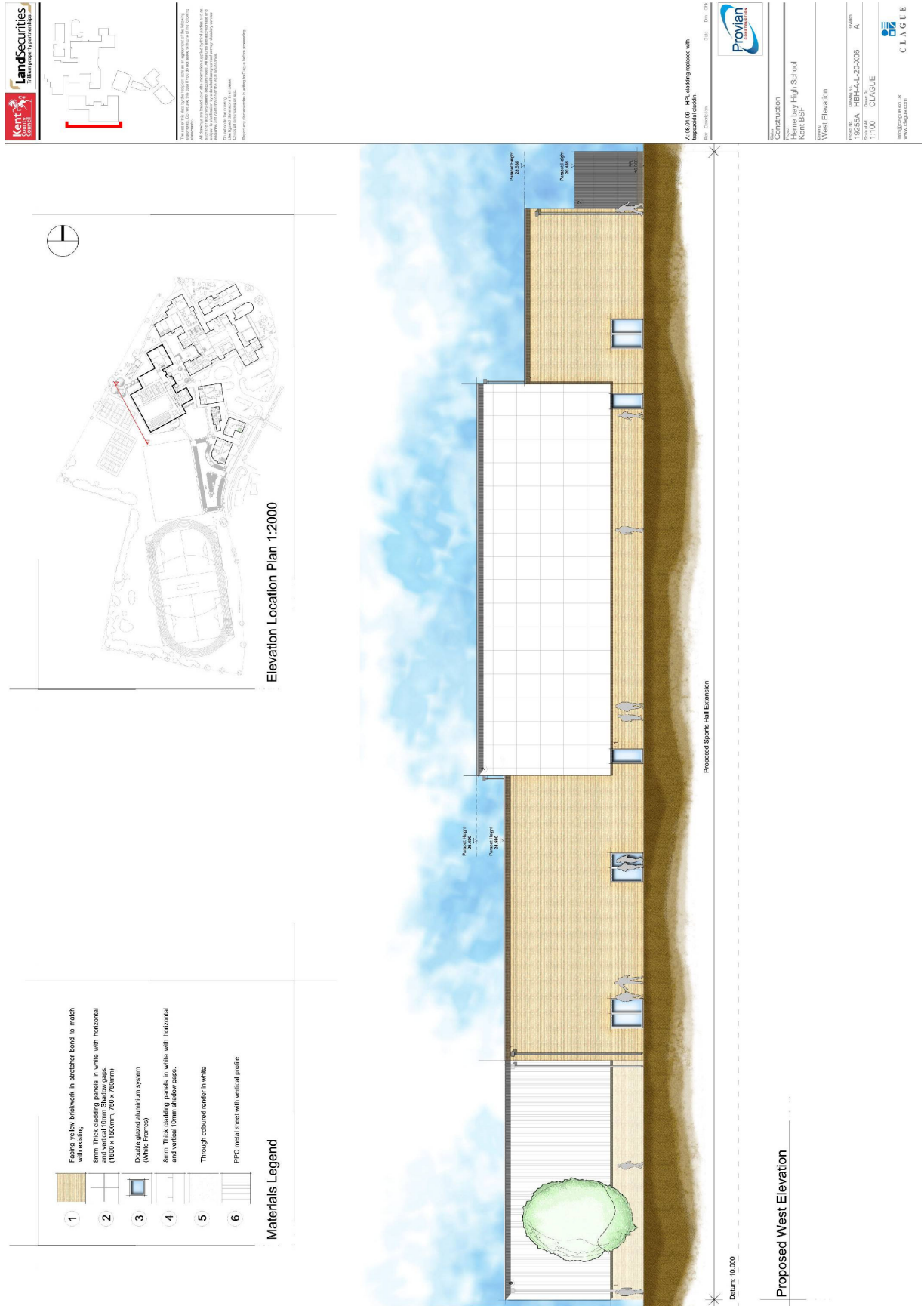
Materials Legend



Proposed South Elevation

Provision of multi-use sports arena and activity hall at Herne Bay High School, Bullockstone Road, Herne Bay - CA/09/680

Proposed West Elevation



Kent Council
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 Planning Partnership

Herne Bay High School, The Old Rectory, Bullockstone Road, Herne Bay, Kent, ME14 2JH.
 All drawings are subject to the final planning consent from Kent Council. All drawings are subject to the final planning consent from Kent Council. All drawings are subject to the final planning consent from Kent Council.

Approved by Kent Council on 14/07/2014. Planning Reference: CA/09/680/14/00001/01.

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 Herne Bay High School
 Kent ESF
 West Elevation

Project No: 19255A
 Drawing No: RBH-HAL-2D-X06
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4. The main campus buildings are a mix of ages dating from the 1950s with the most recent additions being constructed in 2006. The incremental approach to development at the site had led to internal and external circulation problems, whilst the mix of age of buildings presented problems for the School with upkeep and maintenance. It is expected that the redevelopment programme currently being undertaken will address these problems and create a campus designed to meet the needs of 21st century education.
5. The existing school roll is approximately 1500 students, with approximately 200 of those being post 16 students. A total of 200 full and part time staff are employed at the school. As part of the redevelopment of the site under the BSF programme, it was not expected that the school roll or the number of teaching staff would increase.

