

Application Number	21/01914/AS	
Location	Proposed School Site Land South East of, Ashford Road, Great Chart, Kent.	
Grid Reference	E: 597071 N: 140632	
Parish Council	Great Chart with Singleton	
Ward	Weald Central Ward	
Application Description	Reserved matters application pursuant to outline planning permission 12/00400/AS for the construction of a 6FE secondary school which will include a multi-use games area (MUGA), car parking, landscaping and external play, with the creation of a new access from Chilmington Green Road	
Applicant	Bowmer and Kirkland	
Agent	DPP	
Site Area	8.99 hectares	
(a) 339 / 11 'S' / 6 'R' / 3 'General Comments'	(b) Bethersden 'X' / Great Chart 'R' / Kingsnorth 'R' / Orlestone '+' / Shadoxhurst '+'	(c) EX 'X' / NE 'X' / NHS '+' / SE 'X' / KCC Arch 'X' / KCC Ecol 'X' / KCC Flood 'X' / KCC Highways 'X' / KCC PROW 'X' / ABC Env 'X'

Introduction

1. This application is reported to the Planning Committee because, in officer's opinion, the application is of borough wide importance.

Site and Surroundings

2. Chilmington Green is a new community of up to 5,750 homes, a district centre and community infrastructure that is to be delivered in four phases. The site of this application is identified in the outline planning permission for Chilmington Green as Land Parcel E5. The site is located on the north-west edge of the

Chilmington Green development area and forms part of the community infrastructure proposed within phase 2 of the development. A site location plan is provided in **Figure 1** which also shows the site in the context of the wider Chilmington Green development.

3. The application site comprises circa nine hectares of land bounded by the A28 Ashford Road to the north-west, Chilmington Green Road to the north-east and farmland to the south-east and south-west. The site is currently occupied as agricultural land and is generally level, with a slight slope from west to east. Agricultural access to the site is currently taken from the A28.
4. Immediately to the north of the site is a cluster of buildings comprising a storage facility, a dwelling and a group of commercial units located on both sides of Chilmington Green Road. Beyond these, to the north, are two further dwellings. To the east are a group of dwellings fronting Mock Lane and an industrial unit and dwelling fronting Chilmington Green Road. To the west on the far side of Ashford Road is a kennels/cattery. Two public rights of way (AW292 and AW245) run along the south-eastern and south-western boundaries of the site.

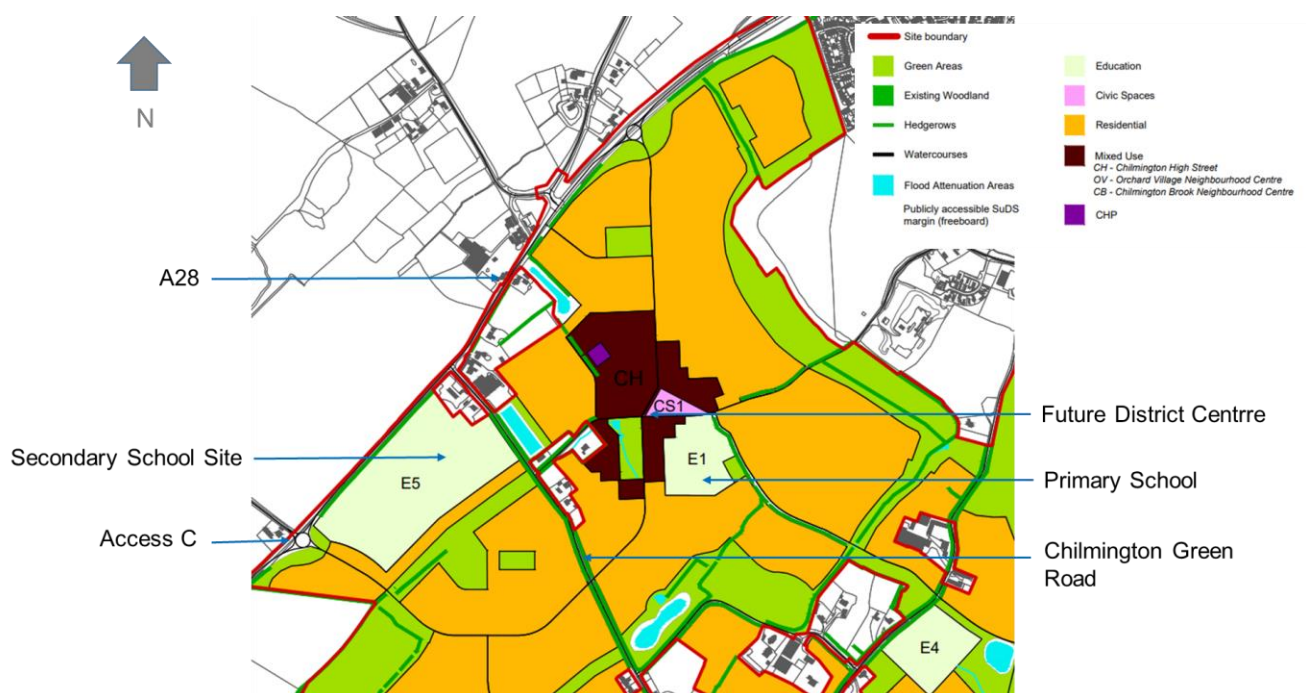


Figure 1: Site Location Plan

Proposal

5. This application seeks approval of all reserved matters (access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) for the construction of a new secondary school.

The school will provide 1400 pupil places from year seven to sixth form, comprising 900 places for years 7-11 and 240 places for the sixth form. The school is expected to employ circa 120 full-time equivalent teaching staff.

