

SECTION D
DEVELOPMENT TO BE CARRIED OUT BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL

Background Documents: the deposited documents; views and representations received as referred to in the reports and included in the development proposals dossier for each case; and other documents as might be additionally indicated.

Item D1

Proposed expansion by 1 FE involving the erection of a new 2-storey teaching and sports hall block, a pedestrian bridge, extension to existing dining area, 16 parking spaces and landscaping works, St Gregory's Catholic School, Reynolds Lane, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN4 9XL – TW/18/2129 (KCC/TW/0100/2018)

A report by Head of Planning Applications Group to Planning Applications Committee on 16 January 2019.

Application by Kent County Council's Property and Infrastructure for a proposed expansion by 1 form of entry involving the erection of a new 2-storey teaching and sports hall block, new pedestrian bridge linking north and south sites, extension to existing dining area, provision of 16 car parking spaces, and associated landscaping works – St Gregory's Catholic School, Reynolds Lane, Royal Tunbridge Wells, TN4 9XL (Ref: KCC/TW/0100/2018 and TW/18/2129).

Recommendation: Planning permission to be granted, subject to a Memorandum of Understanding and conditions.

Local Member: Mr P Oakford

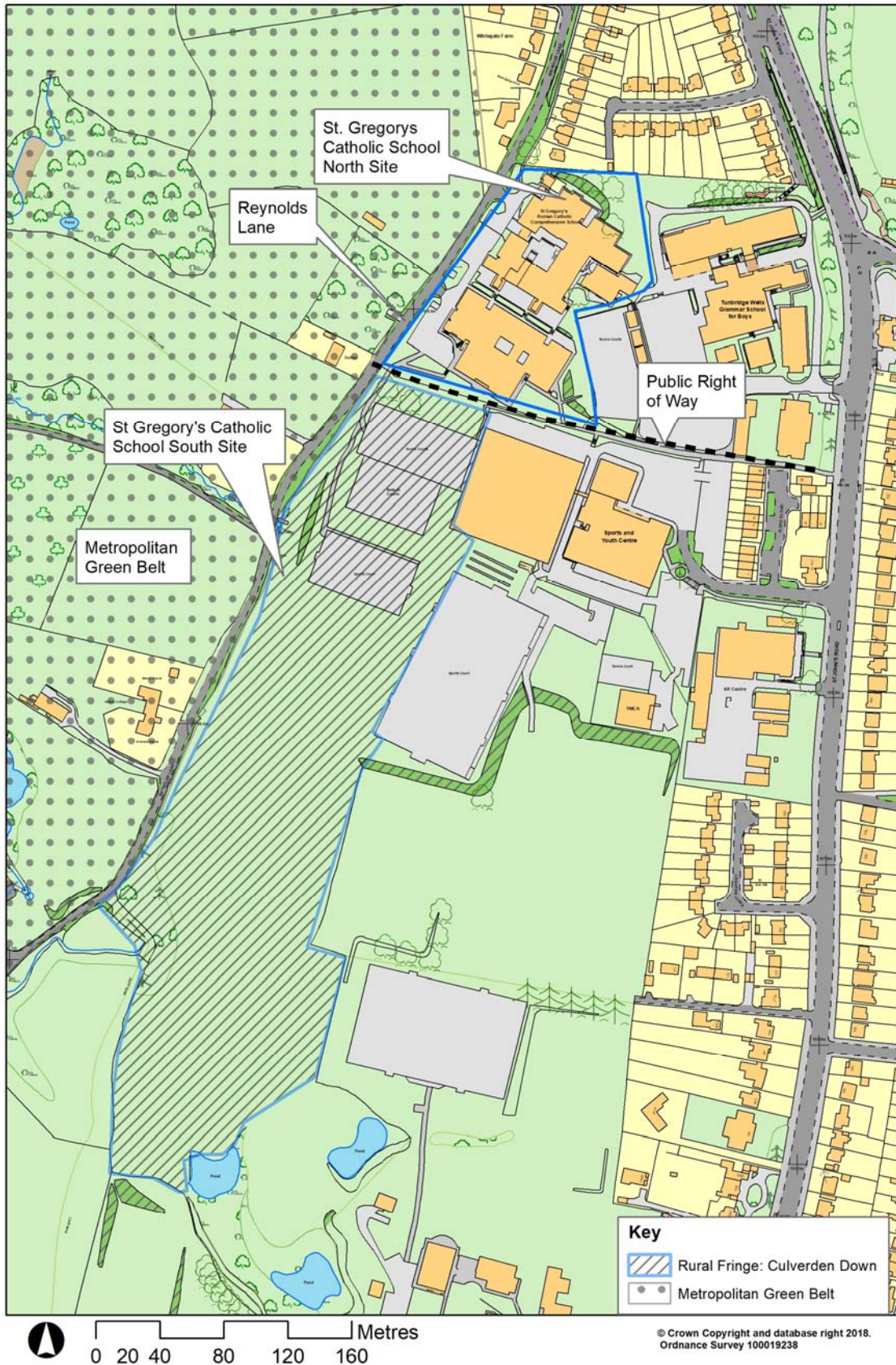
Classification: Unrestricted

Site

1. St Gregory's Catholic School is located off Reynolds Lane and is approximately 2km north of Tunbridge Wells town centre. Residential properties are located to the north of the school site. Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys and Tunbridge Wells Leisure Centre share the eastern boundary of the school site. To the south are the sports fields for both Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys and for St Gregory's Catholic School. Reynolds Lane is located to the western boundary of the school and runs along the entire length of school site. Extensive fields which form part of the Metropolitan Green Belt, are located on the other side of Reynolds Lane. The vehicular entrance and exit to the school are located off Reynolds Lane. There is also a pedestrian entrance via Reynolds Lane and an additional pedestrian entrance directly from the A26 St John's Road via a Public Right of Way which runs through the grounds of the Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys. A site location plan is attached.
2. The school site is generally elongated on plan and orientated broadly in a north to south direction. The site also slopes considerably from north to south. The existing school consists of 2 main blocks, known as the North Building and the South Building. Both of which are located to the northern edge of the overall school plot. There are a number of additional separate buildings, one of them being the Sixth Form Block. The North Building has a mixture of single storey, two storey and three storey buildings which are set around a courtyard. This building also accommodates the main school entrance, dining room, hall, gym, chapel, music room, science and some general classrooms.

Proposed 1 form of entry expansion - St Gregory's Catholic School, Reynolds Lane, Royal Tunbridge Wells - TW/18/2129

Site Location Plan



Proposed 1 form of entry expansion - St Gregory's Catholic School, Reynolds Lane, Royal Tunbridge Wells - TW/18/2129

Proposed site layout – South Site



P06 Updated for Planning- Staff Parking	SR	BP	20.08.18
approved:			
P05 Issue For Stage 3 Coordination	SR	BH	20.07.18
P04 Issue For Planning	SR	BH	15.05.18
P03 Issue For Planning	SR	BH	14.05.18
P02 Issue For Planning Review & Costing	SR	RC	28.04.18
P01 Issue for Review & Coordination	SR	BH	15.04.18
rev description		drawn checked date	

Bond Bryan Architects
 The Church Studio Springsdale Road Sheffield S10 1TP
 t +44(0)114 268 2540 w www.bondbryan.com
 e KCC@Gregorys@bondbryan.co.uk

St Gregory's Catholic School
Tunbridge Wells
External Site Landscape

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

Site Layout Proposal-South Site

site project ref	scale(s)	original paper size
17-075	1:250	A1

name:	project	originator	volume	level	type	role	number
	STG	BBA	ZZ	ZZ	DR	L	1006

status: suitability description:
S2 Suitable For Information

revision: revision description:
P06 PRELIMINARY

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Proposed 1 form of entry expansion – St Gregory’s Catholic School, Reynolds Lane, Royal Tunbridge Wells – TW/18/2129

Proposed site layout – North Site



rev	description	dwn	checked	date
P06	Issued for Stage 3 Coordination	SR	BH	20.07.18
P05	Issued for Planning	SR	BH	16.05.18
P04	Issued for Planning	SR	BH	15.05.18
P03	Issued for Planning	SR	BH	14.05.18
P02	Issued for Planning & Costing	SR	BH	26.04.18
P01	Issued for Review	SR	BH	16.04.18

Bond Bryan Architects
 The Church Studio Springside Road Sheffield S10 1LP
 t +44(0)114 266 2940 w www.bondbryan.com
 e KCCSGregory@bondbryan.co.uk

**St Gregory's Catholic School
 Tunbridge Wells
 External Site Landscape
 KENT COUNTY COUNCIL**

Site Layout Proposal-North Site

bbs project ref	17-075	scales	1:250	original paper size	A1
name	STG - BBA - ZZ - ZZ - DR - L - 1007				
project	originator	volume	level	type	role number
STG	BBA	ZZ	ZZ	DR	L - 1007
status	suitability description : S2 Suitable For Information				
revision	revision description : P06 PRELIMINARY				

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Proposed Pedestrian Gate (A1-Acces Control)
 Proposed low level retaining walls (over RZ to be resistive e.g. construction)

Existing Boundary and Internal Fencing
 Existing Pedestrian Fencing (2.4m - wet/drain or similar approved)

Primary/Main Building Entrance
 Secondary/Escape Service Building Access

Main Pedestrian/Pupil Route
 Connected Vehicular Route (incl service maintenance & emergency)

Existing Tarmac Vehicular Surfacing
 Existing Tarmac Pedestrian Surfacing

Proposed Tarmac Vehicular & Pedestrian Surfacing (standard asphalt)
 Proposed Tarmac Vehicular & Pedestrian Surfacing (permeable coloured with new tiling elements)

Proposed Pedestrian Paving - With feature tiling around new building edge.
 Proposed New Buildings

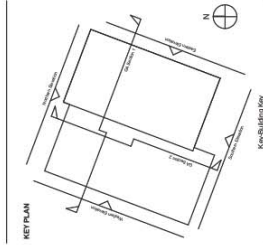
Existing Trees to be retained and protected.
 Existing Trees to be removed as a result of proposal.
 Proposed Trees (Landscape Native Species)

For Existing Trees & Associated Works. Refer to Tree Protection & Removal Strategy and Arboricultural Survey / Report.

Proposed 1 form of entry expansion - St Gregory's Catholic School, Reynolds Lane, Royal Tunbridge Wells - TW/18/2129

Proposed ground floor plan – teaching and sports block

NOTES:
This drawing to be read in conjunction with O.A.3a, Elevations and Section drawings.



P02 Planning issue for revised design. BP JS 13.08.18
 P01 Planning issue BP JS 17.05.18
 rev. description drawn checked date

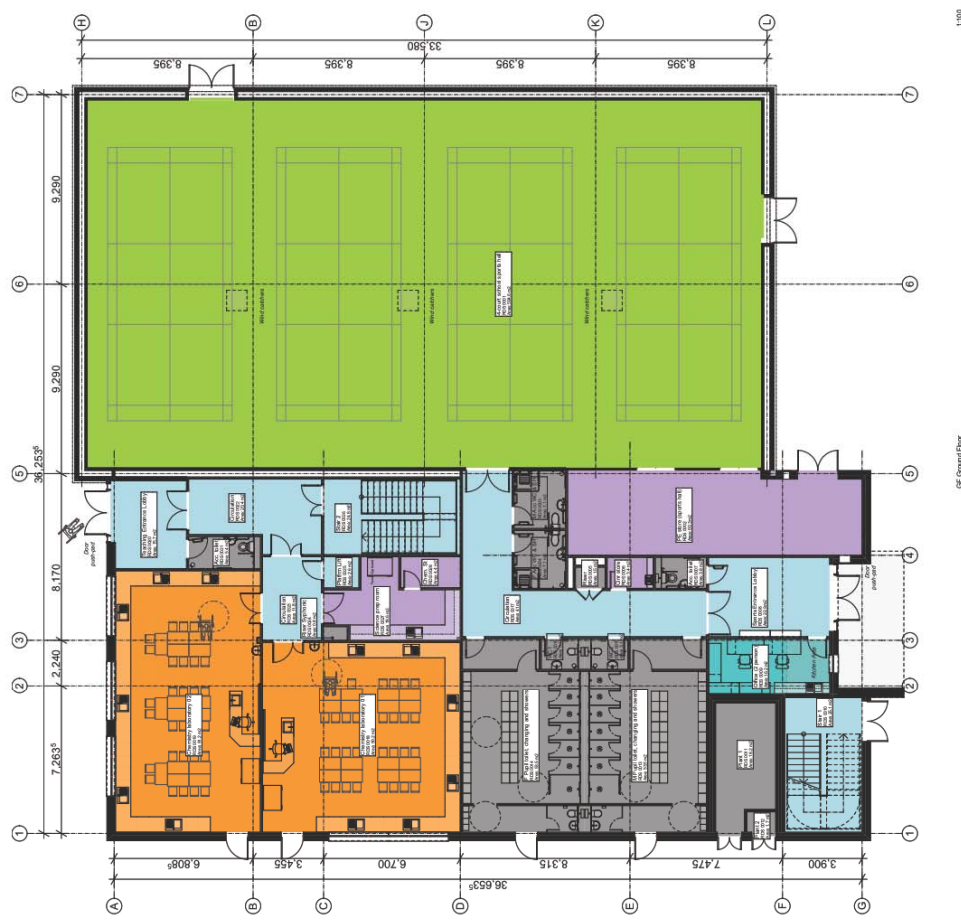
Bond Bryan Architects
 The Church Studio, Springfield Road, Shroton, D10 1UP
 t: +44(0)1539 2900 w: www.bondbryan.com
 e: hcc25@bondbryan.com