Proposal

6. The application proposes the provision of a new multi-use sports arena and activity hall which is borne out of a combination of the Kent BSF programme and the desire by Canterbury City Council to relocate its roller hockey/skating arena, currently situated at "The Pier Sports Centre" in Herne Bay, to Herne Bay High School on a 'like-for-like' basis. As part of the grant of planning permission by the County Planning Authority to redevelop the site under the BSF programme, new sports facilities for both school and community use have already been approved, albeit of a less extensive nature than those covered under this application. Therefore, this application seeks to increase the size of the sports facilities at Herne Bay High, over-and-above those previously consented. The application proposes a 1% year on year rise of visitor numbers at the school for the first 5 years of operation, after which stability of the number of users would occur.
7. The Pier Sports Centre is one of five Canterbury City Council leisure centres managed by an independent trust, known as Active Life Ltd. The centre is over 30 years old and consists of a large sports hall with spectator space, squash courts and health and fitness facilities. The City Council has undertaken numerous public consultations with key stakeholders and local residents regarding a regeneration plan for Herne Bay, known within the Local Development Framework as the Herne Bay Area Action Plan. Within this document, one of the issues related to the relocation of the Pier Sports Centre from the town centre to Herne Bay High School. Although the Herne Bay Action Plan has yet to receive formal adoption, it has recently been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate and forms a material consideration in the determination of this application as an emerging Local Development Framework document.
8. The application proposes a multi-purpose arena designed for international standard roller hockey games, currently hosted at The Pier Sports Centre. This arena would provide for roller sports facilities, recreational skating, badminton, basketball, futsal (indoor football), volleyball, netball, handball, table tennis, indoor long mat bowls, short tennis, trampoline and general fitness facilities. A four court sports hall would also be provided to offer badminton, basketball, table tennis, trampoline and gymnastics facilities, together with a further smaller sports activity hall to provide a gymnastics centre. All of the facilities proposed would be shared between school and community use, with the community use element being managed by Active Life Ltd. on behalf of Canterbury City Council. The proposal includes ancillary changing/showering facilities, together with office accommodation and a small food servery area. In total, the proposed new footprint of the development provides approximately 1900 square metres of additional floorspace, over and above that previously consented under the original BSF scheme.

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9. In terms of the community use element, the applicant has indicated the proposed hours of use of the sports centre would be as follows: 08:00 to 23:00 hours Monday to Friday; 08:00 to 24:00 hours on Saturdays and 08:00 to 22:30 hours on Sundays and Bank Holidays. It is noted that these hours reflect those currently operated at the Pier Sports Centre.
10. Members will note that consent has already been granted for extended sports facilities at the High School under the original BSF scheme, however it is noted that the footprint of this proposal lies directly on the same area as the previously approved sports hall would be located. In other words, this proposal seeks to provide an enlarged sports arena on the same location as previously consented, resulting in the applicant being only able to carry out either of the proposals independently, in the event that planning permission is granted for this proposal.
11. The design of the proposal has been based around incorporating two existing school teaching blocks (Blocks B & E – as shown on ‘Proposed Ground Floor Plan’ Page D2.4) at either end of the sports arena. The High School has a specialism in sports, having sports college status, and as such there is a certain emphasis on cross curricular learning linked with sports and related subjects. The design of the sports arena and teaching facilities for science and maths in close proximity to each other would allow these subjects to be linked with sports science and physical activities much easier and reaffirms the sports college status.
12. The sports hall and activity hall are essentially the same design as previously approved under the original BSF consent; however they have been rotated through 90 degrees. Externally, the building involves a combination of brickwork and metal and laminate cladding panels. This part of the proposed building is the closest distance to residential properties (located in Chestnut Drive) and would be some 55 metres away from the façade of the rear of the houses, and located on a 45 degree angle from the façade of residential properties. This element of the proposal contains no external windows, relying solely on artificial lighting, heating and ventilation to prevent solar glare and overheating from within the sports complex building.
13. The largest of the new sports spaces, the multi-use sports arena, is designed to a standard sufficient to hold international standard roller hockey tournaments. Its proposed location is adjoining the sports hall and activity hall, and sits alongside the school playing fields and external multi-use games areas. As this element of the facility has been designed for spectator sports, part of the proposal allows for 430 spectator seats which can be folded-back to make way for an increased floorspace, should the need arise. As previously outlined, the proposal has been designed to accommodate ancillary facilities such as changing, showering and toilet facilities, together with office accommodation and a servery area serving light refreshments and snacks overlooking the school sports pitches.
14. The proposed building has been designed with two dedicated entrances, one for public community use and the other for school pupils and staff. The community entrance would be clearly demarcated for pedestrians from a new vehicle car park area, to be located to the south of the sports arena, and from the main pedestrian footway into the site from Bullockstone Road.
15. The proposal involves the creation of a new 76 space car park which would be accessed from Bullockstone Road. The site of the proposed new car park is currently being used as a contractor’s vehicle entrance/compound as part of the ongoing BSF building works. It is intended that the new car park would provide dedicated spaces for

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community sports centre users for the duration that the proposed sports centre would be open. In addition, the applicant proposes that at times of international standard roller hockey matches, all school parking would be made available for cars and sufficient space made available to facilitate coach drop off and collection facilities.

16. In terms of landscaping, the application proposes to complement the design of the remodelled school with this application, proposing landscape planting in the new car park and around the new sports building.

Planning History

17. Recently, planning permission has been granted for the following development at Herne Bay High School:
- New sixth form area, fitness room, gymnasium and sports extension, dining and examination room extension and external works including additional parking for visitors in September 2002, under reference CA/02/703;
 - New artificial tennis courts and associated floodlights at the meeting of the Planning Applications Committee on 11 February 2003, under reference CA/02/1371;
 - New vehicle entrance and car park in September 2003, under reference CA/03/1204;
 - Extension to school dining room in September 2004, under reference CA/04/1219;
 - Creating of new single storey vocational centre at the meeting of the Planning Applications Committee on 8 November 2005, under reference CA/05/1109;
 - BSF Application - Partial demolition of existing school buildings and alterations and extensions to form new entrance block, roofing over existing courtyard and new sports hall together with associated hard and soft landscaping and the provision of temporary mobile accommodation during the construction period at the meeting of the Planning Applications Committee on 24 June 2008, under reference CA/08/316.

Planning Policy

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

- (i) The adopted 2009 **South East Plan**:

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

Policy CC4 – Refers to sustainable design and construction.

Policy CC6 – Refers to sustainable communities and character of the environment

Policy S3 – States that, local planning authorities, taking into account demographic projections, should work with partners to ensure the adequate provision of pre-school, school and community learning facilities.