6. The 'Chilmington Green Secondary Academy' is to be a Department for Education (DfE) approved free school, managed by United Learning (UL). UL is a multi-Academy school trust established in 2003. UL manage over 70 schools, in both the public and private sectors. The construction of the school is to be funded by DfE Free School Wave funding.
7. The school building is proposed on the eastern side of Parcel E5, adjacent to Chilmington Green Road. Comprising a single building, formed of two elements; a teaching block with classrooms, offices and break out space and a sports block with fitness / exercise suite, changing rooms and a four-court sports hall. The teaching block is three storeys high and the sports block, two and a half storeys. The proposed site plan is provided in **Figure 2**.

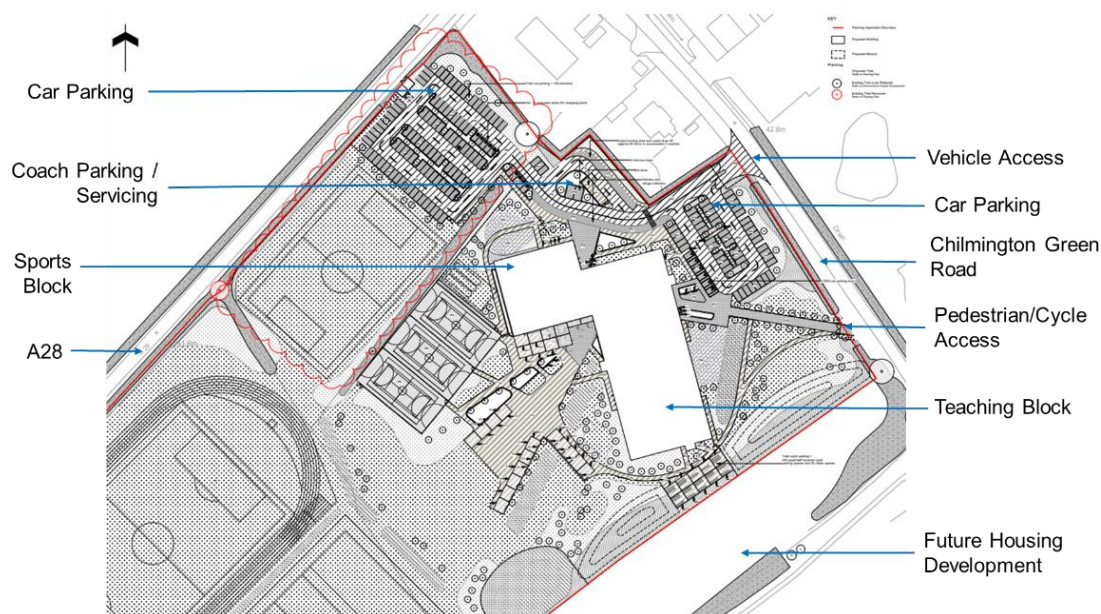


Figure 2: Proposed Site Plan

8. To the front of the school building a landscaped area is proposed and to the rear formal external play and sports areas, including a MUGA, sports fields/playing pitches and a piazza style landscaped space closest to the building.
9. Pedestrian and cycle access for students, staff and visitors is proposed off Chilmington Green Road, in the south-eastern corner of the site, via a pathway leading up to the main entrance and students entrances. The main entrance to

the sports block is proposed on the north east side of the building. Space for 228 cycles is proposed in a covered and secure store to the south of the school building.

10. Separate vehicle access is proposed off Chilmington Green Road with car parking, coach drop off/pick up and servicing areas to the front and north side of the building. 162 car parking spaces are proposed, including six for blue badge holders and 15 with electric vehicle charging points.
11. The school is a Department for Education pathfinder project which aims to test and pioneer new technologies relating to carbon neutrality and sustainability. The school will be carbon neutral in operation for the lifetime of the building.

Floor Plans

12. At the ground floor level is proposed a reception area; admin spaces; library and resource centre; sixth form study area; classrooms for ICT, music, design technology, food technology, textiles and graphics; main hall, activity studio; dining hall; kitchen, plus ancillary stores and offices.
13. The dining hall is proposed with a triple-height atrium with roof lights above. The kitchen is located away from the main entrance to enable deliveries to take place to the side of the building. The sports block is to comprise changing rooms, drama studio, fitness suite and sports hall. The proposed ground floor plan is shown in **Figure 3**.