01-FE EXPANSION
ST GREGORY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL
TEACHING AND SPORT HALL FACILITY
KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

GROUND FLOOR GA PLAN

name	project	original	volume	level	type	date	number
17.07.18		1:500			original		A1

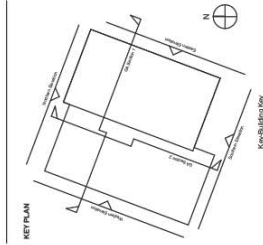
name	availability	description
STG - BBA - 00 - GF - DR - A - 2001		
S8	SUITABLE FOR PLANNING APPROVAL	
P02	PRELIMINARY	



Proposed 1 form of entry expansion - St Gregory's Catholic School, Reynolds Lane, Royal Tunbridge Wells - TW/18/2129

Proposed first floor plan – teaching and sports block

NOTES:
This drawing to be read in conjunction with O.A.3a, Elevations and Section drawings.



PROJ	Planning base for revised design.	BP	J5	13.08.18
REV	Planning base	BP	J5	17.05.18
BY	description	drawn	checked	date

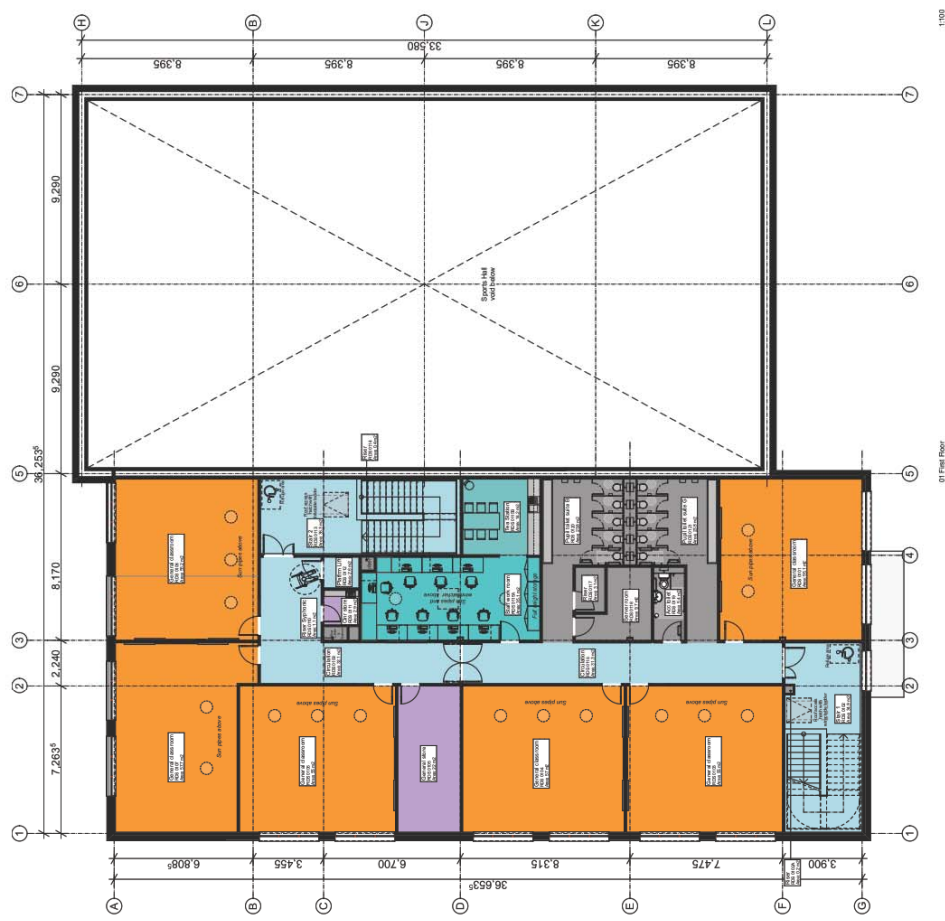
Bond Bryan Architects
The Church Studio, Springfield Road, Shroffed, OX11 1UP
t: +44(0)1491 208 200 w: www.bondbryan.com
e: hcc25@bondbryan.com

01-FE EXPANSION
ST GREGORY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL
TEACHING AND SPORT HALL FACILITY
KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

FIRST FLOOR GA PLAN

area project no	17278	scale(s)	original	paper size	A1		
name	project	originator	volume	level	type	date	number
STG	BBA	00	01	DR	A	2001	
status	SUBSTANTIAL FOR PLANNING APPROVAL						
revision	PRELIMINARY						

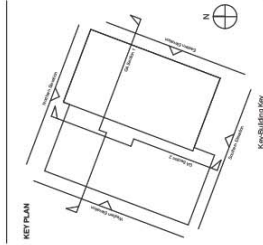
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Proposed 1 form of entry expansion - St Gregory's Catholic School, Reynolds Lane, Royal Tunbridge Wells - TW/18/2129

Proposed roof plan – teaching and sports block

NOTES:
This drawing to be read in conjunction with GA.3a, Elevations and Section drawings.



P02 Planning issue for revised design. BP JS 13.08.18
 P01 Planning issue BP JS 17.05.18
 REV description drawn checked date

Bond Bryan Architects
 The Church Stables, Springfield Road, Shiffeld, O10 1LP
 T: +44(0)114 206 2900 W: www.bondbryan.com
 E: hcc25@bondbryan.com

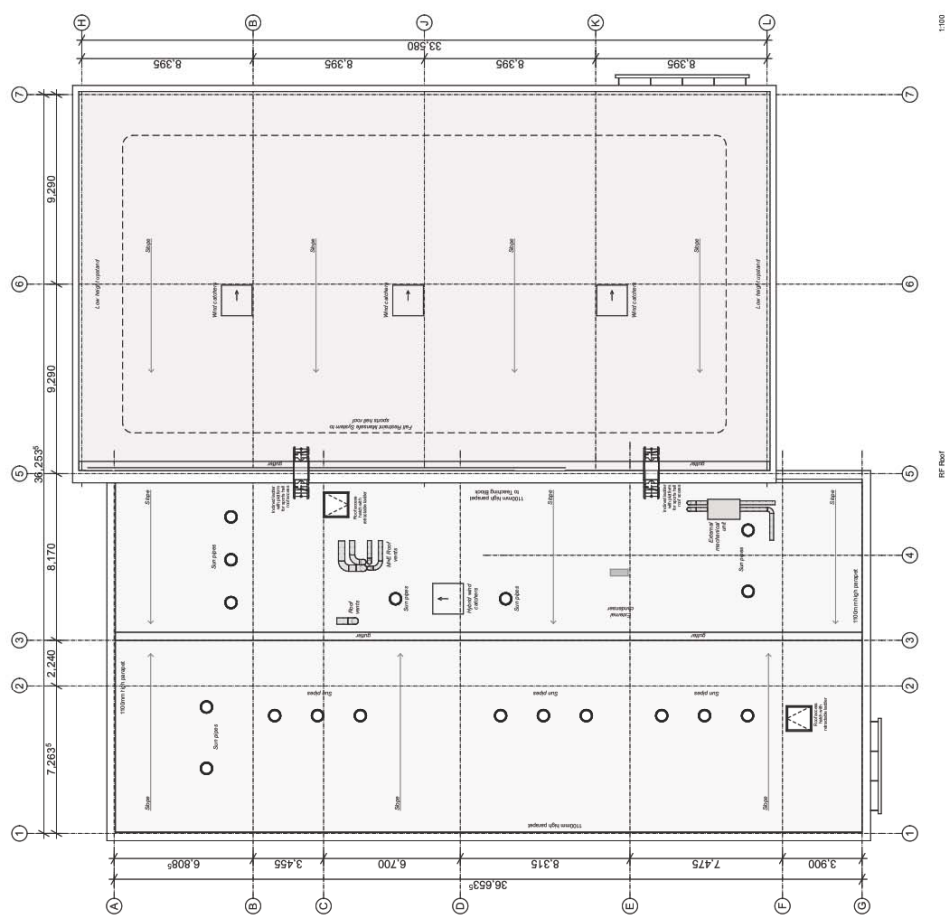
01-FE EXPANSION
ST GREGORY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL
TEACHING AND SPORT HALL FACILITY
KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

ROOF GA PLAN

area project ref	12.07.18
scale(s)	1:100
original discipline	AI

name	project	organizer	volume	level	type	size	number
STG	BBA	00	RF	DR	A	2001	
status	S8 - SUITABLE FOR PLANNING APPROVAL						
revision	P02 - PRELIMINARY						

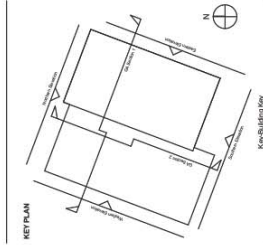
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Proposed 1 form of entry expansion – St Gregory’s Catholic School, Reynolds Lane, Royal Tunbridge Wells – TW/18/2129

Sections through teaching and sports block

NOTES:
This drawing to be read in conjunction with GA.3a, Elevations and Section drawings.



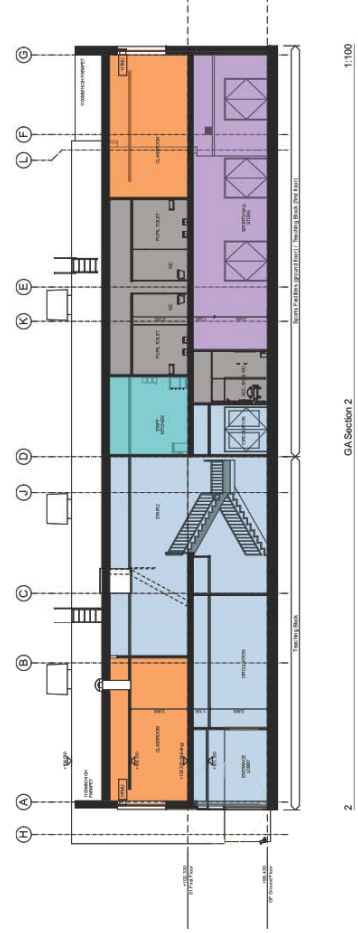
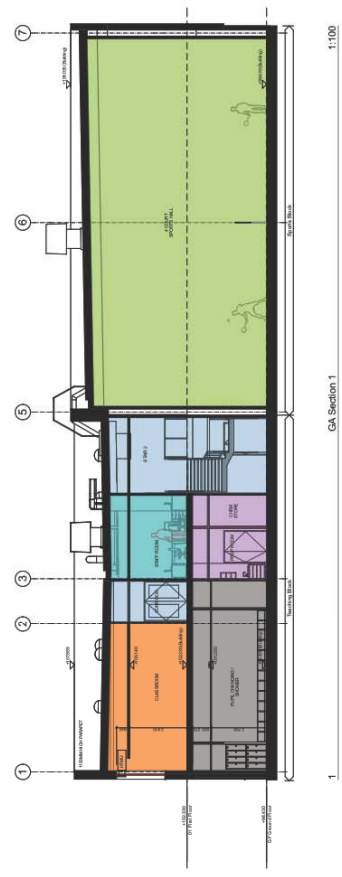
PO4	Planning issue for revised design.	BP	ZS	13.08.18
PO3	Outline planning application for revised design with the sports block.	BP	GC	20.07.18
PO2	Planning issue for revised design.	BP	GC	17.05.18
PO1	Final issue.	BP	GC	14.05.18
BY	description	drawn	checked	date