Policy S5 – Increased and sustainable participation in sport and recreation should be encouraged by local authorities.

Policy S6 – The mixed use of community facilities should be encouraged by local authorities.

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Policy NRM1 – Water supply and ground water will be maintained and enhanced through avoiding adverse effects of development on the water environment.

Policy NRM4 – Refers to sustainable flood risk management.

Policy NRM11 – Requires Local Authorities to secure the greater use of renewable or low-carbon energy in new development.

Policy W2 – Sustainable design, construction and demolition.

Policy TSR3 – Opportunities will be sought to develop new regionally significant sports facilities.

(ii) The adopted 2006 **Canterbury City Council Local Plan (Saved Policies)**:

Policy BE1 – The Council will expect proposals of high quality design that respond to the objectives of sustainable development by having regard to, amongst others, the need for the development, accessibility and safe movement within the proposed development, the landscape character and way the development is integrated into the landscape, the conservation of natural features, and the form of the development.

Policy BE15 – Prior to the determination of applications for development that may affect a known or potential site of archaeological interest, developers will be required to make provision for an appropriate archaeological evaluation.

Policy NE1 – Where development proposals are being considered for a site known, or likely to have protected habitats or species, developers will be expected to carry out a survey and present proposals for mitigation measures.

Policy NE5 – Development should be designed to retain trees, hedgerows, woodlands or other landscape features that make an important contribution to the amenity of the site and the surrounding area.

Policy C1 – In considering the location or control of new development, or the relocation of existing activities, the Council will, amongst other matters, take account of the following principles: controlling the level and environmental impact of vehicular traffic; providing alternative modes of transport to the car by extending provision for pedestrians, cyclists and the use of public transport.

Policy C4 – Proposals considered to have significant transport implications are to be supported by a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan which shows how multi-modal access options will be achieved, and how transport infrastructure arising from the expected demand will be provided.

Policy C9 – Kent County Council's adopted Vehicle Parking Standards shall be applied to development proposals.

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Policy C24 – Proposals which would result in the loss of protected open space where, amongst others, where material harm would be balanced against demonstrable need for the development.

Consultations

19. **Canterbury City Council:** has raised no objection, but noted that no detailed information has been submitted in respect of surface water drainage disposal. The site is in an area of known drainage problems and it is therefore imperative that full details of drainage are submitted and the City Council consulted on this information in due course.

Divisional Transportation Manager: makes the following comments:

- Disappointed that transportation/highway implications have not been fully assessed as part of this application;
- Introduction of an improved community facility at the school site would have an impact on local highway infrastructure, particular during organised events. Therefore, considers that improvements in respect of footway links should be provided to realise the aims and objectives of the School Travel Plan. New pedestrian link to the site would encourage sustainable travel to the community facility and school;
- Notes that the School Travel Plan has not been revised to incorporate the new facility and this should be completed before the new centre is brought into use;
- There is footway provision to the north, linking the existing southern vehicular access to the public footpath via a Zebra Crossing, which in turn leads to the Thanet Way Footbridge. It would be appropriate for footway links to be further improved by extending the footway fronting the school to the existing footway at the north. Footway links should also be provided to the south to link with the access to the proposed centre. These highway improvements would provide a continuous footway link for pedestrians travelling north, removing the need to cross Bullockstone Road or for pedestrian traffic to enter the main school grounds;
- As per the northern footway improvements, there is also scope for the provision of new footway on Bullockstone Road (leading to a residential area to the south of the school site, known as 'The Fairway'). This scheme would require the removal or realignment of the existing fence and vegetation bordering the playing field and the installation of a new combined footway/cycleway. This scheme would encourage users originating from the south to walk/cycle to the site.
- Feel that these highway improvements are reasonable in terms of the scale of the proposed scheme. However, should both elements (the southern and northern footpath extensions) not be considered acceptable, suggest that the land required for the southern footpath is set aside by the school for future improvement;
- Coach turning facilities should be secured within the site to ensure that all coaches leaving the site exit onto the highway in a forward gear before parking off site in dedicated coach parking facilities.

Environment Agency: has no objection, provided conditions are imposed on any planning permission granted covering: drainage, contamination and fuel, oil and chemical storage measures.

Police Architectural Liaison Officer: no comments received to date. Any views expressed ahead of the Committee meeting will be reported verbally.

Sport England: raises no objection under their statutory playing field duty, but instead raises a number of concerns, including:

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- The impact of the development on tennis provision at the site has not been addressed;
- The applicant has yet to demonstrate that the proposed development is an appropriate replacement for The Pier Sports Centre; and
- The intended community use of the sports centre will be compromised by the design and internal layout of the development (particularly due to access, circulation and changing provision).

In view of these outstanding concerns, Sport England maintains a non-statutory objection to the application. Without prejudice to this position, should your Council be minded to approve the application, Sport England would expect conditions covering:

- The Sports facilities be designed to satisfactory design standards and in accordance with the relevant Sport England Guidance Notes;
- The sports hall and arena to be marked out for the intended multi-use; and
- A community use scheme and sports development plan to be prepared and implemented.

The County Archaeologist: notes that previous archaeological investigation at the site has demonstrated a high level of archaeological activity. As such it is possible that the proposed development works may disturb archaeological remains, and therefore a condition covering the archaeological evaluation of the site and any safeguarding measures should be imposed on any consent.

Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE): has made 'no comment' on the proposal due to having been consulted on more schemes than they have the resources to deal with.

County Fire Safety Officer: no comments received to date. Any views expressed ahead of the Committee meeting will be reported verbally.

Local Members

20. The local County Members, Mrs. J. Law and Mr. D. Hirst, and the adjacent local County Member Mr. A. Marsh were notified of the application on 7 May 2009.

Publicity

21. The application was publicised by the posting of four site notices at the main entrances to the school along Bullockstone Road and Greenhill Road, a newspaper advertisement, and the individual notification of 147 neighbouring residential properties.