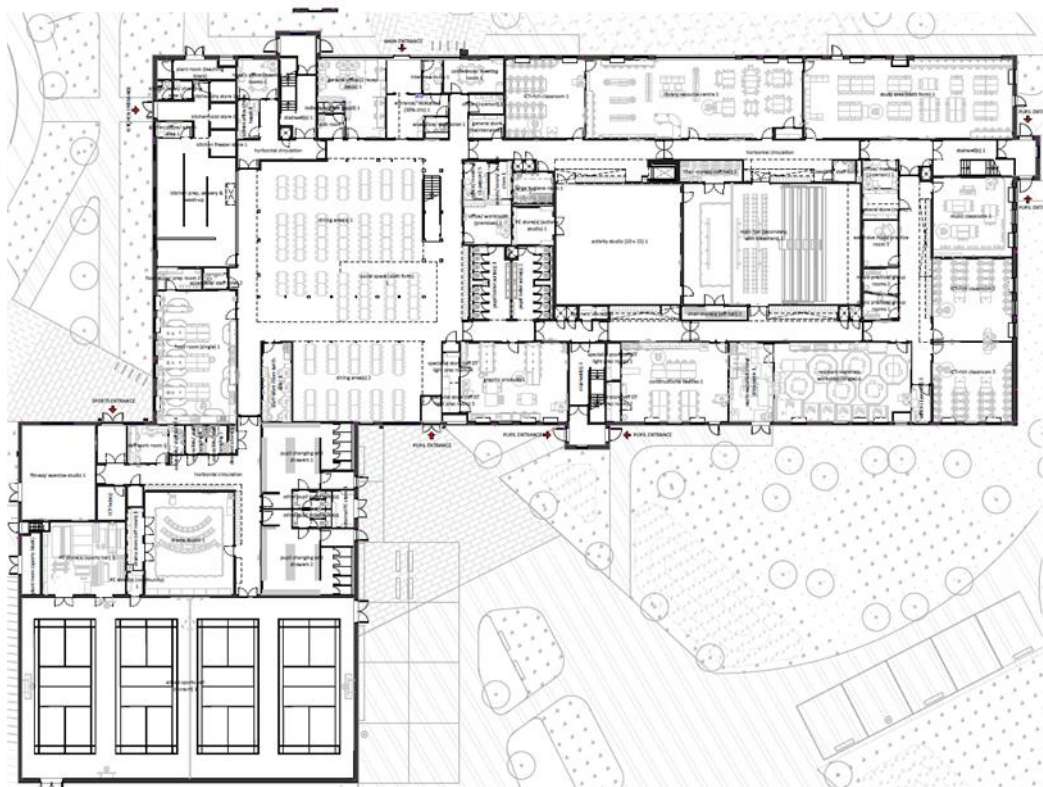


Figure 3: Proposed Ground floor Plan

14. The first and second floors will provide general teaching classrooms, art and ICT classrooms, science labs and associated staff workrooms and offices. The proposed first and second floor plans are shown in **Figures 4 and 5**.

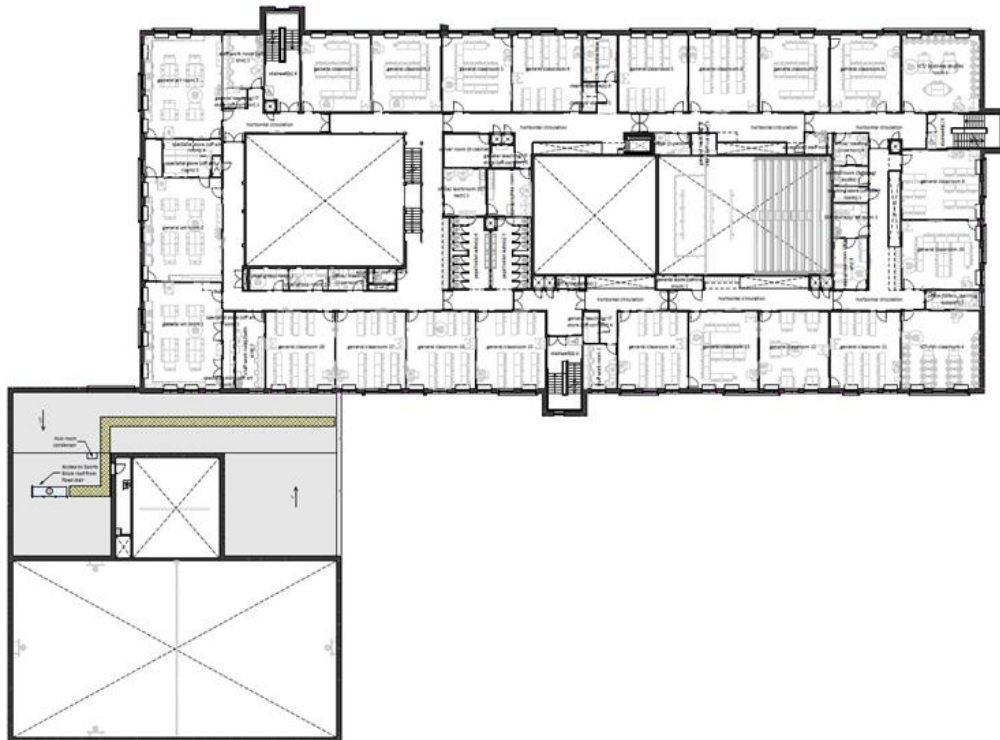


Figure 4: Proposed First floor Plan

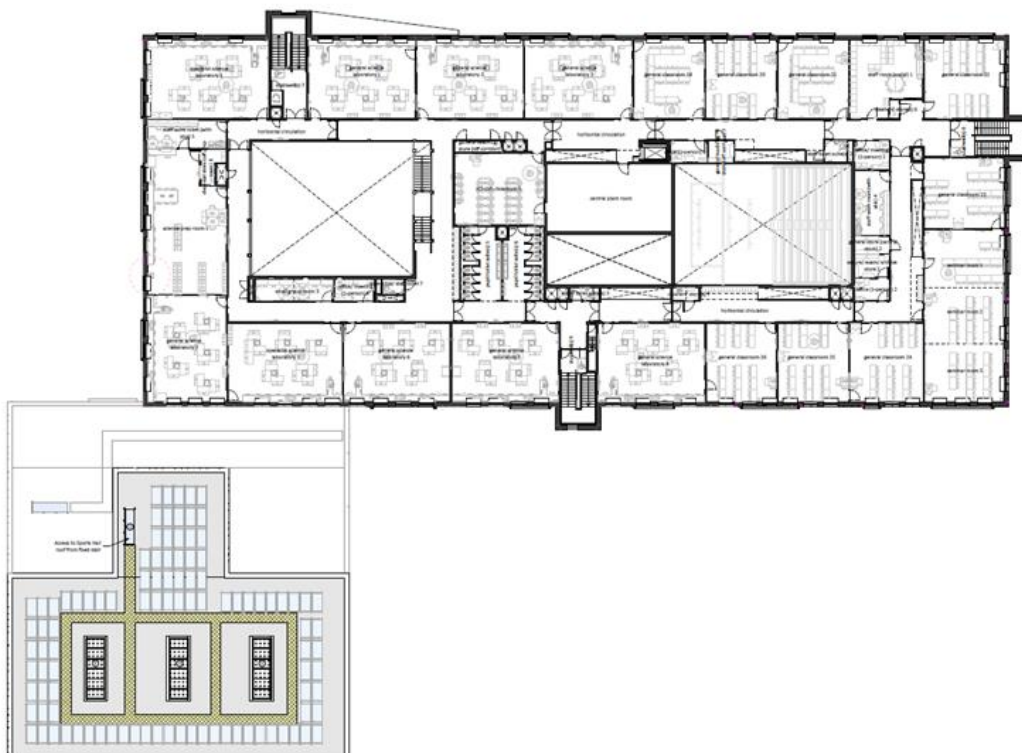


Figure 5: Proposed Second Floor Plan

15. The roof of both the teaching block and sports block will accommodate photovoltaic (PV) panels, roof lights and roof plant equipment such as ductwork and external flues. A maintenance walkway will provide access to service the equipment and maintain the roof lights and PV's. A parapet is proposed, a minimum height of 1100mm above roof level, to provide a protective edge during maintenance. The roof plan is provided in **Figure 6**.