Bond Bryan Architects
The Church Stables, Springfield Road, Shroffed, D10 1LP
t: +44(0)1753 200 200 w: www.bondbryan.com
e: hcc25@bondbryan.com

01-FE EXPANSION
ST GREGORY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL
TEACHING AND SPORT HALL FACILITY
KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

GA SECTIONS SHEET 1

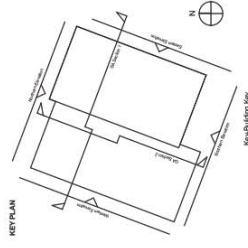
title	scale(s)	original discipline
17.07.18	1:100	A1
project	organizer	volume
STYG	BBA	00 - ZZ - DR - A - 4001
sheet	number	revision
S8	SUITABLE FOR PLANNING APPROVAL	
PO4	PRELIMINARY	



Proposed 1 form of entry expansion – St Gregory’s Catholic School, Reynolds Lane, Royal Tunbridge Wells – TW/18/2129

Northern and western elevations – teaching and sports block

- Elevation Materials**
- 01 - Brickwork, colour: black/white grey, finish: half brick, weather with recessed
 - 02 - Portland cement, colour: dark grey, finish: smooth
 - 03 - Portland cement, colour: dark grey, finish: smooth
 - 04 - Portland cement, colour: dark grey, finish: smooth
 - 05 - Portland cement, colour: dark grey, finish: smooth
 - 06 - Portland cement, colour: dark grey, finish: smooth
 - 07 - Portland cement, colour: dark grey, finish: smooth
 - 08 - Portland cement, colour: dark grey, finish: smooth
 - 09 - Portland cement, colour: dark grey, finish: smooth
 - 10 - Portland cement, colour: dark grey, finish: smooth
 - 11 - Portland cement, colour: dark grey, finish: smooth
 - 12 - Portland cement, colour: dark grey, finish: smooth
 - 13 - Portland cement, colour: dark grey, finish: smooth
 - 14 - Portland cement, colour: dark grey, finish: smooth
 - 15 - Portland cement, colour: dark grey, finish: smooth



P02 Planning issue for revised design. BP JB 13.08.18
 P01 Planning issue BP DC 17.05.18
 rev. description drawn checked date

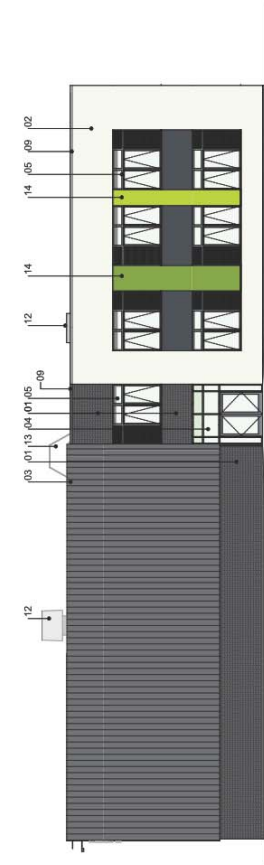
Bond Bryan Architects
 The Church Studio, Springfield Road, Shroton, D10 1UP
 t: +44(0)1539 2900 w: www.bondbryan.com
 e: hcc25@bondbryan.com

01-FE EXPANSION
ST GREGORY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL
TEACHING AND SPORT HALL FACILITY
KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

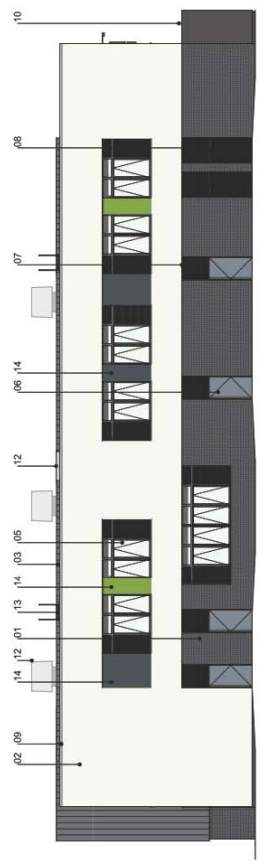
GA ELEVATIONS SHEET 1

name	scale(s)	original paper size				
12/2018	1:100	A1				
project	original no.	volume	level	type	date	number
STG	BBA	00	ZZ	DR	A	3011
status	availability / description					
S8	SUITABLE FOR PLANNING APPROVAL					
P02	PRELIMINARY					

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Northern Elevation
1:100

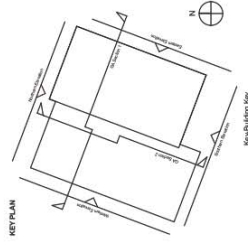


Western Elevation
1:100

Proposed 1 form of entry expansion - St Gregory's Catholic School, Reynolds Lane, Royal Tunbridge Wells - TW/18/2129

Eastern and southern elevations – teaching and sports block

- Material Schedule**
- 01 - Brickwork, colour to be decided by client, half brick stretcher with recessed joint, mortar colour dark grey, etc. as above.
 - 02 - Portland cement concrete, colour to be decided by client, etc. as above.
 - 03 - Aluminium metal panel cladding with vertical profile, etc. colour dark grey.
 - 04 - Aluminium window frames with vertical profile, etc. colour dark grey.
 - 05 - Aluminium window frames with horizontal profile, etc. colour dark grey.
 - 06 - Aluminium window frames with vertical profile, etc. colour dark grey.
 - 07 - Aluminium window frames with horizontal profile, etc. colour dark grey.
 - 08 - Portland cement concrete, colour to be decided by client, etc. as above.
 - 09 - Portland cement concrete, colour to be decided by client, etc. as above.
 - 10 - Portland cement concrete, colour to be decided by client, etc. as above.
 - 11 - Portland cement concrete, colour to be decided by client, etc. as above.
 - 12 - Portland cement concrete, colour to be decided by client, etc. as above.
 - 13 - Portland cement concrete, colour to be decided by client, etc. as above.
 - 14 - Portland cement concrete, colour to be decided by client, etc. as above.
 - 15 - Portland cement concrete, colour to be decided by client, etc. as above.



P02 Planning issue for revised design. BP JB 13.08.18
 P01 Planning issue BP DC 17.05.18
 REV description drawn checked date

Bond Bryan Architects
 The Church Stables, Springfield Road, Shefield, S10 1LP
 t: +44(0)114 208 2900 w: www.bondbryan.com
 e: hcc250@bondbryan.com

01-FE EXPANSION
ST GREGORY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL
TEACHING AND SPORT HALL FACILITY
KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

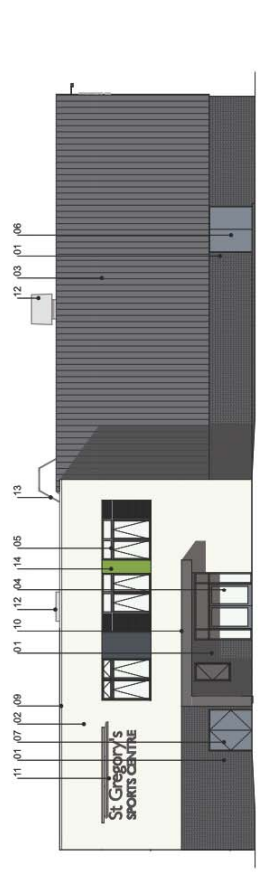
GA ELEVATIONS SHEET 2

name	scale(s)	original discipline
1:200	1:100	A1

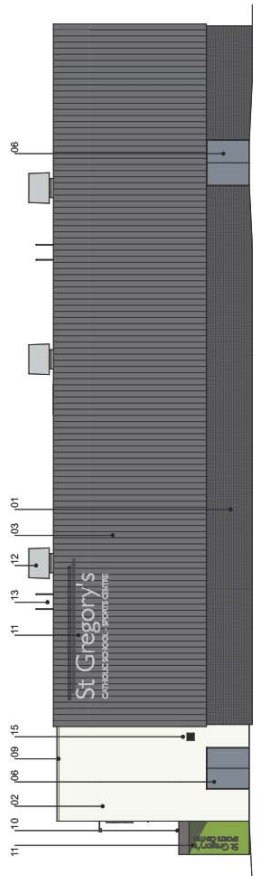
project	organizer	volume	level	type	date	number
STG	BBA	00	ZZ	DR	A	3012

status: **SUBJECT FOR PLANNING APPROVAL**
 revision: **PRELIMINARY**

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Southern Elevation 1:100



Eastern Elevation 1:100

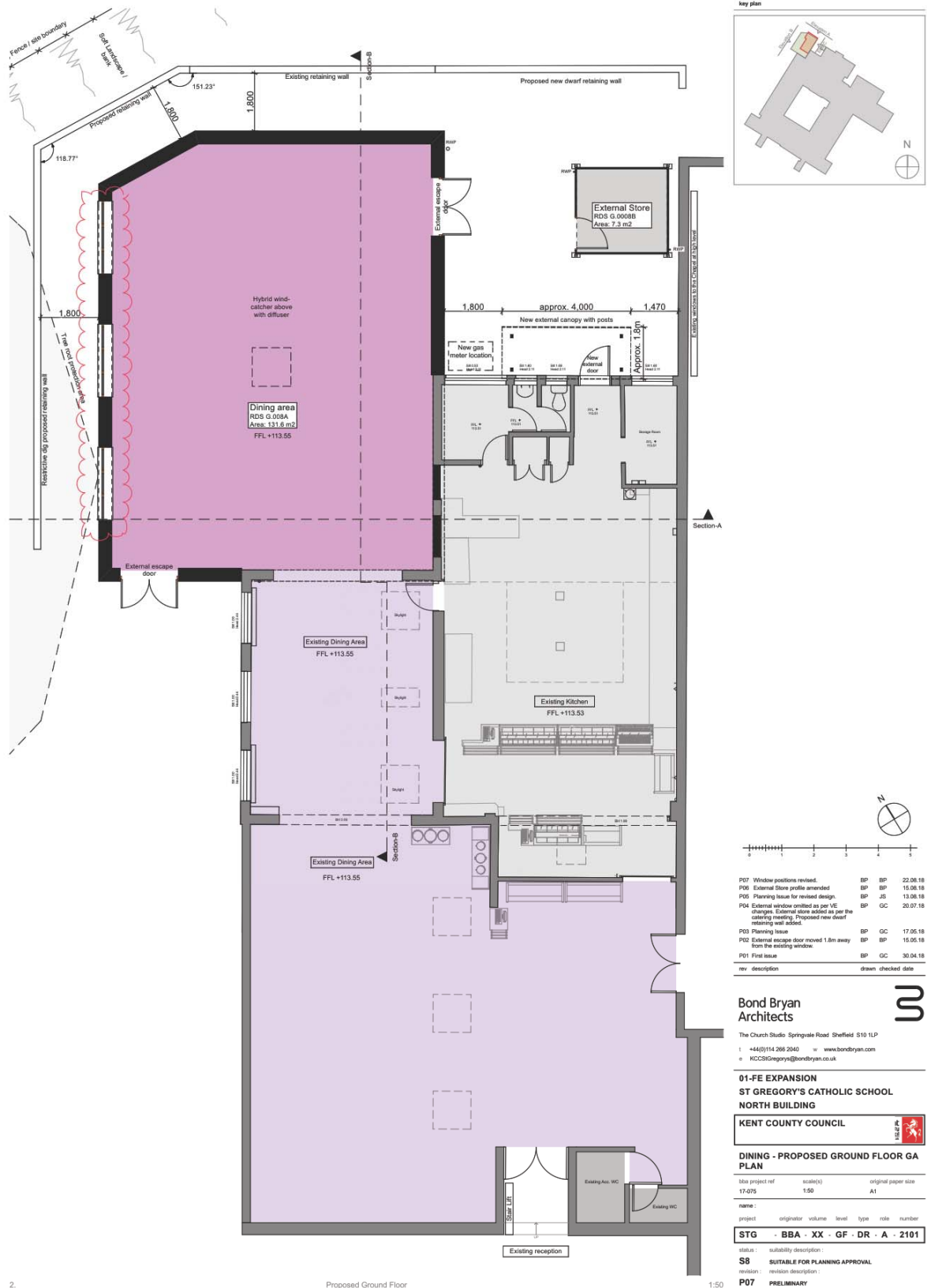
Proposed 1 form of entry expansion – St Gregory’s Catholic School, Reynolds Lane, Royal Tunbridge Wells – TW/18/2129

Existing and proposed demolition ground floor plan – dining space



Proposed 1 form of entry expansion - St Gregory's Catholic School, Reynolds Lane, Royal Tunbridge Wells - TW/18/2129