Representations

22. I have received 7 letters of objection from local residents to date in respect of this application. The main points of objection are summarised under key sub-headings below:

Relocation of Pier Sports Centre

- Feel that this is not the most convenient place to site such sports facility. This area of the town is somewhat isolated with poor public transport links and pedestrian access only available across the Thanet Way. Surely a better location would be on land between the allotments and the Postal Sorting Office which would negate the need to cross the Thanet Way for pedestrian access.

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- Cannot comprehend why the Pier Sports Centre is being taken out of Herne Bay Town. A lot of money has been channelled into improving and regenerating the sea front. It attracts locals and visitors alike and obviously enjoys a certain amount of passer by and visitor revenue generated by its current locality. The proposal to remove a facility from the central access of the town and hide it away in a semi-rural area seems ludicrous.
- To state that there is no alternative site for the relocation of the Pier is of course not true. Although not on the sea front the Memorial Park attracts a lot of social activities and there are areas next to the new youth club or where currently three side by side tennis courts are, plus an area of open land next to them which could accommodate the new pavilion and would retain the facility as central to Herne Bay.
- Question what will happen to the existing Pier structure?

Flooding and Drainage

- Concerns that scale of development proposed, without adequate surface water drainage measures, will further exacerbate flooding issues as the houses nearby are lower than the school grounds;

Parking and Highway Issues

- Insufficient car parking both in existing (118 spaces) and planned (76 spaces) to accommodate the vehicular traffic generated by this substantial multi-use facility. The School's own Travel Plan recognises "On site parking can be a problem during the day and evenings when the local community uses the school". Whilst it is noted that additional spaces are to be provided, it is considered that traffic hazards in and around the school will continue to prevail;
- No provision for coach parking which must surely be a requirement being in mind the proposed new uses. Incidentally, this observation should come as no surprise to the School as we have been approached with a request to provide parking spaces for coaches at the Driving Range; clearly a need not satisfied at present nor planned for in the new proposals;
- Urge the Council to give further consideration to on-site car and coach parking, together with appropriate traffic management measures, to ensure that traffic hazards are minimised and pedestrian safety maintained;
- Traffic issues are a big bone of contention for Greenhill Road and Chestnut Drive residents at present, particularly as a result of overflow parking from the main campus site.;
- The Greenhill Road/ Bullockstone Road is not in great shape now, it will require a great deal of improvement, resurfacing, adding double yellow lines to both sides of the road so traffic will flow through and a 20 MPH speed limit;
- Request a Council Tax reduction for the extra volume of traffic noise and air pollution that all this increase in traffic will bring.

Amenity

- Suffer from light pollution from existing school sports pitches and worry that new buildings will increase light pollution levels to unacceptable levels;
- Concerned that the high buildings are proposed very close to the rear of our property will have an impact on our privacy and we will be overlooked by high level windows;
- Increase in noise levels and the security of our houses could be compromised with the free access to the school grounds;
- Question whether there are any plans to improve the perimeter fencing at the rear of the houses in Chestnut drive because at the moment the wire fencing is mostly broken and inadequate;

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- Feel that yet again the school plans are taken without any real regard for the adjacent residents and just play lip service to any genuine concerns that we have;
- Feel that the main sports arena will be too readily visible from both Chestnut Drive and Oaks Avenue given its proposed height – further consideration should be given to lowering it or sinking it partially into the ground in order to reduce its overall impact. Should neither of these be available, suggest that provision is made for the planting of mature trees to achieve the same result;
- Loss of natural daylight from nearby gardens as a result of height of building;
- No details in the application what steps are being taken to protect surrounding homes from the noise that will undoubtedly be generated once the proposed development is up and running. This is most important as noise from roller hockey matches played on the Pier Pavilion is currently dissipated out towards sea;

Opening Hours

- Opening hours mentioned for the scheme are far too long and can only adversely affect by way of noise pollution, what is after all a residential community with a large number of elderly people within it. We feel that a closing time of 10pm between Monday to Saturday and 9pm on Sunday would be far more reasonable from the standpoint of the surrounding community;
- Proposal would result in an unacceptable noise disturbance up until 11pm on weekdays.

Discussion

Introduction

23. The application seeks planning permission for the partial demolition of existing school buildings and alterations and extensions to form a multi-use sports arena and activity hall (to relocate some of the existing facilities from the Pier Sports Centre, including roller sports facilities) and the creation of an additional service car park. The application proposes to increase the total amount of on-site sports facilities by approximately 1900 sq. metres over and above those already consented through the school's BSF programme. The application is being reported for determination as a result of the objection received from local residents, predominantly relating to access and highway, amenity and hours of opening concerns, as summarised in paragraph (22) above, together with the non-statutory objection received from Sport England relating to internal building design issues.
24. In considering this proposal, regard must be had to the Development Plan Policies outlined in paragraph (18) 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 the proposal needs to be considered in the context of the Development Plan Policies, Government Guidance and other material planning considerations arising from consultation and publicity. Issues of particular relevance in this case include the potential impact on the local highway network as a result of this proposal, the visual appearance and dominance of the proposed sports arena/hall building on the surrounding and wider landscape, and the amenity impacts arising from the hours of use of the proposed development on the surrounding residential area.

Relocation of The Pier Sports Centre

25. The relocation of the Pier Sports Centre was approved, in principle, by Canterbury City Council in November 2007. As part of the current proposals, the intention of the City

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Council is to relocate the existing functions presently taking place within the Pier to Herne Bay High School (as being considered under this planning application) and to extend the Herons Sports Centre in Herne Bay town centre by 2011. Members will note that residential concerns have been expressed ranging from comments relating to the High School not being the most convenient place to site such sports facility; questioning why the sports centre is being taken out of the town centre when money is being channelled into improving and regenerating the town; and why an alternative site has not been found on a more accessible site. Questions have also been raised relating to the future of the Pier structure itself.