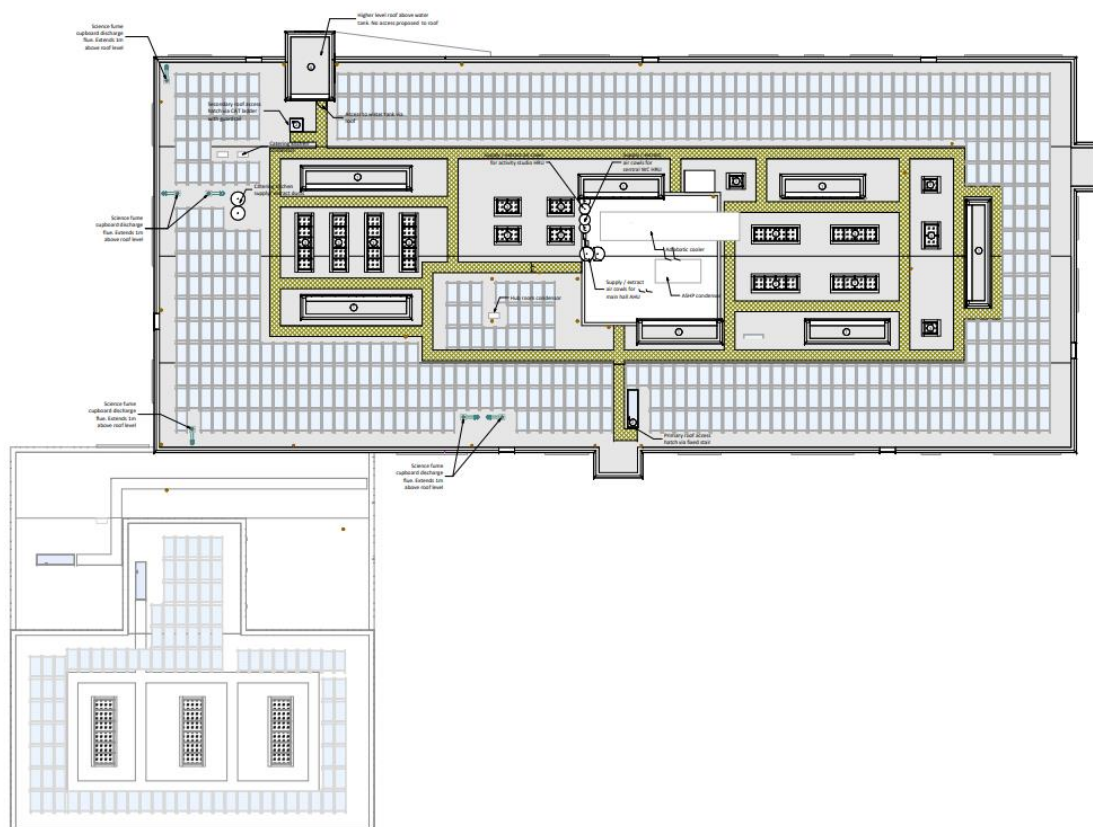


Figure 6: Proposed Roof Plan

Elevations

16. The materials palette of the teaching block will comprise of mechanically fixed buff brick (stretcher bond and soldier course bond) at ground floor level and charcoal fibre cement cladding on the floors above. The main entrance will comprise a black canopy with yellow reveals and integrated signage. The stair cores will consist of black brick slips at ground floor level and block fibre cement cladding to the upper floors. The stair core to the front of building will be topped with the school logo on three sides.
17. The pupil stair cores to the rear of the building will include spandrels within the

curtain walling system in yellow and the dining hall and sports block entrances will have a yellow framing canopy. Yellow framing is also proposed around groups of windows on the upper floors with this framing infilled with horizontally and vertically laid timber effect weatherboarding. The windows will be aluminium and charcoal in colour. The ventilation turrets on the roof will be clad in yellow fibre cement cladding. The sports block would comprise a buff brick base and fibre cement cladding in charcoal, green and reddish brown, in a variety of panel widths. The proposed elevations are provided in **Figures 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11.**



Figure 7: Teaching Block - Front Elevation



Figure 8: Teaching Block - Rear Elevation



Figure 9: Teaching Block - Proposed Side Elevations



Figure 10: Sports Block - Proposed Front Elevation

Figure 11: Sports Block - Proposed Side Elevation

Supporting Documents

18. The following supporting documents were submitted with the application.

- Air Quality Assessment
- Bat Survey Report
- Archaeological Desk Based Assessment
- Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation
- Design and Access Statement
- External Lighting Statement
- Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage Assessment
- Geo-environmental Assessment
- Low and Zero Carbon Technology Feasibility Report
- Noise Impact Assessment
- Phase I Geo-environmental Assessment Report
- Phase II Geo-environmental Assessment Report
- Planning Statement
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

- Reptile Survey Report
- Site Waste Management Plan
- Sustainable Design and Construction Statement
- Transport Assessment & Highways and Transport Addendums
- Travel Plan
- Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Preliminary Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan
- Utility Statement

Discharge of Conditions

19. The applicant has submitted information to enable the following conditions attached to the outline planning permission for the Chilmington Green development to be discharged (so far as they relate to the secondary school site (land parcel E5). The conditions require compliance with specified parameters of the outline planning permission or specified information to be submitted with the reserved matters application.