Proposed ground floor – dining space



P07	Window positions revised.	BP	BP	22.08.18
P06	External Store profile amended	BP	BP	15.08.18
P06	Planning issue for revised design.	BP	JS	13.08.18
P04	External escape confirmed as per VLE changes. External store added as per the calling meeting. Proposed new dwarf retaining wall added.	BP	GC	20.07.18
P03	Planning issue	BP	GC	17.05.18
P02	External escape door moved 1.8m away from the existing window.	BP	BP	15.05.18
P01	First Issue	BP	GC	30.04.18

Bond Bryan Architects
 The Church Studio, Springside Road, Sheffield S10 1LP
 t +44(0)114 266 2540 | www.bondbryan.com
 e KC25@gregory@bondbryan.com

**01-FE EXPANSION
 ST GREGORY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL
 NORTH BUILDING**

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

DINING - PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR GA PLAN

lba project ref 17-075 scale(s) 1:50 original paper size A1

name: STG - BBA - XX - GF - DR - A - 2101

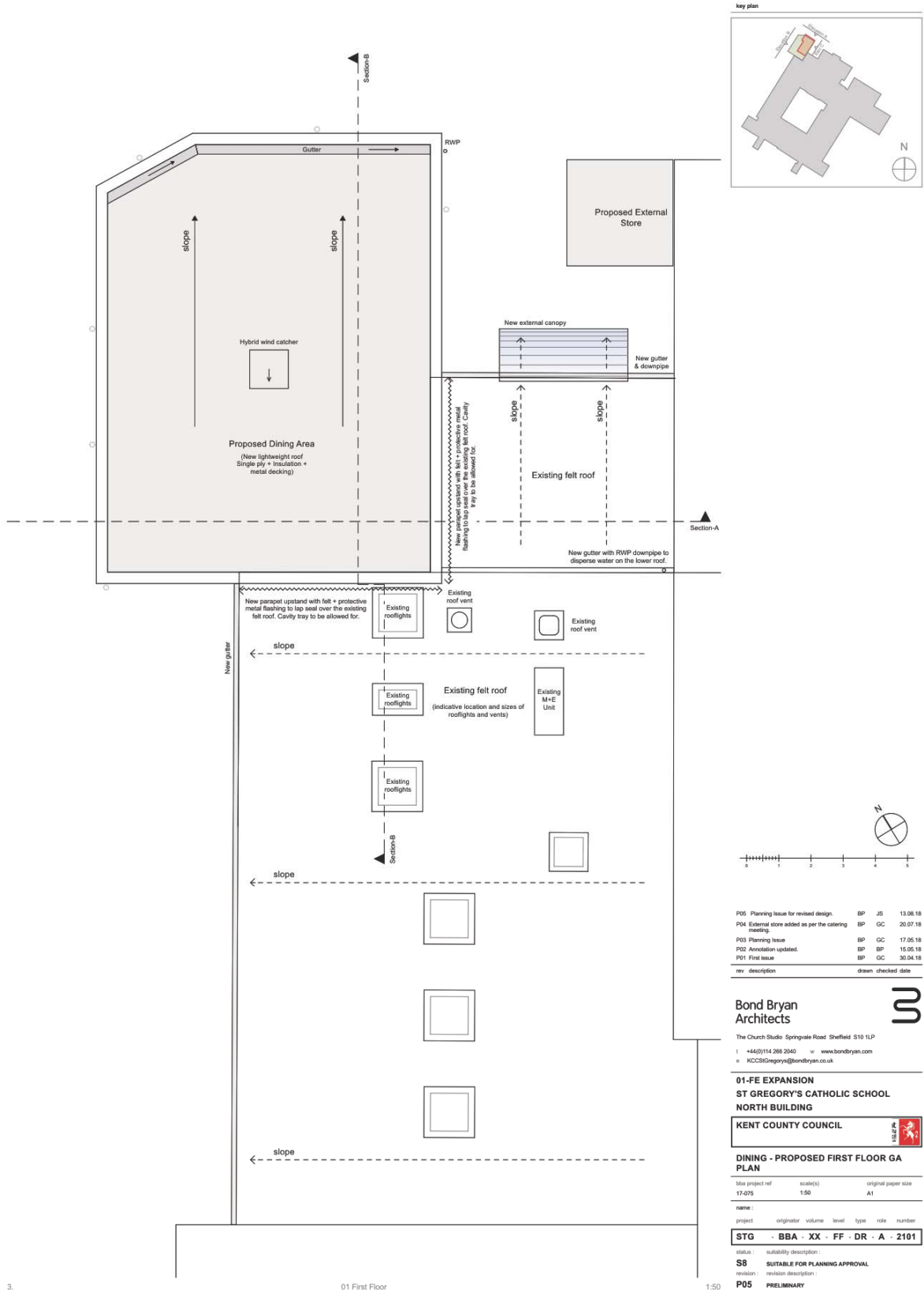
status: S8 SUITABLE FOR PLANNING APPROVAL

revision: P07 PRELIMINARY

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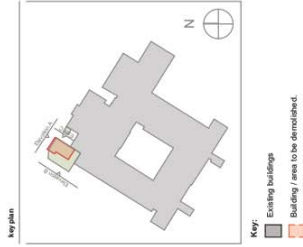
Proposed 1 form of entry expansion – St Gregory’s Catholic School, Reynolds Lane, Royal Tunbridge Wells – TW/18/2129

Proposed first floor – dining space



Proposed 1 form of entry expansion - St Gregory's Catholic School, Reynolds Lane, Royal Tunbridge Wells - TW/18/2129

Sections through dining space



no.	description	drawn	checked	date
P07	Planning Issue for revised design.	BP	JS	27.08.18
P08	Issue for Stage 3 Tender	BP	JS	19.08.18
P09	Issue for Stage 3 Tender	BP	JS	19.08.18
P10	Minor revision received.	BP	JS	22.08.18
P11	Minor revision received.	BP	JS	22.08.18
P12	Planning Issue for revised design.	BP	JS	13.08.18
P13	Planning Issue for revised design.	BP	JS	13.08.18
P14	Planning Issue for revised design.	BP	JS	17.08.18
P15	Final Issue	ST	BP	30.04.18

Bond Bryan Architects
 The Church, Stude, Springfield Road, Shroton, D10 1LP
 t: +44(0)1539 2960 w: www.bondbryan.com
 e: hcc25@bondbryan.com

01-FE EXPANSION
ST GREGORY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL
NORTH BUILDING - DINING & KITCHEN
KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

DINING - GA SECTIONS SHEET 1

name	scale(s)	original	expansion
12/07/18	1:50	A1	

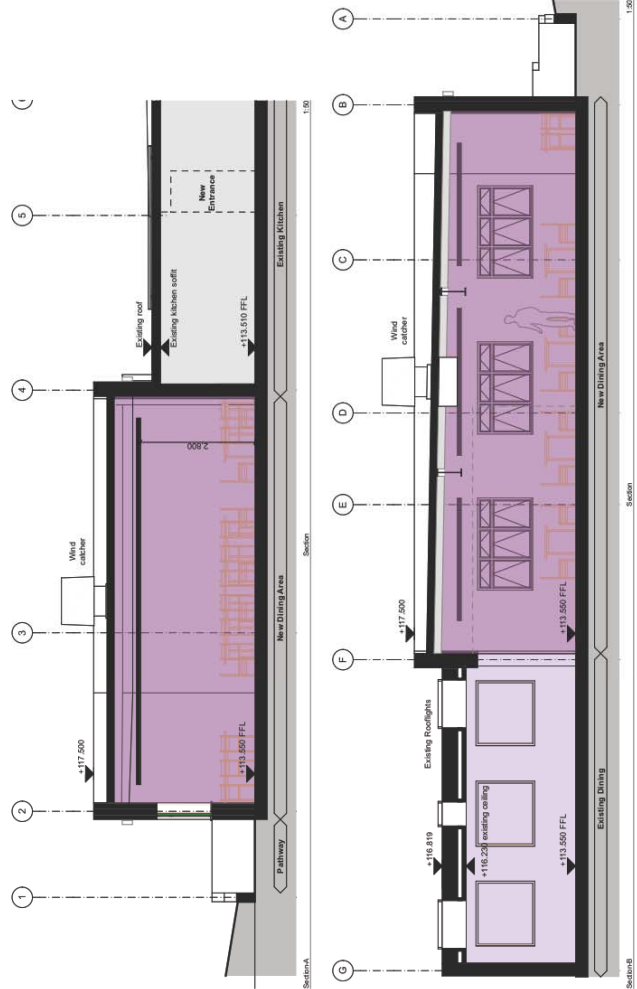
project: original/rev. volume level type size number

sheet: STG - BBA - 02 - ZZ - DR - A - 4101

status: S8 - SUITABLE FOR PLANNING APPROVAL

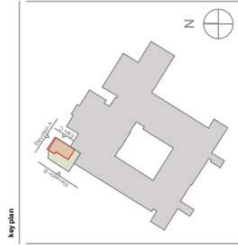
revision: P07 - PRELIMINARY

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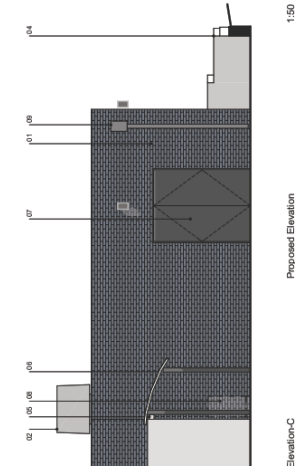
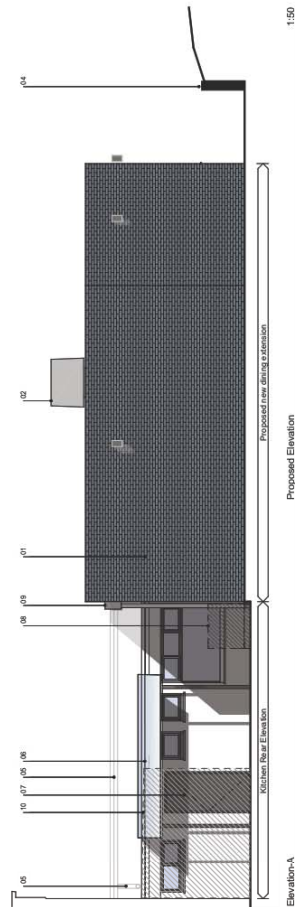
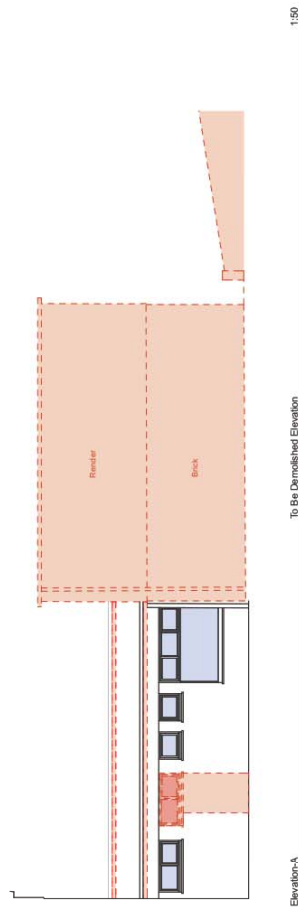
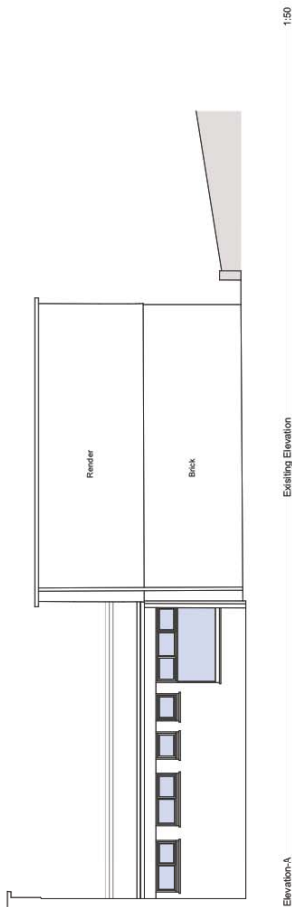


Proposed 1 form of entry expansion - St Gregory's Catholic School, Reynolds Lane, Royal Tunbridge Wells - TW/18/2129