26. The majority of these issues are not directly relevant to the consideration of this application and would be better presented to Canterbury City Council, given that the facility is currently owned and managed by an independent company on behalf of the City Council. Furthermore, it is noted that significant levels of public consultation have already been undertaken as to the principle of this scheme as part of Canterbury City Council's Herne Bay Area Action Plan preparation. Based on my current understanding, I am led to believe that an independent charitable body, known as The Herne Bay Pier Trust, has been established as a local community organisation to promote the interests of the Pier in anticipation of the relocation of its existing sports facilities.
27. It is however, important to note that as a matter of principle, the relocation of the Pier's existing sports facilities is not a matter for this Committee to consider. It is instead, for the Committee to consider the planning merits of the new (relocated) sports facility at the Herne Bay High School campus as discussed below. Therefore, matters relating to the broader regeneration of Herne Bay, any alternative sites within the town centre being more appropriate and what happens to the existing Pier structure are not directly relevant in this instance.

Impact on highway network and vehicle parking

28. Members will note that one of the key concerns raised by local residents to the proposal is that of the potential impact of the development on the highway network and concerns over the amount of on-site parking. To address the potential parking shortfall as a result of the proposed sports arena, the application proposes the construction of a new dedicated service car park. This element proposes 76 additional car parking spaces at the site which would be accessed directly from Bullockstone Road. The location of the proposed new car parking facility would be sited on land currently occupied by a contractor's compound, in association with the current BSF building works taking place at the site. This proposed new car park would lead directly onto the new sports arena and would allow the safe and easy movement of users of the sports centre to park and walk to the main entrance without the need to cross the main High School site.
29. On the basis that the sports arena has been designed to hold international standard roller hockey events, as the current 'Pier Sports Centre' already does, I considered that the proposed new 76 space car park would not be sufficient to meet the needs of the new centre exclusively. In the event of major events, the sports arena has been designed to cater for 430 spectator seats which would inevitably result in additional vehicle movements to the site above and beyond the 76 new spaces being proposed in this instance. Therefore, the applicant has indicated that when these major events take place, for which it is anticipated to be a maximum of six per year, overflow vehicle parking would be made available within the school's existing 118 space car park. It is also proposed that given a number of coaches are likely to arrive at the site bringing 'away' teams of players and/or spectators, facilities would be made available within the school's current bus turning lay-by to allow coaches to enter the site and drop off/collect

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people before leaving the site to park in dedicated coach parking facilities within the main town of Herne Bay. This mechanism is proposed to be written into any future operational contract between the School and the management company who would subsequently operate the sports centre to ensure that any potential highway issues arising from major events are satisfactorily addressed. It is also noted that these major events would only take place during weekend or school holiday periods when the main operation of the school is not taking place. In order to control these measures, I propose that conditions be attached to any future planning permission requiring coaches to turn within the site using the existing bus turning facilities and leave the site in a forward gear before driving to dedicated coach parking within the town centre, together with a condition requiring all existing school parking to be made available for use in the event of major events. I consider that these measures would adequately control these elements of the proposed development and would be in accordance with the professional advice received from the Divisional Transportation Manager.

30. From a daily operational perspective, the applicant has considered that the provision of a new 76 space car park would be sufficient to meet the average daily demands of the proposed new community sports centre. Members will note that the Divisional Transportation Manager has not raised an objection to this element of the proposal. I would however, seek to ensure that either by way of the erection of appropriate signage or suitable parking control measures, that the new 76 space car park proposed is made available for the users of the community sports centre and not filled as overspill parking for the main school campus. I consider that such measure should ensure that any potential issue with sports centre users parking on the highway outside of the site is minimised during the normal operation of the sports centre.
31. Members will note that the Divisional Transportation Manger has requested that the applicants provide additional footpath improvements in the locality as part of the proposed scheme. The Divisional Transportation Manager has considered that such measures should be provided to encourage sustainable travel to the site by foot passengers. Discussions are currently on-going with the applicants with regards to these off-site improvements, and therefore I propose that any recommendation to grant planning permission is made subject to the resolution of the outstanding highway improvements. On this basis, I consider that the principle of the scheme can be established, but the detailed improvement works which are felt necessary by the Divisional Transportation Manager can be agreed prior to any formal consent being issued and subsequently implemented.
32. The existing School Travel Plan already recognises that there is a well-established pattern of travel to and from the site, and that a large amount of students access the site by walking from the nearby catchment area of Herne Bay. It is expected that a number of people would also adopt such approach to travel by foot to the proposed new sports complex given the large catchment of people within a 20 minute walk of the proposed sports centre complex. In addition, the application proposes that cycle parking facilities would be up-graded at the site to ensure that the facility would be sufficiently provided for in terms of cycle parking facilities, in line with the Kent Vehicle Parking Standards and Policy C1 of the Adopted Local Plan. Furthermore, it is considered that as a result of the proposed development, the existing School Travel Plan would need to be up-dated to reflect the up-dated school transport situation, together with the transport implications arising from the proposed sports centre.
33. Members will note that local residents have suggested that off-site works, such as the painting of double yellow lines on dangerous bends surrounding the campus, the parking of white lines to prevent parking on the highway surrounding residential

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properties, and the reduction of the speed limit of Bullockstone Road to 20 mph in the event of permission being granted. I understand that parking outside of the High School site by student and staff cars is of concern to local residents, but note that this is a matter for residents to address to the Highway Authority as it is not an aspect which is controlled by the County Planning Authority. I consider however that the provision of a new 76 space car park should help alleviate any potential parking concerns associated with the proposed new sports complex development. I further note that the reduction of the speed limit on Bullockstone Road to 20 mph is a matter for the highway authority in this instance, and not one which the County Planning Authority has any jurisdiction over.