- Condition 5: Submission of reserved matters (Phase 2)
- Condition 10: Details of reserved matters
- Condition 11: compliance with the disposition of land uses shown in the approved documents in condition 14 of the outline planning permission.
- Condition 12: details of existing and proposed ground levels together with scaled cross-sections through the reserved matters site and adjacent land.
- Condition 20: details of parking or garaging and manoeuvring of vehicles (non-residential) to accord with the provisions of the adopted non-residential vehicle parking standards applicable at the time.
- Condition 31: details of cycle parking (non-residential) to accord with the provisions of the adopted non-residential cycle parking standards applicable at the time.
- Condition 39: compliance with adopted Chilmington Green Design Code.

- Condition 40: compliance with Chilmington Green Quality Charter.
- Condition 41: strategies to be submitted with each reserved matters application.
- Condition 42: Design Statement.
- Condition 50: details of external appearance.
- Condition 54: details of hard and soft landscaping.
- Condition 60: hedge and hedgerow protection.
- Condition 62: details of measures to protect trees planted from damage by stock and rabbits.
- Condition 63: landscape management plan.
- Condition 66: surface water drainage scheme.
- Condition 67: land contamination site investigation.
- Condition 69: noise mitigation strategy.
- Condition 73: measures to minimise light pollution and compliance with the Dark Skies SPD.
- Condition 77: statement demonstrating how the reserved matters development incorporates elements of the Ecological Enhancement and Mitigation Strategy (EEMS) approved under condition 77.
- Condition 79: ecological mitigation strategy.
- Condition 80: bat mitigation and enhancement strategy.
- Condition 81: dormice mitigation and enhancement strategy.
- Condition 82: great crested newt mitigation and enhancement strategy.
- Condition 83: reptile mitigation and enhancement strategy.
- Condition 84: breeding and wintering bird mitigation and enhancement strategy.

- Condition 85: badger mitigation and enhancement strategy.
- Condition 86: woodland and other habitats and features of nature conservation interest mitigation and enhancement strategy.
- Condition 87: number and location of bird and bat boxes.
- Condition 94: scheme for the retention, integration and conservation of specific historic landscape features.

Chilmington Green Planning Context

Chilmington Green Area Action Plan (AAP) 2013

20. The AAP forms part of the council's statutory development plan for the borough. It is a site-specific plan which sets out how the new community at Chilmington Green should take shape. The AAP identifies the need for a new secondary school as part of the Chilmington Green development to meet demand for school places generated by the development itself and from wider Ashford.
21. The AAP identifies that the location of the school site will enable its delivery in an early phase of the Chilmington development, having easy access to the local road network and without impacting on the construction programme for the wider site.

Chilmington Green Design Code 2016

22. The Design Code identifies the secondary school site as forming the northern edge of the Orchard Village neighbourhood. This design approach to this neighbourhood will draw on the character and identity of its location in the flat Weald landscape.

Development Specification and Parameter Plans

23. The Outline planning permission for Chilmington Green approved a series of parameter plans relating to land use; residential density; storey heights; open space; building parameters; footpaths and cycle routes; access and strategic vehicular routes. These plans are accompanied by a Development Specification (2013). All reserved matters applications must conform to these parameters. The parameters relevant to this application are identified below.
24. **Land Use Plan** (OPA02R1 Rev P2) - identifies the application site for education use (Parcel E5). The land adjoining the secondary school site to the south-east

and south-west is allocated for residential.

25. **Open Space Plan** (OPA06R2 Rev P3) - retained hedgerows are identified along the north east boundary of the site alongside Chilmington Green Road and the north-west boundary alongside the A28.
26. **Building Parameters Plan** (OPA07R1 Rev P1) - identifies the site as Building Type 'K'. This sets the footprint of the school building (width and depth) as a minimum of 9 metres and maximum of 200 metres. The height parameters are between 6 metres (one-storey) and 15 meters (three-storeys).
27. **Footpath and Cycle Routes Plan** (OPA08R3) - an existing byway is located along the south-west boundary of the school site.
28. **Access and Strategic Vehicular Routes Plan** (OPA05R1 Rev P1) - a new strategic route is proposed to the south-west of the site, connecting proposed Access 'C' to Chilmington Green Road. Chilmington Green Road is to be closed at its northern end adjacent to the north eastern boundary of the secondary school site.

Planning History

29. The Chilmington Green site has an extensive planning history, the applications most relevant to the development proposed in this application are set out below.
30. 12/00400/AS – Outline planning permission granted on 6 January 2017 for a Comprehensive Mixed Use Development comprising:
 - up to 5,750 residential units, in a mix of sizes, types and tenures;
 - up to 10,000 m² (gross external floor space) of Class B1 use; up to 9,000 m² (gross external floorspace) of Class A1 to A5 uses;
 - Education (including a secondary school of up to 8 ha and up to four primary schools of up to 2.1 ha each);
 - Community Uses (class D1) up to 7,000 m² (gross external floorspace);
 - Leisure Uses (class D2) up to 6,000 m² (gross external floorspace);
 - Provision of local recycling facilities;
 - Provision of areas of formal and informal open space;

- Installation of appropriate utilities infrastructure as required to serve the development, including flood attenuation works, SUDS, water supply and wastewater infrastructure, gas supply, electricity supply (including substations), telecommunications infrastructure and renewable energy infrastructure (including CHP in the District Centre);
- Transport infrastructure, including provision of three accesses on to the A28, an access on to Coulter Road I Cuckoo Lane, other connections on to the local road network, and a network of internal roads, footpaths and cycle routes;
- New planting and landscaping, both within the Proposed Development and on its boundaries, and ecological enhancement works; and
- Associated groundworks

where appearance, landscaping, layout and scale are reserved for future approval and where access is reserved for future approval with the exception of the three accesses on to the A28 and the access on to Coulter Road I Cuckoo Lane.