Elevations – dining space



- Elevation Key:**
- 01 - Existing brick building. Blue hatching on walls with recessed joint. Maroon color on side gully.
 - 02 - Mosaic gully recessed ventilation louvre system, etc.
 - 03 - Aluminium windows with ventilation louvre system, etc.
 - 04 - Insulative dry low height external wall.
 - 05 - New gullies with low height external wall.
 - 06 - External canopy with perforated stainless steel and metal cladding.
 - 07 - External metal door, copper color grey.
 - 08 - Location for the gully water.
 - 09 - Materials clamping.
 - 10 - Indicative location for the external stone.
- Building areas to be demolished.



no.	description	drawn	checked	date
P02	Planning issues for revised design.	BP	JD	13.08.18
P03	Planning issues for revised design.	BP	GC	20.07.18
P04	Planning issues for revised design.	BP	GC	20.07.18
P05	Planning issues for revised design.	BP	GC	17.06.18
P06	Planning issues for revised design.	BP	GC	15.05.18
P07	Final issue - For Review	ST	BP	30.04.18

Bond Bryan Architects
 The Church, Stads, Springfield Road, Sheldiff, D10 1LP
 T: +44(0)1539 2900 W: www.bondbryan.com
 E: hcc250@bondbryan.com

01-FE EXPANSION
ST GREGORY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL
NORTH BUILDING
KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

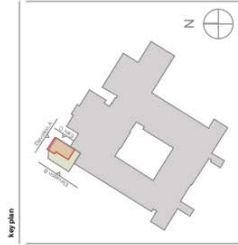
name	project	originator	volume	level	type	date	number
STG	01-FE EXPANSION	1:50	1:50	A1	original	17.07.18	3005

DINING - GA ELEVATION A & C

status: **S8** - SUBSTANTIAL FOR PLANNING APPROVAL
 version: **P05** - PRELIMINARY

Proposed 1 form of entry expansion – St Gregory’s Catholic School, Reynolds Lane, Royal Tunbridge Wells – TW/18/2129

Elevations – dining space



- Elevation Key:**
- 01 - Existing brick building. New height on site with recessed panel. Material color as per.
 - 02 - Masonry finish, ventilation system.
 - 03 - Aluminium windows with ventilation louvre system, etc.
 - 04 - Alternative glazing height extending wall.
 - 05 - New glazing with louvre finishing to existing roof.
- Building areas to be demolished.

PO3 Planning issue for revised design.	BP JS	13.08.18
PO4 Planning updated in line with the CA/09	BP GC	20.07.18
PO3 Planning issue	BP GC	17.09.18
PO4 Planning issue - Client Meeting	BP BP	10.08.18
PO4 Planning issue - Client Meeting	BP BP	10.08.18
PO1 First Issue - For Review	ST BP	30.04.18
Rev. description	drawn	checked date

Bond Bryan Architects
 The Church, Stads, Springfield Road, Shroffed, OX1 1LP
 t: +44(0)114 200 200 w: www.bondbryan.com
 e: hcc2018@bondbryan.co.uk

01-FE EXPANSION
ST GREGORY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL
NORTH BUILDING
KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

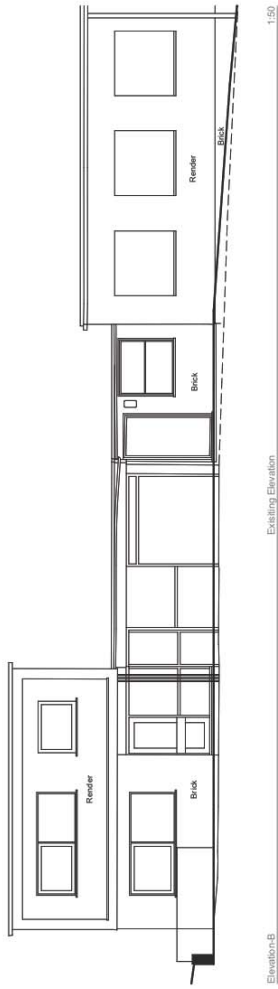
name:	STG - BBA - XX - ZZ - DR - A - 3006
scale(s):	1:50
original reference:	A1
project:	originator volume level type date number

DINING - GA ELEVATION B

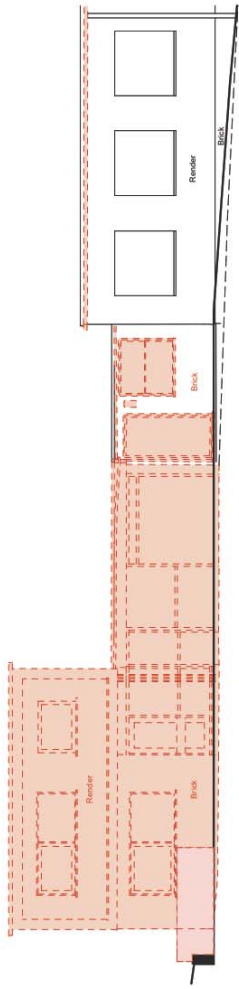
status: **S8** **SUITABLE FOR PLANNING APPROVAL**

revision: **P005** **PRELIMINARY**

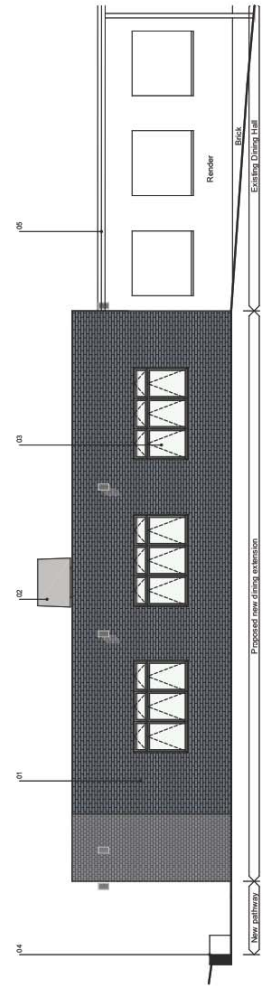
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Elevation-B Existing Elevation 1:50



Elevation-B To Be Demolished Elevation 1:50



Elevation-B Proposed Elevation 1:50

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3. The Public Right of Way, Number WB2, crosses the school site from east to west, with the school buildings located to the north of the PROW and the school’s recreation areas including hard standing games courts and playing fields to the south. The southern part of the school site is located within the designated area of the Rural Fringe - Culverden Down site in the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Site Allocations Plan (2016). The school site also sits on the edge of the Metropolitan Green Belt.
4. The South Building is stepped in design to suit the sloping site. It is a mixture of single storey and two storey buildings. This building accommodates the general classrooms along with specialist rooms such as the design and technology suites. The existing sports fields occupy the southern section of the site and are separate to the school buildings. The Public Right of Way runs from east to west across the school site and effectively separates the school buildings from the sports field.

Background

5. The School was founded in 1966 and when it opened it had 250 pupils and 12 members of staff. The school was located in the building that is known as the North Building. In 1979 the school became a comprehensive and the South Building was built. The school further expanded in 1996 when the Technology Building was opened. In 2003 the school opened its Hearing Impaired Resource. The Technology Building was then demolished and replaced by the Sixth Form Centre in 2004. In that same year the South Building was extended to accommodate the Technology facilities and a new fitness suite. The school then became part of the multi academy trust named Kent Catholic Schools Partnership in January 2014. In 2017 an Artificial Grass (3G) Pitch located on the sports field was opened.
6. The School presently has a total of 1,194 pupils, based on a 6FE (form of entry) and this equates to 900 pupils in Years 7 to 11 and the rest making up the Sixth Form. The School is currently supported by 145 members of staff. School hours are Monday 8.45am and 2.30pm and Tuesdays to Fridays 8.45am to 3.30pm. The school remains open after these hours for sports lettings and for other activities in the hall, chapel, gymnasium, and the 3G Pitch. The school closes at 10pm during the week. The school is open for lettings (sports and other activities) only on Saturdays and Sundays between 9.00am and 6.00pm. The school currently has 51 staff parking spaces and 7 visitor parking spaces on the site.
7. The Draft KCC Education Commissioning Plan for 2018-2022 states that demand for school places within Tunbridge Wells will increase in the future. Whilst the birth rate in Tunbridge Wells continuously falls below the Kent and national averages, the Borough’s Strategic Housing Market Assessment has identified a need for 12,960 new homes between 2013 and 2033. Pressure on Year 7 places will increase from a deficiency of 121 spaces in 2018/19 to a peak deficiency of 245 places in 2022-2023. It is however noted that these figures are skewed by the available capacity within the Cranbrook area, whilst the larger urban areas are experiencing significantly greater pressures.
8. The Draft KCC Education Commissioning Plan identifies an additional 8 Form of Entry (FE) provision for September 2018, which will increase to over 11 FE within five years. The forecast demand cannot be met locally without increasing provision within the town centre area of Tunbridge Wells. The proposed expansions of Bennett Memorial School, St Gregory’s Catholic School and Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys have all been identified within the Plan as contributing to meeting the forecast demand within Tunbridge Wells. It should also be noted that the forecast data outlined above does not

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account for pressures arising from new housing developments under the emerging Local Plan and therefore the demand is likely to be even greater than the forecast indicates.

9. The School’s Governing Body, in conjunction with Kent Catholic Schools Partnership and Kent County Council are proposing to provide additional school places by expanding St Gregory’s Catholic School by permanently increasing the Pupil Admission Numbers (PAN) from 180 pupils to 210 pupils (6FE to 7FE) from September 2019. This follows a temporary ‘bulge’ expansion of 60 Year 7 places in 2018/19.
10. The School has also experienced significant in-year admissions into other year groups on top of the recent bulges in Year 7 places, as well as the proposed permanent expansion to a 210 PAN (7FE). This has resulted in timetabling pressures and has in the short term resulted in the need for additional temporary teaching accommodation. Under Permitted Development Rights, a pair of modular classrooms have been located on part of the existing school staff car park to provide temporary accommodation for the current bulge in Year 7 admissions needed for the September 2018 intake.

Recent Planning History

11. The most relevant recent site planning history is listed below;

TW/18/2126	Proposed ‘temporary’ 13 space car park. Granted temporary planning permission with conditions.
KCC/TW/0290/2011	Installation of floodlighting to an existing Multi-Use Games Area and an extension to existing hours. Withdrawn.
TW/10/3121	New reception area. Granted with conditions.
TW/09/3978	Construction of a new Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) with enclosure fencing. Granted with conditions.
TW/09/2971	Renewal of existing single glazed metal windows with white double glazed PVCu windows. Renewal of existing tile hung cladding with timber cladding. Granted with conditions.
TW/08/3505	Extension and conversion of tennis court to create a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA). Granted with conditions.

Proposal

12. The planning application seeks permission to accommodate a 1FE expansion of the school with the erection of a new freestanding 2-storey teaching and sports block, extension to the existing dining space, the creation of a new pedestrian bridge lining the north and south sites, the provision of an additional 16 car parking spaces and associated landscape works.

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13. The proposal seeks to construct a 2-storey new build teaching and sports block with a gross internal floor area of 1,870m². This is proposed to provide a range of general teaching spaces, laboratories, a four court sports hall with associated changing provision, as well as a mixture of staff rooms, offices and further ancillary support and storage space. It is proposed to build over an existing hard-surfaced play area and is positioned in close proximity to the existing outdoor hard surfaced and grass pitch outdoor sport facilities, which are located on the southern part of the school site.
14. It is also proposed to extend the current dining facilities, which are located to the north of the school site, by constructing a single storey extension. This is proposed to provide much needed additional capacity at the school. To be able to facilitate the proposed extension to the dining facilities, an existing caretakers house would need to be demolished.
15. Improvements are also proposed to the existing pathways across the school site to enhance the current pedestrian access links and connectivity. The proposals include the addition of a new disabled access ramp and pedestrian bridge link between the proposed new teaching and sports building and the existing school buildings located on the northern section of the site. The proposed bridge would be located over the existing Public Right of Way that runs through the centre of the school site. It would effectively improve connectivity between the north and south sections of the school campus without needing to cross the Public Right of Way. While the proposed pedestrian bridge would be positioned close to the existing 2 TPO trees, it would not impact upon the crown or root spread of these protected trees. However, the proposal would require the removal of 10 trees in total. 7 trees would need to be removed as a result of the proposed development and a further 3 trees would need to be removed on health and safety grounds. However, it is planned to replant a total of 18 new trees.
16. Furthermore, a new parking area would also be provided, which would be accessed off Floyd Close and using the existing leisure centre access road, which in turn is accessed off the A26 St John’s Road. This new car park would provide 16 new car parking spaces and would be utilised by school staff. A pedestrian footpath measuring 1.5m in width from the proposed car parking area to the new teaching block would also be provided. Cycle parking is also proposed in the vicinity of the new dining hall with 11 Sheffield stands being provided and being able to accommodate 22 bicycles at the same time.
17. The proposed expansion would provide an additional 1 Form of Entry, totalling an additional 150 pupils and transforming the school from 6 to 7 Forms of Entry. It is also proposed to employ an additional 16 members of staff.