34. On the basis of the highway matters discussed above, whilst I recognise that traffic related issues are of concern to local residents surrounding the campus site, I do not consider the current proposal to be of such significant impact to warrant an objection on highway grounds. I note that the Divisional Transportation Manager has requested that additional off-site footway improvements take place as part of the proposed scheme, for which discussions are still on-going with the applicant. Subject to the satisfactory resolution of these outstanding highway matters, I consider that the current proposal meets the requirements of Policies C1 of the Adopted Local Plan, and accordingly would not seek to raise an objection on these grounds.

Design, scale and overshadowing

35. It is noted that the proposal involves the partial demolition of an existing school building, which I do not consider to be worthy of retention, being of no particular architectural merit. The application proposes the erection of a modern standard sports hall, a large sports arena and a secondary sports/activity hall. The design of the proposed building comprises of a mix of materials ranging from yellow facing brickwork to match those of the main school and the recently approved BSF extensions, metal and laminated cladding panels and aluminium casement windows. The roof of the proposed sports centre is proposed to be a metal standing seam roof, the exact colour of which would be approved as a 'reserved matter' following the grant of any planning permission. Members will note that plans showing the elevations of the proposed sports centre have been included on previous pages D2.5 to D2.8 inclusively.
36. In essence, the sports centre building proposed under this application is essentially the same design as previously consented under the original BSF application, albeit it significantly larger in its massing and rotated through 90 degrees. The north elevation of the proposed building which would face the closest to residential properties (located in Chestnut Drive) would comprise of a blank façade of brickwork and metal cladding with no external windows. This part of the building would be located some 55 metres away from the façade of the rear of the houses, and located on a 45 degree angle to the line of the rear elevations of the houses. Taking into account of the scale of the proposed building, the distance to the nearest residential properties and the directional movement of the sun during the day, I am satisfied that the proposal would not result in an unacceptable loss of light in nearby residential dwellings as suggested by local residents. Furthermore, having observed the current site boundary between the closest residential properties and the school site, it is considered that a substantial reduction in sunlight already occurs given the dense vegetation along this boundary.
37. In terms of potential overlooking issues of nearby residential dwellings from inside the sports hall/arena building, as previously mentioned the building is not proposed to have any windows on the north facing elevation, therefore eliminating any potential overlooking concerns. Instead, the sport hall/arena is proposed, in the main, to use artificial lighting, heating and mechanical ventilation measures to control the

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temperature within the sports areas and reduce solar glare. It is noted therefore, that the only windows looking out towards the nearest residential properties would be those from existing teaching classrooms which are already in situ on the school site. I therefore do not consider that an objection on overlooking matters can be sustained in this instance.

38. In terms of the visual appearance of the sports complex building from outside of the site, there would be a noticeable change to the East and South elevations facing Bullockstone Road and the West elevation facing onto the existing sports field. Whilst it is noted that the proposed sports complex building would stand out as a dominant feature on the school site, and surrounding landscape, it is considered that it would not be 'out of place' given the predominance of sports activities at the site, including extensive flood-lit tennis courts/multi-use courts and the sports status the High School currently holds. Furthermore, it is noted that one of the key features of sports complex buildings are large and relatively bulky buildings given the internal space requirements including a high internal ceiling height. I am mindful that the applicant has incorporated the use of matching materials within the proposed design, together with the use of metal and laminate cladding panels to 'break-up' otherwise blank brick-work elevations.
39. Members will note that Sport England have maintained a non-statutory objection to the proposed scheme, largely based on the internal layout of the proposed sports centre building. Whilst it is important to consider the concerns raised in this instance, given that the objection is a non-statutory objection (i.e. not relating to their statutory playing field protection policy) the application would not have to be referred to the Secretary of State should members be minded to resolve to approve this application. It is noted that the concerns of Sport England in this instance relate to technical internal building design layout issues, which are not strictly speaking planning matters in their own right. That said, I consider that the provision of these technical aspects could be controlled by planning conditions to ensure that the internal sports facilities are designed in accordance with the relevant Sport England Guidance Notes and that the sports arena is marked out for its intended multi-use games provision. Furthermore, I consider that a Community Use Scheme and a Sports Development Plan could also be controlled by planning conditions requiring their submission and future approval in consultation with Sport England. On this basis, I am minded to ensure that any future decision include appropriately worded planning conditions to safeguard the Sport England concerns, as outlined in paragraph (19) above.
40. I consider the design of the proposed scheme to be appropriate in terms of its design, scale, layout and massing, whilst considering the impact on surrounding residential visual amenity to be noticeable, but not detrimental, given the separation distances and the location proposed. Whilst I consider that wider views into the site from surrounding areas would change as a result of the proposal, I do not consider the design of building proposed to be out of character with the sports status the High School currently holds. Accordingly, I consider that the design solution proposed is in accordance with Policy BE1 of the Canterbury City Council Local Plan. On this basis, I would not seek to raise an objection on design grounds, and would accordingly recommend that a condition be placed on any decision to require the submission of a detailed scheme of external materials for later consideration.

Noise & Light Pollution

41. Members will note that concerns have been expressed relating to the potential nuisance arising from increased background noise levels from the additional sports facilities, and the potential increase in light pollution, particularly during night time periods. In terms of

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noise impacts, it is noted that all new sporting activities are proposed to take place within the three sports areas of the new building – the main sports arena, sports hall and sports hall/activity area. As previously noted, the proposed sports areas would benefit from mechanical heating and ventilation and therefore could be described as a sealed area. In noise impact terms, any potential noise break-out could only therefore occur as a result of noise travelling through walls and to residential properties beyond. I am therefore not expecting that noise break-out from the proposed sports complex would be significant in this instance. Furthermore, it is noted that the main sports arena area, which would be used for major international standard events, would be located the furthest distance from the nearest residential properties in Chestnut Drive, thereby further reducing the possibilities of significant noise break-out from major events.