31. To note: Condition 27 of 12/00400/AS requires 'Access C' – the southern access roundabout to be fully constructed and open for use by traffic prior to the opening of the secondary school.
32. In addition, condition 29 of 12/00400/AS requires Chilmington Green Road to be closed to vehicular traffic at its northern end prior the opening of the secondary school
33. 12/00400/AM03/AS – Non-material amendment approved on 11 April 2018 to vary the wording of Condition 41 (phasing) and Condition 50 (external appearance).
34. 21/00840/AS – Full planning permission granted on 1 October 2021 for an infrastructure route which includes carriageway, footpath/cycleway, indicative locations of visitor parking bays and soft verges to the Phase 2 Avenue providing access to the Chilmington Green Secondary School site within at Chilmington Green, Great Chart, Ashford.
35. To note: condition 11 of 21/00840/AS requires the infrastructure route to be completed prior to the opening of the secondary school.
36. 21/00839/AS – Full planning permission granted on 1 October 2021 for an

Active Travel Route to provide pedestrian access between Chilmington Avenue and the Secondary School Site entrance. The Active Travel Route comprises of a footpath and verge.

37. To note: condition 7 of 21/00839/AS requires the active travel route to be complete prior to the opening of the secondary school.
38. 12/00400/AM10/AS – Non-material amendment granted on 5 October 2021 for to planning conditions 17, 60, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85 and 86 of planning permission 12/00400/AS relating to the Secondary School within Phase 2
39. 21/00840/AMND/AS – Non-material amendment approved on 27 May 2022 to alter the junction configuration at the crossroads at Chilmington Avenue and Chilmington Green Road approved under planning permission 21/00840/AS (Infrastructure route which includes carriageway, footpath/cycleway, indicative locations of visitor parking bays and soft verges to the Phase 2 Avenue providing access to the Chilmington Green Secondary School site within at Chilmington Green, Great Chart, Ashford).

Consultations

40. The application has been subject to the following formal statutory and non-statutory consultation.

Parish Councils

Bethersden Parish Council resolved to make no comment.

Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council object to the application until assurance can be given that the school will not open before the access roundabout is in place and Chilmington Green Road has been closed off. The PC also have concerns about: the limited number of parking spaces; the poor layout of the coach drop off area; the lack of inclusion of green energy to power the school, but also for electric car charging points – including in the disabled spaces; the need for active travel routes to the school from outside of the Chilmington development red line.

Kingsnorth Parish Council object to the application as they consider the location of the development is not sustainable due to lack, at the present time, of suitable infrastructure; the impact on the highway; limited available walking and cycling connections to the site; insufficient car and coach parking, insufficient EV charging points; concern that archaeological field evaluation works have not been undertaken; and loss of hedgerow.

Orlestone Parish Council - no comments received at the time of writing this report.

Shadoxhurst Parish Council - no comments received at the time of writing this report.

National Consultees

Environment Agency advised that they are not a statutory consultee for reserved matters applications and therefore make no comment.

Natural England advised that they have no comments.

NHS – no comments received at the time of writing this report.

Sport England - advised that they consulted with the relevant sport national governing bodies (NGBs) in respect of football, tennis and cricket, their comments are summarised as follows:

- Football Foundation - commented that the quality and provision of the natural turf football pitches adheres to their standards in respect of their design, construction, quality and maintenance (
- Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) - support the tennis court provision and the proposed community access, commenting that the facilities would support the demand for additional community tennis facilities in the borough and be in line with the LTA vision of Opening Tennis Up.
- English Cricket Board (ECB) note that no cricket facilities are proposed in the school. They recommend that cricket facilities be included in the sports hall and the inclusion of a non-turf cricket pitch within the playing field.

(Case officer's note: the applicant has confirmed that the size of the football pitches and tennis courts conform to the Football Foundation and LTA's recommendations).

Sport England comment that, subject to further consideration being given to the inclusion of cricket facilities, the details submitted are satisfactory. Sport England therefore raise no objection to the application, subject to conditions to ensure the following

- i. The playing pitches and MUGA are constructed in accordance with the design and layout details submitted with the application and in

- accordance with Sport England and /National Governing Body Technical Design Guidance Notes;
- ii. The submission of a detailed assessment of ground conditions (including drainage and topography) of the land proposed for the playing fields;
 - iii. The submission of a schedule of playing field maintenance including a programme for implementation;
 - iv. The submission of a community use agreement.

Kent County Council Consultees

KCC Archaeology raised no objection to the proposed development, noting that there are a variety of conditions placed on the outline planning permission for the wider development that apply to the school site. KCC suggest that archaeological evaluation fieldworks on the site are undertaken prior to determination of this planning application. (*Case Officer's note: the archaeological fieldworks were undertaken in February 2022.*)

KCC Ecological Advice Service advised that sufficient ecological information has been submitted with the application. The Advice Service raise no objection to the proposed development, subject to conditions to require the submission of a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP); to ensure the proposed precautionary mitigation approach to reptiles proposed by the applicant is implemented; and to require the submission of a lighting design for biodiversity. They also request that a breeding birds informative be included.

KCC Flood Risk and Water Management confirmed that they are satisfied with the proposals for dealing with surface water. They therefore have no objection to the application subject to conditions to require the submission of a detailed sustainable surface water drainage scheme and verification report.

KCC Highways initially raised concerns about the impact of the development on the highway and the proposed level of car and coach parking. Following the submission of revised plans, KCC Highways raise no objection to the proposed development, subject to conditions to secure the following:

- a) To ensure the proposed vehicle and bicycle parking spaces and vehicle access and servicing facilities are provided prior to first occupation of the school.
- b) To ensure the provision of at least 15 EV charging points prior to first occupation of the school, with the rest of the parking spaces having provision for EV charging points to be installed in the future.