Minor Amendments

18. The planning application has had a number of minor amendments to the proposal after the initial consultation process. Whilst the amendments are minimal and would not change the principles or footprint of the proposed development, the appearance of the proposed development would look slightly different to the original scheme that was consulted on. Reconsultation with all the neighbours and Statutory Consultees that were consulted on the original scheme was undertaken. The proposed amendments included alterations to the hard and soft landscape and seating areas, changes to the proposed colour of the cladding on the new 2 storey teaching and sports building, reduction in the number of windows and rooflights, increasing the proposed amount of new parking spaces from 16 spaces to 19 spaces, including 1 DDA compliant car parking spaces, and a small external dry food store, measuring 7.3m² proposed near the dining area.

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Planning Policy Context

19. The most relevant Government Guidance and Development Plan Policies summarised below are appropriate to the consideration of this application:

- (i) **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) July 2018** and the **National Planning Policy Guidance** (first published in March 2014), sets 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).

In determining applications, the NPPF states that local planning authorities should approach decisions in a positive and creative way, 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:

- 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;
- Achieving the requirement for high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;
- Taking a positive approach to applications than make more effective use of sites that provide community services such as schools, provided this maintains or improves the quality of service provision and access to open space and making decisions that promote an effective use of land while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions;
- Meeting the challenge of climate change and flooding and incorporating SuD’s;
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

In addition, Paragraph 94 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.*

- (ii) **Policy Statement – Planning for Schools Development (15 August 2011)** which sets out the Government’s commitment to support the development of state-funded schools and their delivery through the planning system. In particular the Policy states that the Government wants to enable new schools to open, good schools to expand

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and all schools to adapt and improve their facilities. This will allow for more provision and greater diversity of provision in the state funded school sector, to meet both demographic needs, provide increased choice and create higher standards.

(iii) **Tunbridge Wells Borough-Local Plan 2006 (Saved Policies):**

Policy LBD1	States outside the Limits to Built Development, development will only be permitted where it would be in accordance with all relevant policies contained within the Development Plan.
Policy EN1	Seeks all proposals to be compatible in nature and intensity with neighbouring uses and not cause significant harm to character and amenities of the area in terms of daylight, sunlight, privacy, noise or excessive traffic generation. Seeks the design of the proposal to respect the context of the site and not cause significant harm to residential amenities.
Policy EN8	Seeks to ensure that proposals for outdoor lighting are the minimum of lighting necessary, be un-obstructively sited or well screened and the design and specification of lighting would minimise glare and light spillage.
Policy EN15	Seeks to prohibit proposals that would have adverse impact upon the nature conservation interest.
Policy EN16	Seeks to ensure that there is no adverse or unacceptable impact on the water quality or potential yield of groundwater.
Policy EN25	Seeks to ensure that outside of the Limits to Built Development, that all proposals for development would have a minimal impact on the landscape character of the locality, would have no detrimental impact on the landscape setting of settlements, would not result in unsympathetic change to the character of a rural lane, and new buildings should be located adjacent to existing buildings or well screened by vegetation.
Policy R1	Seeks to ensure that proposals would not result in the loss of recreation open space and would only be permitted where no deficiency in accessible open space in that area.
Policy T1	Requires Transport Assessments and Travel Plans to accompany any development proposals for any large scale non-residential development.
Policy TP4	Seeks to ensure that any additional traffic generated by the proposal has adequately been assessed.
Policy TP5	Vehicle parking in connection with development proposals will be restricted to the maximum necessary having regard to local highway conditions. Kent County Council’s Vehicle Parking Standards, adopted by the Council, will be applied to such development proposals.

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Policy TP9 Seeks to ensure that cycle parking standards for non-residential development are in accordance to the latest Kent County Council Cycling Strategy.

(iv) Tunbridge Wells Borough Core Strategy 2010

Core Policy 3 Promotes sustainable modes of transport and requires development proposals which would have significant transport implications to be accompanied by a transport assessment and travel plan showing how car-based travel can be minimised.

Core Policy 4 Seeks to ensure that the Borough’s built and natural environments, which are rich in heritage assets, landscape value and biodiversity, are conserved and enhanced.

Core Policy 5 The Borough Council will apply and encourage sustainable design and construction principles and best practice. Developments should also be of high quality design, creating safe, accessible, and adaptable environments, whilst conserving and enhancing the public realm.

Core Policy 9 Development must conserve and enhance the landscape and heritage and biodiversity assets of Royal Tunbridge Wells, including the surrounding Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, to secure its special character in the long term.

(v) Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Site Allocations Local Plan 2016

Policy AL/STR 1 The extent of the Limits of the Built Environment. This saved policy from the Local Plan will continue to be relevant in considering details of the appropriate uses inside, and outside of, the defined areas until such a time as they are updated and superseded by the Core Strategy Review (Local Plan).

Policy AL/GB 4 Rural Fringe. This will continue to be a designated as long-term land reserved beyond the Plan period to ensure that the Green Belt boundaries are protected. Proposals for development at these sites will need to demonstrate that the needs of an established use on these sites are being met, or the development is temporary, and the land can be restored back to its previous use.

Consultations

20. **Tunbridge Wells Borough Council:** Raises no objection provided the County Council is satisfied that there would be no adverse impact on the nearby trees and that the proposed tree protection measures are put in place during construction.

Kent Highways: Raises no objection and has the following comments:

‘Public Transport Capacity Improvements

Owing to the pressing need for additional school places in the town of Tunbridge Wells, four school expansions are proposed. These four school are located on the A26 corridor

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to the north of the town. Three of the expansions are being applied for by KCC Education, and the fourth is being applied for by the school itself (The Skinners School). A lack of bus service capacity has implications on mode choice and may result in greater numbers of pupils needing to travel by car than currently anticipated. It therefore has an important influence on the conclusions drawn by KCC Highways on the impact of the school on the highway network, given the congestion already prevalent at several nearby junctions. With significant capacity issues already being experienced on the A26 bus services for pupils attending these schools, monetary contributions towards increased capacity on school peak times services are being sought as part of the formal agreements associated with these applications. The Transport Assessment for St Gregory’s RC School presents a base travel mode share for pupils (April 2018 survey), where 397 pupils (33.3%) travel by public bus services.

An estimated 447 pupils will travel to school by bus when the extension is completed (based on Young Person Travel Pass and 16+ Travel Card purchases by existing students). The School Travel Plan was last updated in 2009. Should this application be permitted, the School Travel Plan should be updated (to include measurable targets) within 6 months of permission, and a School Travel Plan monitoring fee will be payable to KCC by the school. These aspects should be conditioned. The monitoring fee will be £5,000 and will cover a 5 year monitoring period. A quantifiable target for the maintenance (at least) of the current public bus service mode share should be specified (following discussion with KCC officers); a Travel Plan Coordinator should be appointed to oversee implementation; and a Steering Group should be formed to enable key stakeholders, including KCC H&T, to meet and guide any actions taken. The range of measures that could be taken forward to encourage sustainable travel behaviours will form the basis of an Action Plan, alongside a commitment to monitor and review progress through the regular undertaking of travel surveys.

The required School Travel Plan will identify that a proportion of the children will come by bus. The bus company will not put extra buses on to accommodate these children without being paid to do so. If they are not funded, the students will be driven to school and the mode share targets will not be achieved, resulting in an impact on the highway. This is why the suggested mitigation measure is required. As and when new house building occurs, KCC will request contributions to improve the bus services and there may be no need to use the contingency fund required as mitigation for this extension.

KCC Highways will only require the payment if children from the school buy YPTP passes and they live on corridors where there is not sufficient bus capacity for them to travel.

A document entitled ‘Payment Mechanism for A26 school expansions Rev 3’ outlines the calculations undertaken by KCC Highways to ensure public transport is available to all students as a result of the four school extensions. As a result of these calculations, KCC Education is asked to underwrite the cost of resolving any additional capacity requirement, thereby mitigating the impact of the proposed development, up to a capped maximum amount of £128,903. This payment mechanism should be secured as part of a formal agreement between KCC Education and KCC Highways. KCC Education has accepted the proposed mitigation measure and payment mechanism. I therefore raise no objection to this application, subject to the mitigation measures outlined above.

Junction capacity modelling

The TA Addendum outlines the modelling assessments undertaken by the applicant on three key junctions associated with traffic from this development. The assessments

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show that none of the three junctions will be severely impacted by the additional trips associated with the development, providing the modal share of private car trips does not exceed the predicted percentage (based on current modal share). The required School Travel Plan will allow this to be monitored.

Reynolds Lane speed limit

The applicant has proposed a derestricted speed limit across the main site access on Reynolds Lane be altered to a 30mph speed limit, extending the existing restriction which is in place 40 metres to the north of the access, to encompass the main site access. A Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) would be undertaken to ensure suitability at this location, and the applicant is asked to fund the TRO and subsequent implementation of required signage changes should the TRO be supported through consultation.

Parking restrictions on Reynolds Lane

Para 6.3.2 of the Transport Assessment states:

Additionally, to aid the free flow of traffic on Reynolds Lane it is considered viable that some form of loading / waiting restrictions could be implemented. It is acknowledged that residents of Reynolds Lane currently park on-street due to the embankment present on the eastern side of the road. As such, it is considered that the implementation of intermittent double yellow lining could be viable. This would create informal passing places, allowing for greater flow of vehicle movement without displacing residents on-street parking. A Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) would be undertaken to ensure suitability at this location.

The applicant is asked to fund the TRO and subsequent implementation of required signage changes should the TRO be supported through consultation. This requirement should be legally secured should this application be approved at committee.

I therefore raise no objection to this application, subject to the mitigation measures and legal requirements outlined above.’

School Travel Planner: Raises no objection and has the following comments:

‘I have read the Transport Assessment documents that have been uploaded on the schools behalf by the contractor, however this is not a School Travel Plan. My recommendation is that the school appoint a “School Travel plan co-ordinator” (this can be any school staff member, e.g. office manager, head teacher, school business manager etc.) to complete a simple School Travel Plan on the Jambusters website, which will provide a KCC approved template that they can easily fill in at their convenience. Once a final draft has been agreed and all comments acknowledged, I will be able to approve the STP and set as the schools “current 2018 STP”.

Public Rights of Way: Raises no objection and has the following comments:

‘Public footpath WB2 crosses the site and has been identified in the application. From the information supplied, I do not consider the proposal will adversely affect the public right of way. The proposed pedestrian bridge linking the two sites and crossing the public right of way does not affect use of the footpath. The Public Right of Way should remain open and available at all times. No materials or waste arising from the development may be stored on the Public Right of Way. If it is necessary to temporarily close the public right of way during the construction of the pedestrian bridge in order to ensure the safety of the public using the footpath, then an application should be made to

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the Public Rights of Way office at least 8 weeks in advance. Any closure should be kept to a minimum and an alternative route provided.’

SuDS: Raises no objection, subject to the imposition of conditions.

Ecology: Raises no objection and has the following comments:

‘We are satisfied with the conclusions of the ecological survey that the proposed development has limited potential to impact protected/notable species and no further surveys or mitigation is required to be carried out.’

Environment Agency: Has no comments to make on this planning application.

Sport England: Raises no objection and has the following comments:

‘Having assessed the application, Sport England is satisfied that the proposed development meets exception 3 of our playing fields policy, in that:

The proposed development affects only land incapable of forming part of a playing pitch and does not:

- reduce the size of any playing pitch;
- result in the inability to use any playing pitch (including the maintenance of adequate safety margins and run-off areas);
- reduce the sporting capacity of the playing field to accommodate playing pitches or the capability to rotate or reposition playing pitches to maintain their quality;
- result in the loss of other sporting provision or ancillary facilities on the site; or prejudice the use of any remaining areas of playing field on the site.

It is noted that the development would appear to be largely on an area of hardstanding with no visible markings for sport. This being the case, Sport England **does not wish to raise an objection** to this application.’

Reconsultation on amended application

21. The Statutory Consultees listed above were consulted on the revised details of the planning application and no new or revised comments were received. All 77 original neighbours were also reconsulted on the proposed changes. Two new neighbour representation was received, objecting to the application. These comments can be viewed in paragraph 24 below.