42. Whilst it is noted that the applicant is seeking permission to operate the sports centre until 23:00 hours Monday to Friday evenings, 24:00 hours on Saturday evenings and 22:30 on Sunday and Bank Holiday evenings, I consider that given the only sports activities taking place within this time period would be internal sports activities within an enclosed purpose built building, adverse noise impacts are not considered to be significant on surrounding residential properties. I therefore consider that the applicant has been able to demonstrate that nearby properties would not be adversely affected through noise break-out from the proposed new facilities, and therefore consider that an objection on these grounds cannot be sustained. However, in order to safeguard this position, I would seek to ensure that details of mechanical ventilation measures be submitted for approval to ensure minimum noise break-out associated with this element of the proposal.
43. In terms of any additional external lighting proposed on the sports complex building, it is noted that the only additional light sources would be associated with the installation of bulk-head light fittings for security purposes around the building. I have also received confirmation that no external floodlighting would be installed on the perimeter of the proposed building. I therefore recommend that a condition be placed on any decision requiring the submission of an external lighting scheme for the further approval of the County Planning Authority in order to ensure that nearby light sensitive residential properties are safeguarded. With such measure proposed, I would not seek to raise an objection on the impact of the development on nearby dwellings through light pollution.

Landscaping

44. I note that the applicant has outlined proposed landscape planting measures to visually soften the proposed sports complex and new car park developments. I support such landscaping measures in line with Policy NE5 of the adopted Local Plan, and recommend that such measures be conditioned on any future decision to ensure that the proposed species, sizes and densities of all new planting is acceptable.

Impact on Open Space designation

45. As previously noted, the playing fields of the school site are designated as open space in the Adopted Canterbury City Council Local Plan. Policy C24 of the Local Plan sets a policy presumption against the loss of protected open space where the material harm would outweigh the need for the development. However, in the case of this particular application the open space designation is not, in my opinion, materially affected given that the majority of the new building works are located outside of this land designation on the southern edge of the school's existing 'built cluster'. It is noted that the proposed sports centre complex building would be located outside of the formal designation,

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whilst the proposed new car park would be located on land currently forming part of the Open Space designation.

46. Whilst it is unfortunate that a relatively small area of Open Space would be lost as part of the proposals, in reality this triangular shape of the proposed car park area does not play a valuable part in the open space of the site at present. As previously noted this area is currently being occupied as a contractor's compound area, and upon completion of the BSF building works would return to a grassed area. However, this area is too small to form any useful space for sporting or recreational purposes, and given the acute need to provide additional parking within the site, I consider that the applicant has been able to provide a demonstratable need for the new car park in this location in this particular instance. On balance, I therefore consider that any impact on the formal Open Space designation would be minimal and would not seek to raise an objection on these grounds.

Construction works

47. In order to ensure that construction methods and practices would result in the least possible disruption of local residents and the wider road network, I recommend that a condition limiting the hours of construction be placed on any decision to limit the effects of construction activities during weekday evenings, and weekends given the site's location in a largely residential area. Accordingly, I recommend that a condition controlling the hours of construction seeks to ensure that construction activities can only take place between the hours of 08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Fridays, and 09:00 to 13:00 on Saturdays, with no working on Sundays or Bank Holidays. Furthermore, I note that a condition requiring the same hours of construction as outlined above was placed on the current BSF building works taking place on site. From my experience to date, it would seem that such hours are appropriate to the site surroundings and I have received no complaints from local residents relating to these hours based on the current building works.
48. In order for construction traffic to access the site, the application proposes that the current on-site contractor's compound would be utilised, thereby reducing the need for an additional compound area to be established on site. The applicant envisages that the proposed building works would take place in tandem to the current BSF building works, and the last phase would involve the removal of the contractor's compound and the construction of the new car park on its footprint. In order to ensure that the proposed new sports complex does not formally open for community use until the new car park has been installed, I propose that a suitably worded condition be placed on any decision to ensure that the provision of the new on-site vehicle parking is fully implemented and operational before the centre is brought into community use. Furthermore, to ensure that minimal construction impacts are experienced on the surrounding highway network, I would seek to ensure that a condition be placed on any decision to ensure that significant levels of mud and debris are not tracked onto the highway as a result of construction activities.

Opening Hours and Community Use

49. Members will note that the applicant has proposed the following hours of operation for the community facilities: 08:00 to 23:00 hours Monday to Friday; 08:00 to 24:00 hours on Saturdays and 08:00 to 22:30 hours on Sundays and Bank Holidays. It is noted that these hours reflect those currently operated at the Pier Sports Centre in Herne Bay Town Centre, and that any new facility would need to offer the same operational hours

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given the existing sporting activities which currently take place within the current facility and ultimately the commercial viability of the relocated sports centre.

50. Whilst I note that concerns have been expressed by local residents relating to the extent of the late-night opening hours of the proposed facility, I note that all activities which would take place at the site would only take place within the confines of the building. Therefore, any potential noise disturbance is only likely to be associated with pedestrians/vehicles moving to and from the site during late night periods.
51. I note that a number of existing clubs currently use the site for out of school hours community activities during weekday evenings and weekends. I therefore note that a certain degree of community use is already taking place at the site, albeit not to the extent being proposed by this application. In terms of planning policy, I also note that Policy S5 of the South East Plan encourages sport and recreational activities to be encouraged and supported by local authorities, whilst Policy TSR3 recognises the opportunities to develop regionally significant sporting facilities. I therefore consider that there is strong policy support for this application in principle.
52. In addition, Sport England has requested that conditions be placed on any decision to grant planning permission to ensure that all new sporting provision is developed in accordance with their adopted design guidance, and that within 6 months of the first occupation of the sporting facilities, a Community Use Agreement and Sports Development Plan should be submitted to and approved by the County Planning Authority. In my opinion, I have no objection to these recommendations, and accordingly suggest that conditions be placed on any decision to secure these matters.
53. On balance, whilst I consider that the proposed hours of opening are significantly greater than those currently operated by community activities at the school, and that the location of the proposed facility is within a predominantly residential area, it is considered that the benefit of the new sporting facility to the local community which is essentially the relocation of an existing facility, would outweigh the potential concerns in this instance. Furthermore, I consider that the proposed hours of operation would take place solely within the fabric of the building, resulting in a minimal impact on the surrounding amenity during late-night periods. I am also mindful that the reduction in the hours of opening of the new centre as opposed to the current hours of opening of the existing sports centre, would result in the loss of sporting activities for the local community and also, although not directly a material planning consideration, the impact on the commercial viability of any new sports facility. It is noted that the demand for sports facilities within Herne Bay are currently high, particularly in the run up to the London 2012 Olympics, and I would therefore not wish to reduce the community sports facilities within the local area through any reduction in the proposed opening hours of the relocated sports centre. Whilst the balance between the hours of opening in terms of safeguarding nearby residential amenity and the potential loss in the amount of available sports facilities in the locality are finely balanced in this case, I am minded to support the proposed hours of operation of the facility in this instance.