- c) To require the submission of a Travel Plan for the school.
- d) To require that the school does not open until the following infrastructure is completed to adoptable standard and open to the public:
- Access C roundabout;
 - Chilmington Avenue from Access A to Chilmington Green Road (17/00665/AS);
 - Chilmington Avenue Extension from Access to Chilmington Green Road (21/00840/AMND/AS);
 - Active Travel Route from the Chilmington Green Road to the Secondary School (21/00839/AS).

KCC Public Rights of Way (PROW) note that Public Rights of Way AW245 & AW292 pass adjacent to the site. These PROW will form significant pedestrian and cycle access to the school with only minimal vehicular traffic sharing the routes. They are however in need of surface improvements to make them more suitable as routes to school. (*Case Officer's note: AW245 is due to be upgraded as part of the Chilmington Green development prior to 1200 occupations*).

ABC Consultees

ABC Environmental Services raise no objection to the proposed development subject to conditions in respect of construction hours, land contamination and lighting.

Other Consultees

Chilmington CMO commented that they support the early delivery of the secondary school and welcome the commitment of the school to grow strong local partnerships. They appreciate the school's intention to make their sports facilities available to the community outside of school hours. Whilst they understand that external lighting for the pitches cannot be provided at the time of opening they would like to see this provided in the future to allow greater community use. The CMO has raised concerns about the proposed parking provision and space within the school site for coach drop-offs and the resultant impacts on traffic flow in the area.

Kent Fire and Rescue – no response received at the time of writing this report.

Kent Police advise that they have reviewed this application regarding Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). They recommend the use of the Secured By Design (SBD) principles in the development to show commitment to crime prevention and community safety.

Ramblers Association comment that two adjacent PROW, Byways AW245 and AW292 are likely to see increased use as routes to the school and, as such, they need to be fit for purpose for use by pedestrians, cyclists, all non-motorised wheeled vehicles, and also equestrians. They also need to be available for use throughout the construction process, The Ramblers request that safe pedestrian and cycle access to the school should be a priority at all times.

Scotia Gas Networks (SGN) provided a copy of their map record for the site. This shows that there are no gas mains within the site. SGN made no comment on the application.

Southern Water advised that the sewer services at this location are the responsibility of IWNL. There is an inset agreement/NAV agreement in place between Southern Water and IWNL for sewerage services. The connection/discharge points to the public network and agreed discharge flow rates must comply with inset/NAV agreements terms.

Stagecoach Buses – no response received at the time of writing this report.

UK Power Networks provided a copy of their network maps for the site. These show that there are no electrical lines within the site. UK Power Networks made no comment on the application.

Neighbours

41. The application has been advertised by the display of a site notice, a press notice and notification letters sent to the occupiers of 339 properties in the vicinity of the site. 20 responses have been received, comprising six objections, eleven in support and three general comments. The points raised are summarised below.

Ward Councillors

42. Councillor Bill Barrett is broadly supportive of the application but notes the comments from KCC Highways requiring revisions to the application in respect of car parking, coach drop off and electric charging points. The Councillor acknowledges that traffic volumes will increase on Chilmington Green Road during school drop off/pick up times, identifies that there should be a bigger

emphasis on car sharing in the applicant's Travel Plan and comments that the speed limit on Chilmington Green Road will have to be reduced. The Councillor is reassured by the design of the school, its sports facilities and open space appear very good, also reassuring is the report on reducing the carbon footprint of the school, with an emphasis on PV Panels and heat pumps

Objections

43. Concerns about the impacts of the school on the level of traffic on Chilmington Green Road, the A28 and the village of Great Chart.
44. The school should not open until Chilmington Green Road is closed and the access roundabout (Access C) is constructed.
45. There is insufficient parking and drop off facilities proposed.
46. More electric charging points should be provided.
47. Concern about the loss of green space

Support

48. The school would be of benefit to the area and is a much-needed community asset for South Ashford.
49. Support the Net Zero Carbon build.

General Comments

50. Comments about the facilities to be provided at the school and the internal layout proposed.
51. There must be good access links, cycle paths and pedestrian walkways to Singleton and Kingsnorth from the school.

Planning Policy

52. The Development Plan for Ashford borough comprises the Ashford Local Plan 2030 (adopted February 2019), along with the Chilmington Green Area Action Plan (2013), the Wye Neighbourhood Plan (2016), the Pluckley Neighbourhood Plan (2017), the Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan (2019), the Boughton Aluph and Eastwell Neighbourhood Plan (2021), the Egerton Neighbourhood Plan (2022) and the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2016) as well as the Kent

Minerals and Waste Early Partial Review (2020).

53. The relevant policies from the Chilmington Green Area Action Plan (AAP) are as follows:

CG0	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
CG1	Chilmington Green Development Principles
CG11	Highways and Access
CG13	Cycling and Walking
CG15	Education Provision
CG19	Sustainable Design and Construction
CG20	Sustainable Drainage
CG21	Ecology
CG22	Phasing, Delivery and Implementation

54. The APP policies identified above are also consistent with the following policies in the Ashford Local Plan which apply in the rest of the borough outside the Chilmington Green AAP area:

SP1	Strategic Objectives
SP6	Promoting High Quality Design
EMP6	Promotion of Fibre to the Premises (FTTP)
TRA3b	Parking Standards for Non Residential Development
TRA4	Promoting the Local Bus Network
TRA5	Planning for Pedestrians
TRA6	Provision for Cycling
TRA7	The Road Network and Development

TRA8	Travel Plans, Assessments and Statements
ENV1	Biodiversity
ENV3a	Landscape Character and Design
ENV4	Light Pollution and Promoting Dark Skies
ENV5	Protecting Important Rural Features
ENV6	Flood Risk
ENV7	Water Efficiency
ENV8	Water Quality, Supply and Treatment
ENV9	Sustainable Drainage
ENV11	Sustainable Design and Construction – Non- Residential
ENV12	Air Quality
ENV15	Archaeology
COM1	Meeting the Community's Needs
IMP1	Infrastructure Provision