Local Member

22. The local County Member Mr Oakford was notified of the application on 4 July 2018 and of the revised proposals on 2 November 2018. Mr Oakford made the following comments to the second consultation;

‘I support the application but do not plan to speak at the committee’.

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Publicity

23. The application was advertised by the posting of a site notice and the notification of 77 neighbours and an advertisement was placed in the local newspaper on 12 July 2018. All 77 neighbours were reconsulted of the proposed changes to the planning application.

Representations

24. A total of 3 letters of representation have been received to the original application (2 letters were from the same resident). In response to the amended plans, 1 representative was received from a neighbour that had written previously on the original planning application and 1 new representation was received to the reconsultation. The main points of objection are summarised below;
- Parking in Reynolds Lane causes obstruction prohibiting access to my property.
 - Main issue is the volume of traffic now.
 - Speed limit outside of the school is 60mph. School pupils walk out straight onto the road (Reynolds Lane). An accident waiting to happen.
 - 16 car parking spaces on completion of the proposed development is totally inadequate.
 - The proposed building would damage the amenity of rural Reynolds Lane.
 - No case of education need has been made for the additional teaching and sports block. There are plenty of needy schools in Tunbridge Wells borough and across Kent. St Gregory’s School has already received the direct benefit of substantial public/community funds to build the new floodlit 3G sports pitch at the school.
 - The two storey industrial style proposed development, with large massing and scale next to Reynolds Lane, would dominate rural Reynolds Lane and dwellings, turning the Reynolds Lane area and surrounding countryside into something similar to North Farm Industrial Estate and its environs.
 - The large two storey proposed building will impinge on the ‘right to light’ of neighbouring properties.
 - The destruction of a significant number of significant trees is unacceptable. Not only the loss of trees themselves, but also it would entail the loss of character of this part of Reynolds Lane and surrounding countryside to the west.
 - The proposal will overheat a concentration of schools in this part of Tunbridge Wells, causing unplanned associated traffic.
 - The new block’s windows would look directly into the gardens and windows of adjacent nearby dwellings, an infringement of residential amenity.
 - The proposed new pathway for deliveries to the kitchen/proposed store will be within a few metres of our house and is described as being used for access of 1.8m wide pallets. Currently we are disturbed by noise in the early hours from trucks making deliveries. It would be unacceptable to have deliveries made on pallets within a few metres of our house.
 - The plans indicate that the proposed extension to the dining block is to be built in a dark brick. This is in contrast to the white render of the existing building and all the neighbouring buildings. We feel this brick finish would be an eyesore.
 - Concerned that any noise or odour from the dining room vent will come directly into our house.
25. Furthermore, general comments have jointly been made on this application and the planning application for a temporary 13 space car park that was reported to the Planning

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Applications Committee meeting on 7 November 2018. The general comments are as follows;

- The site is greater than half a hectare. An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) should be required.
- It is appropriate that the two planning applications are reported to and determined by the Planning Applications Committee (rather than being determined under delegated powers).
- Councillors should be allowed to consider whether the proposals represent a fair and appropriate allocation of yet more of Kent County Council and other public resources at St Gregory’s School (which has recently been funded with and has constructed a brand new 3G sports pitch), rather than allocations of such public resources to underfunded schools in Kent.
- Planning Applications Committee accordingly is entitled to consider if it is lawful for KCC to determine the two planning applications, which have been made by KCC to itself for determination by KCC.
- The development would be outside the designated Limits to Built Development, a statutory departure from the Tunbridge Wells Local Plan, which should be notified to the Secretary of State if KCC is minded to approve the two planning applications.
- The planning applications are a hybrid of proposed community sports facilities use, and proposed education use.

Discussion

26. In considering this proposal regard must be had to Development Plan Policies outlined in paragraph 19 above. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) 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 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and other material planning considerations arising from consultation and publicity.
27. This application is being reported for determination by the Planning Applications Committee due to the letters of representation received which object to the planning application. The main issues relating to this application include need, design and location, arboricultural issues, highway issues, Rural Fringe Considerations, delegated powers and Environment Impact Assessment.

Need

28. As outlined in paragraph 19 of this report, the National Planning Policy Network (NPPF) supports the provision and retention of community facilities as a means of place making and promoting healthy and sustainable communities. Paragraph 70 underlies the important social role of the planning system contributing to sustainable development and healthy communities. Decisions should be made which guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community’s ability to meet its day to day needs. It should also ensure that established facilities and services are able to develop and modernise in a way that is sustainable and retained for the benefit of the community.
29. Additionally, Paragraph 94 of the NPPF 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

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proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement and to development that would widen choice in education. They should give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools, and work with school’s promoters to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted. There is similar strong policy support in the Government’s Planning Policy Statement for Schools (2011).

30. Support for the provision of school places is heavily embedded in the NPPF and local planning policy, and I consider that the need for the permanent development should be given significant weight in this instance. There is considerable demand for school places in Tunbridge Wells, as outlined in paragraph 7 and 8 above, and to ensure the future provision of Secondary education in Tunbridge Wells, I would not therefore raise a planning objection on this matter.

Design and location – Freestanding two storey teaching and sports block

31. Objection has been received to the proposed design and location of the freestanding two storey teaching and sports block, suggesting that it would look like an industrial building and that due to its large massing and scale next to Reynolds Lane, that it would dominate the rural feel of Reynolds Lane.
32. The applicant has confirmed that careful consideration has been given to the form, massing and orientation of the proposed new two storey building. A freestanding two storey teaching and sports block would make an efficient use of the available site whilst providing a complementary height and scale to the existing school buildings. A rectangular shaped form would enable the main general teaching and support spaces to be accommodated in a simple efficient and cost effective rectilinear block that would provide long-term flexibility to meet any future internal changes. A north/south orientation would also provide the long elevations to the east/west, thus easing extremes in solar gain whilst maximising opportunities for exploiting natural daylight and cross ventilation. A buffer zone around the proposed entire building perimeter would ensure sufficient space for pedestrian movement.
33. In respect to the location of the proposed freestanding two storey teaching and sports block, this was deemed to be the best solution in providing the school with the additional classrooms needed to accommodate the required 1FE expansion, whilst maintaining the existing school provision throughout the construction period, as well as ensuring that the existing external sports and play areas would be maintained as much as possible. The proposed new building would be located immediately south of the main built up part of the school campus. The shortest distance between the elevations of the proposed new freestanding two storey teaching and sports block and the nearest residential properties in Reynolds Lane has been measured as 63.4m. This distance would be sufficient to ensure that there is no risk of harming the amenity of local residents. In addition, the site benefits from adequate boundary soft landscaping features which would help to screen views into the site and thus further mitigating any potential impact on local residents and amenity.
34. The proposed freestanding two storey teaching and sports block would be located on an existing underused hardstanding area, which is sometimes used as a playground. This is no longer used for formal sports activities and is not available for community use. It should be noted that a number of locations were assessed and it was deemed that no suitable alternative previously developed area of the site would be available to accommodate the proposed development. The selected location was deemed the most feasible since it would be as close as practically possible to the existing main built-up

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area of the school site and would avoid unnecessary encroachment into the main areas of the school’s playing fields.

35. The basic dimensions of the proposed freestanding two storey teaching and sports block would be in keeping with the general scale and height of the existing school buildings. Upon implementation, the proposed new building would not be an overly dominant feature in the context of the existing school and associated buildings. Thus, in terms of scale and massing the proposed new freestanding two storey building would blend in well with the existing school building and the wider character of the school site.
36. The proposed material palette of the freestanding two storey teaching and sports block has been selected to both blend in with the existing school buildings and also to inject a fresh and modern look to improve the appearance of the school site. The applicant recognises that the elevation treatment secures long term flexibility for the school, enabling any potential future internal adaptations as the curriculum and delivery methods evolve.
37. In the light of the above, I consider that the overall appearance of the proposed freestanding two storey teaching and sports block as well as the proposed location, have been carefully considered and satisfies the requirements of the Local Plan Policies LBD1, EN1, EN25, R1, Core Policies 4, 5 & 9, A2/STR1 and AL/GB 4. I would not therefore raise a planning objection on this matter.

Design and location – extension to existing dining space

38. Objection has been received to the proposed extension to the existing dining space which is located to the very north of the school site. The objection includes the potential noise impact created by food deliveries, the proposed pathway, the location of the proposed vent (noise and odour), the proposed materials to be used externally and the boundary landscaping.
39. The planning application proposes an extension to the existing dining space, which would have a gross internal area of 131m². It is also proposed to provide a small dry store which would be able to hold more food stuff than the school currently has capacity for. To extend the dining space, it is proposed to demolish the existing caretakers house. The proposed extension to the dining space would be lower in height than the current caretakers house and it would be located slightly further away from the site boundary. The current caretakers house is located 9.5m away from the site boundary and it is proposed that the new dining building would be located 10.6m away from the site boundary. A new pathway around the new dining building and the site boundary is proposed which would be constructed in a smooth resin bound paving, which should ensure any noise impact is minimised. This new pathway is proposed to allow for the food deliveries to be taken around to the new dry store room on foot using trollies during the delivery process. It is also proposed that this new pathway would double up as a new pedestrian fire escape access route.
40. The proposed delivery route area for vehicles is to remain in the current location, albeit with hard landscaping, new surfacing and line marking enhancements. The proposed delivery route would be to run around the north of the proposed new dining building over a smooth resin bound surface pathway and lead into the back of the dining room/kitchen area and to the proposed new dry store. This final part of the delivery would be taken on foot and by pushing the deliveries on trollies. The school currently has one daily food delivery from the external company and it contains frozen, chilled and ambient foods.

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The deliveries arrive on a Monday morning around 7am and during the rest of the week are dependant on external company’s daily delivery schedule. The external company cannot guarantee a regular time slot. The deliveries are made in the mornings because the school need to prepare the food for lunch. Currently deliveries are taken from the back of the lorry and straight into the kitchen. It is difficult to assess how many pallets will be taken around the footway, however there is usually only one delivery driver so the only additional noise may be the wheeling of the pallets round the footway. It is also expected that there will be no increase in the number of deliveries and most likely a noticeable reduction in the frequency and timing due to the fact that the school would now have additional storage within the new dry store, despite an increase in the number of school pupils.

41. Furthermore, the planning application is accompanied by an Environmental Noise Assessment and a spot measurement had been undertaken to establish the existing noise environment near to the proposed new dining room extension. The measurement has captured the noise environment of the existing car park by the school’s main entrance where the delivery vehicles currently park. The delivery parking bay is to remain unchanged and providing that the frequency of the delivery remains the same, there will be no increase in noise impact from delivery vehicles. However, the report concluded that any small increase would still not lead to an unacceptable noise levels.
42. A rating sound level limit has been provided for the proposed external plant units to ensure that the new proposed development would not increase the existing background noise level. The Environmental Noise Assessment also concluded that the proposed ventilation and extract proposed at the site would meet all the required regulations and standards.
43. The choice of external materials for the proposed new dining room extension has been carefully considered and the proposed dark brick has been chosen to blend in with the dark brick used elsewhere on the existing school buildings and wider campus. The proposed dark brick matches the dark brick to the main entrance of the school. Additionally, all of the steps and retaining walls are also dark brick. The applicant is proposing to connect the proposed dark brick of the new dining space with the adjacent dark brick on the entrance elevations of the school. Furthermore, there are also some buildings in the vicinity which use the same dark brick and it is also proposed that the new Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys Sports Hall will also use the same material.
44. The current caretakers house is a two storey building with brown brick on the ground floor and white render on the first floor. The proposed dining space building that would replace the caretakers house would be lower in height and slightly further away for the site boundary, which should result in an improvement for the nearby residential amenity.
45. Around the site boundary to the north of the school site, it is only proposed to remove the trees which need to be replaced as part of the proposed development and replace it with new soft landscaping as required. In this area it is proposed to remove a total of 5 trees. However, some of the proposed new planting would compensate for the necessary removal of these trees and to help to screen the proposed new dining space. The applicant has confirmed that it has been the proposed design intention to minimise the required removal of trees as much as possible in order to meet the planning requirement and BS5837 Tree in Relation to Construction standards. The design intention has not been to address or improve the school’s general maintenance and management of the existing trees, as this would be considered to potentially require the

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undertaking of the school’s current management plan and responsibilities, for which this planning application is not responsible for. The Arboricultural Survey Report that has been submitted as part of this planning application, has carefully considered the proposal in order to reduce the impact, retain ecological habitats and diversity, and meet planning requirements. A number of trees associated with the immediate works have been identified for removal either as a result of construction development or in the interest of health and safety.