Land Contamination, Drainage & Flooding Issues

54. The Environment Agency has raised no objection to the proposed development, but has suggested that conditions be placed on any decision to grant planning permission to control the disposal of foul and surface waters, drainage into groundwater or surface waters, land contamination and the storage of fuel, oil and chemicals on site during construction activities. I consider that the imposition of such conditions would be

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reasonable in this instance, and subject to these being included in the recommendation, would not seek to raise an objection these aspects of the proposals.

55. Members will note that objections have been received from local residents, as outlined in paragraph (22) above relating to the potential for the proposed scheme to increase the amount of surface water run-off from the site, thereby increasing the likelihood of flooding of nearby properties. As part of a review of surface water issues at the site, a report has recently been undertaken investigating the impacts of the High School site on surrounding residential properties. It was found that building works at the school in recent years have not adversely impacted upon surface water run off in the vicinity.
56. Furthermore, it is noted that the proposed development's footprint would be located in the main on an area of existing hardstanding, currently occupied by hardstanding of pavements, and an existing playground, together with current school buildings which would be demolished as part of the scheme. The applicant has indicated that if anything, the proposed development would actually improve surface water management in this location, given that an appropriate drainage scheme would be specifically designed for the management of surface waters. In this instance, I do not therefore that an objection on this matter can be sustained, and would accordingly recommend that a condition be placed on any decision requiring such scheme to be implemented as approved by the County Planning Authority, in conjunction with the City Council.

Archaeology

57. Members will note that the County Archaeologist has suggested that the previous archaeological investigation at the site demonstrated a high level of archaeological activity. As such it is possible that the proposed development works may disturb archaeological remains, and therefore a condition covering the archaeological evaluation of the site and any safeguarding measures should be imposed on any consent. I consider these suggested conditions to be appropriate to the scale and nature of the proposed development, and accordingly recommend that they are included within a recommendation to grant planning permission. I further note that such conditions would be in accordance with Policy BE15 of the Adopted Local Plan.

Conclusion

58. Having regard to the Development Plan Policies, and the material planning considerations received from both consultees and local residents in this instance, I consider the proposal to be an acceptable solution in terms of its design, scale and massing and in general accordance with the Development Plan. Whilst I consider that the issue surrounding the proposed hours of operation of the relocated sports centre in a predominantly residential area are finely balanced against potential loss in the extent of the sporting facilities on offer within the town should the proposed hours be reduced below those currently taking place at the Pier Sports Centre, I am minded to accept the proposed hours of use in this case. I am conscious that I would not wish to see any potential loss in the extent of community sports facilities, particularly in the run up to the London 2012 Olympics. On balance, I therefore consider that planning permission should be granted for this proposal, subject to the resolution of the outstanding footpath improvements requested by the Divisional Transportation Manager (as set out in Paragraph 19 above), subject to the following conditions as set out in paragraph (59) below:

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Recommendation

59. I RECOMMEND that SUBJECT TO THE SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION OF OUTSTANDING HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS, that PLANNING PERMISSION BE GRANTED, SUBJECT TO conditions, including amongst others, conditions to cover the following aspects:

- Standard time limit ;
- The development to be carried out in accordance with the permitted details;
- Full details of all external materials to be submitted to and approved prior to the commencement of operations;
- Details of mechanical ventilation measures be submitted for approval;
- Site levels and finished floor levels shall be submitted to and approved prior to any works commencing;
- School travel plan be updated prior to first occupation of development to take account of the new sports complex;
- Parking to be made available out of school hours within the site in connection with the sports centre use;
- Adequate measures be taken to ensure that vehicles leaving the site engaged in the construction work do not deposit mud or other debris on the public highway;
- Construction works only take place between the hours of 08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Fridays; 09:00 to 13:00 Saturdays; and no working on Sundays or Bank Holidays;
- Landscaping scheme to be submitted to and approved prior to the commencement of operations on site, and thereafter be fully implemented as approved within the first planting season following the completion of works;
- Programme of archaeological evaluation;
- Surface water drainage scheme be submitted for approval by the County Planning Authority in liaison with Environment Agency and Canterbury City Council;
- Land contamination;
- Fuel, oil and chemical storage measures;
- Submission of a Community Use Scheme and Sports Development Plan to be approved in writing by the County Planning Authority in conjunction with Sport England;
- Details of external lighting to be approved by County Planning Authority;
- Control of mud and debris on highway in connection with construction activities;
- Coach turning facilities made available at all times on site;
- Coaches leaving site do so in a forward gear and park off site in designated coach parking;
- Sports hall to be marked out for intended multi-use;
- Internal layout designed in accordance with Sport England Guidance Notes;
- Implementation of new car park prior to bringing the sports complex into use by the community;
- Hours of use of internal facilities of new sports centre be limited to - Mondays to Fridays: 08:00 to 23:00 hours, Saturdays: 08:00 to 24:00 hours, Sundays and Bank Holidays 08:00 to 22:30 hours;

Case officer – Julian Moat	01622 696978
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Background documents - See section heading
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