46. Trees that are not immediately affected by the proposed development may still have been surveyed, however, unless specifically identified as needing removal in the interest of health and safety, works to these trees would not be proposed. The trees that are the subject of this objection have been surveyed and have not been identified as ‘poor specimens’. They are therefore not specially included within the scope of works for the proposed development and therefore no works or removal are proposed. However, the school has been notified about the trees that are the subject of the objection and about their maintenance issues.
47. In the light of the above, I consider that the overall appearance of the proposed dining hall extension as well as the proposed location and external materials, have been carefully considered and satisfies the requirements of the Local Plan Policies LBD1, EN1, EN25, Core Policies 4, 5 & 9, and A2/STR 1. I would not therefore raise a planning objection on this matter.

Arboricultural issues

48. Objection has been received about the proposed loss of a significant number of trees and the effect this would have on the character of this part of Reynolds Lane. As a direct consequence of the planning application there would be a loss of 7 trees. Additionally, as an indirect result of the proposed development and as part of the overall tree management of the site, it is proposed that a further 3 individual trees are recommended to be removed on health and safety grounds.
49. Five of these trees that would need to be removed as a result of the proposed development would be on the northern site boundary as well as 1 of the 3 trees identified for removal on health and safety grounds. The remaining 2 trees from the 7 identified for removal due to the proposed development, would need to be removed from within the school site and adjacent to the Public Right of Way that runs across the school site. The proposed new footpath bridge link that would enable students improved pedestrian access between the north and south sections of the school campus, has been deliberately and suitably located in such a position to ensure that there is no impact on the two nearby trees that are covered by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO).
50. It should be noted that the other 2 trees identified for removal on health and safety grounds are located along the northern section of the school site with the Reynolds Lane boundary. These 2 trees are not considered significant trees and should not significantly affect the character and appearance of Reynolds Lane in this particular area. It should also be noted that none of the existing vegetation and trees located along the southern section of the school’s boundary with Reynolds Lane and in the area of the proposed freestanding two storey teaching and sports block are to be removed. Therefore, the current vegetation and trees in this area will not be affected and I do not feel that the character of Reynolds Lane would be materially altered as a direct result of this planning application. The site benefits from adequate soft landscaping features which help to screen the views into the site further mitigating any potential impact upon local residents

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and the surrounding rural/landscape character generally. Additionally, the proposed scale and height of the proposed new buildings are in keeping with the general character of the existing school buildings within the site and the neighbouring Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys.

51. Furthermore, this planning application includes proposals to plant a total of 18 new trees, which should adequately mitigate the loss of the 7 trees that would be lost as a direct result of this proposed development. The accompanying Landscape Strategy has demonstrated that the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the site’s landscape character nor on the landscape character of the surrounding area
52. In the light of the above, I consider that the proposed development is acceptable in respect of its impact on the character of the local soft landscaping and is in accordance with Local Plan Policies EN1 and EN15 and Core Policies 4 and 5. I would not therefore raise a planning objection on this matter.

Highway issues

53. Objections has been received that parking in Reynolds Lane causes an obstruction to other vehicles and the volume of traffic. Additionally, concern has been received that the speed limit outside the school is a derestricted 60mph speed limit and that 16 new car parking spaces are inadequate. (Please note that 16 parking spaces were proposed as part of the original planning application and the revised application now proposes a total of 19 parking spaces).
54. A Transport Assessment has been produced to accompany the planning application. It has identified Reynolds Lane as the main vehicular access point to the school site, with a separate entrance and exit point off Reynolds Lane. Reynolds Lane measures approximately 5m in width within the vicinity of the school site and is subject to a 60mph speed restriction across the site frontage. To the north of the site access, on-street parking has been observed, which narrows the effective width of the road in this location and allowing for only one-way vehicle working.
55. A Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) is proposed to increase the extent of the 30mph speed limit restriction on Reynolds Lane to encompass the main site access to the school, and thus to include both the vehicular entrance and exit points to the school. Additionally it is also proposed to implement intermittent double yellow lines in Reynolds Lane to provide informal passing places, which would help improve vehicle movements, whilst ensuring that residential parking was still maintained. The proposed double yellow lines would also be the subject of a TRO to ensure suitability at this location. Kent Highways has reviewed the planning application with particular reference to the Transport Assessment and is supportive of the recommendations for both the lower 30mph speed limit to encompass the main site access and the intermittent double yellow lines to provide informal passing places in Reynolds Lane. A Traffic Regulation Order would have to be advertised and reported to the Joint Transportation Board.
56. A new 19 space staff car park is proposed as part of this planning application which would be accessed off Floyd Close and using the existing leisure centre access road, which is turn is accessed off the A26 St John’s Road. A pedestrian footway is also proposed from this car park facility to the new freestanding two storey teaching and sports block. Cycle parking is proposed within the vicinity of the new dining space, with 11 Sheffield stands, accommodating up to 22 bicycles at any one time. The on-site parking capacity has been assessed in the Transport Assessment and is considered to

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accord with parking standards, allowing for staff and visitors to be accommodated on the site.

57. The School Travel Plan has demonstrated that the majority of school pupils either walk to school or use public transport to get to and from school. Pedestrian access to the site is achieved via two routes. The primary pedestrian route is accessible from the A26 St John’s Road via a footpath which routes through the grounds of Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys. The bus stops that serve the school site are located on the A26 St John’s Road. A secondary pedestrian access is derived from the north of Reynolds Lane.
58. The Future Trip Attraction has been assessed in the Transport Assessment and this was based on the vehicle trips associated with the school once its full capacity has been realised. A full school would include 1,344 pupils and 161 members of staff. The predicted number of additional trips associated with the proposed development was forecast to produce an additional 43 two-way vehicle trips in the AM peak and an additional 32 trips in the PM peak hour. This level of trip generation was not considered to be ‘severe’ in accordance with the NPPF. It should also be remembered the proposed new staff car park would not be accessed off Reynolds Lane, so there should be no direct increase in traffic in Reynolds Lane from the new staff members using the new car park.
59. Paragraph 32 of the NPPF states amongst other things that development should not be refused on transport grounds unless the cumulative impact is severe. In this instance the application proposes a new 19 space staff car park, including 1 DDA compliant parking space, within the school site which would be access off Floyd Close. Therefore, this new car park would not directly increase the vehicular traffic flow on Reynolds Lane. I therefore do not consider the impact to be severe in this instance and advise that a highway objection is not warranted. Subject to the securing of a 30mph speed limit to encompass the main site accesses in Reynolds Lane and the intermittent double yellow lines to provide informal passing places in Reynolds Lane, funding for additional bus services along the A26 St John’s Road corridor and a £5,000 payment to monitor the school’s Travel Plan and subject to the imposition of conditions, I consider that the proposal has been assessed and is in accordance with Local Plan policies TP4 and TP5, and Core Policy 3, I would therefore not raise an objection on this matter. The highway matters would need to be achieved via a Memorandum of Understanding rather than a legal agreement as the County Council cannot have a legal agreement with itself.

Rural Fringe Considerations

60. The Tunbridge Wells Site Allocations Local Plan (2016) confirms that the southern half of the school site, including the intended location of the proposed new teaching building and sports block, is within the designated Rural Fringe (Policy AL/GB4) and outside the Limits of the Built Development (AL/STR1). (It should also be noted that the whole of the school site sits on the edge of the Metropolitan Green Belt, which is located on the other side of Reynolds Lane, but it is not affected by the Green Belt policies). Objection has been received that the proposed development is outside of the designated Limits to Built Development and that the Secretary of State should be notified if Kent County Council is minded to approve this planning application.
61. Policy AL/GB4 states that proposals within the Rural Fringe will need to demonstrate a) the needs of an established use on the site are being met, or b) the development is temporary. In this instance the proposal has been designed to meet the needs of the

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established school use on the site, in accordance with the above policy. In addition the proposed new teaching building and sports block is located as close as practicably possible to the existing built-up part of the school which would help reduce, if not eliminate, any visual and landscape impact.

62. Furthermore, Policy AL/STR1 states that saved policies of the Local Plan will continue to be relevant in considering details of the appropriate uses inside, and outside, of the area defined as ‘Limits to Built Development’. In this instance, the proposed development is directly associated with the existing established education use of the wider site.
63. In the light of the above, I consider the planning application to be in accordance with the Local Plan Policies for the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council area, and I see no reason to refer this planning application to the Secretary of State, as a departure from the Local Plan policies. I note that Tunbridge Wells Borough Council has not raised objection in this regard.

Delegated Powers

64. Objection has been received that the County Council is determining a planning application submitted by the County Council. The power to determine planning applications such as this is governed by Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992. This requires the County Council to determine such planning applications as long as the development is to be carried out by (or on behalf of) the County Council or jointly with another named party. The development may be on land within the County Council’s ownership, or any other land. The Law gives the County Council no choice in the matter. To ensure that there is no conflict of interest, no party involved in the promoting of the application can be involved in the determination of the application. This is the case in this (and all Regulation 3 applications). It is of note that is the same planning process that is followed by every local authority wishing to carry out development.

EIA Regulations.

65. Objection has also been received that states that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) should have been carried out for this planning application, as the school site is greater than half a hectare. However it should be noted that in 2017 revised guidance increased the threshold to 1ha. The proposed area for development is 0.9ha and therefore falls below the 1.0ha threshold. The nature and scale of the development is not such that a full EIA is required. This proposal has been considered against the EIA assessment legislation and whilst the whole of the school site measures 6.9ha, it falls below the threshold for screening.

Construction Matters

66. Given that there are nearby residential properties, if planning permission is granted it would, in my view, be appropriate to impose a condition restricting hours construction to protect residential amenity. I recommend 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.

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67. I also consider it appropriate that details of a Construction Management Strategy be submitted for approval prior to the commencement of the development. That should include details of the location of site compounds and operative/visitors parking, details of site security and safety measures, lorry waiting and wheel washing facilities, details of how the site access would be managed to avoid peak school times, and details of any construction accesses. 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.

Conclusion

68. This proposal seeks to provide a new free standing two storey teaching and sports block, an extension to the existing dining space, the creation of a new internal pedestrian bridge linking the north and south sites, provision of an additional 19 car parking spaces and associated landscaping. The planning application would support the proposed expansion of the existing school and provide accommodation for an additional 1FE, totalling an additional 150 pupils and an additional 16 members of staff. 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 and the guidance contained in the NPPF. Subject to the conditions below, I do not consider that the development would have an unacceptable effect on the character of the local area or upon the landscaping and would not have an unacceptable impact on the local highway. The development is in accordance with the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework and has strong planning policy support in the Planning Policy Statement for Schools (2011). Subject to the imposition of the conditions as outlined throughout this report, I consider that the proposed development is acceptable, I therefore conclude that the development is sustainable and recommend that planning permission to be granted subject to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding the required monetary contributions to bus services and to ensure the monitoring of the Travel Plan, being signed and subject to planning conditions.

Recommendation

69. I RECOMMEND that SUBJECT TO receipt of an agreed and signed Memorandum of Understanding regarding the required monetary contribution to bus services and to ensure monitoring of the Travel Plan, that PLANNING PERMISSION BE GRANTED SUBJECT TO conditions, including conditions covering:

- The standard 5 year time limit;
- The development carried out in accordance with the permitted details;
- The submission of details of all materials to be used externally;
- An ecological enhancement plan is submitted and implemented as approved.
- Measures to protect the trees;
- No tree removal during the bird breeding season;
- Details of any external lighting to be provided;
- Hours of working during construction to be restricted to 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;

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- The submission of a construction management plan, including lorry routing, access, parking and circulation within the site for contractors and other vehicles related to construction operations;
- Measures to prevent mud and debris being taken onto the public highway;
- The development shall not be occupied until the 30mph speed limit across the main site accesses in Reynolds Lane and implementation of intermittent double yellow lines in Reynolds Lane as agreed with the Highway Authority has been implemented;
- A detailed sustainable surface water drainage scheme is submitted and implemented as approved;
- An operation and maintenance manual for the proposed sustainable drainage scheme is submitted and implemented as approved;
- Any measures to mitigate flood risk and protect water quality are implemented and maintained;
- No building on any phase of the development shall be occupied until a Verification Report to the surface water drainage system has been approved and implemented as approved;
- An updated School Travel Plan to be submitted within 6 months of the date of the decision.

70. I FURTHER RECOMMEND that the applicant be advised of the following informative:

- The applicant is advised to urgently progress a Traffic Regulation Order to address the highways comments raised by this application.

Case officer – Lidia Cook	Tel No.03000 413353
Background documents - See section heading	