55. The following are also material considerations to the determination of this application:-

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

Fibre to the Premises SPD, 2020

Dark Skies SPD, 2014

Public Green Spaces & Water Environment SPD (2012)

Sustainable Design and Construction SPD, 2012

Landscape Character SPD, 2011

Sustainable Drainage SPD, 2010

Other Relevant Documents

Chilmington Green Design Code (2016)

Chilmington Green Quality Charter

Kent Design Guide – Parking Standards

Government Advice

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021

National Planning Practice Guidance

56. Members should note that the determination must be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. A significant material consideration is the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF says that less weight should be given to the policies above if they are in conflict with the NPPF. The following sections of the NPPF are relevant to this application:-

Chapter 2 - Achieving sustainable development

Chapter 4 - Decision-making

Chapter 8 - Promoting healthy and safe communities

Chapter 9 - Promoting sustainable transport

Chapter 10 - Supporting High Quality Communications

Chapter 11 - Making effective use of land

Chapter 12 - Achieving well-designed places

Chapter 14 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Chapter 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Assessment

57. The key areas for consideration in the assessment of this application are:

- Principle of Development
- Sustainability and Climate Change
- Site Layout and Building Design
- Landscaping
- Ecology and Trees
- Access and Parking
- Residential Amenity
- Heritage and Archaeology
- Drainage and Flood Risk
- Environmental Impacts

Principle of Development

58. The Council's 'Vision' for Chilmington Green set out in the AAP comprises eight elements, of particular relevance to this application are the following:

- *'a place that....works for people of all ages and provides the range of community, school, health and other services needed by local people in a joined-up way'.*
- *'a place that...looks and feels good and, by setting challenging standards of innovative design, becomes a place of special and varied character, with sustainability integrated into all aspects of design'.*
- *'a place that.....has a strong identity in a landscape setting, but is closely linked to the urban area and is able to offer new opportunities to other residents of Ashford, in particular those nearby in Brisley Farm, Singleton, Shadoxhurst and Stanhope'.*

- *'a place that....respects and integrates heritage buildings, landscape features, woodland and wildlife habitats as part of a well-planned layout.'*
59. This 'Vision' is reflected in the Chilmington Green Development Principles set out in AAP Policy CG1. In particular part (b) of this policy identifies that *'each main phase of the development will be sustainable in its own right, through the provision of the required social and physical infrastructure'*.
60. Education provision within the Chilmington Green development is specifically addressed in Chapter 10(a) of the AAP and Policy CG15 which states that *'one minimum 6 form entry secondary school (on a minimum 8 ha site) shall be provided as part of the Chilmington Green development, in accordance with the allocation shown on the AAP Policies Map.'* The AAP also identifies that the school should include sixth-form facilities and *'will provide for the strategic needs of Ashford in the short to medium term and will be well located to cater for the needs generated by the Chilmington development itself in the longer term.'* (para 10.3)
61. The outline planning permission for Chilmington Green established that the construction of a secondary school on land adjacent to the A28, alongside the north-west boundary of the Chilmington Green site (identified as Parcel E5) is acceptable in principle. This location accords with the AAP Policies Map and, as set out in the AAP, was chosen to ensure that *'the school can be delivered in an early phase, with easy access to the local road network and without impacting on the construction programme for the remainder of the site.'*
62. In addition, schedule 15, part 5 of the s.106 agreement attached to the outline planning permission secures the delivery of a secondary school as part of the Chilmington Green development via the transfer of land and the payment of financial contributions to Kent County Council. The s.106 agreement also identifies that the secondary school should accommodate six forms of entry and have the capacity to be upgraded to accommodate eight forms of entry.
63. The AAP envisaged that the secondary school would be delivered within phase 2 of the development. This intention was reflected in the outline planning permission which envisaged that circa 1500 houses would have been delivered, alongside associated infrastructure such as the district centre and first primary school, prior to the secondary school coming forward. However, due to slower than envisaged construction, the secondary school is now being brought forward alongside the construction of housing in phase 1. At the time of writing this report, just over 200 homes have been delivered on site, plus the first primary school.

64. Whilst the school is being brought forward earlier than envisaged in relation to the phasing of Chilmington Green, I consider this not to be contrary to the aims and objectives of the AAP nor the outline planning permission. In fact, when discussing the delivery of the secondary school, the AAP acknowledges that *'there must be flexibility in this as it will need to respond to demand generated for places within the wider town and will therefore need to be made available at the county council's request, whether this is earlier or later than phase 2.'*
65. Kent County Council have advised that there is an acute need for new secondary school places within south Ashford, with young people currently traveling to schools outside the borough. It was envisaged, when outline planning permission was granted for the Chilmington Green development, that 61% of pupils attending the secondary school would reside within Chilmington Green and 39% would be drawn from wider south Ashford. Whilst there may currently be lower demand than envisaged from the Chilmington Green development itself, there is current demand from the wider area. The DfE Wave funding for the school has been secured in response to the need for a new secondary school, however, this funding is time limited. If construction was held back until more housing and associated infrastructure is delivered at Chilmington Green, there is uncertainty about whether funding for the school would still be available. It is therefore vital that the secondary school development is brought forward now.
66. It is important, however, to note that the secondary school being brought forward at an earlier stage in comparison to the delivery of housing and other infrastructure does present challenges in respect of accessibility. I assess this aspect of the development in the Access and Parking section of this report below.
67. This reserved matters application proposes a secondary school in the location, and of the size required, by the AAP and the outline planning permission. Subsequently, I consider this application to comply with AAP policies CG1(b) and CG15 and therefore to be acceptable in principle. The application also complies with the NPPF and is consistent with the Council's wider approach in other parts of its area, with reference to Ashford Local Plan policies SP1 and COM1.

Sports Provision

68. The sports provision proposed within the school comprises two football pitches (one nine a side pitch and one eleven a side pitch), a rugby pitch, an athletics track, a multi-use games area (MUGA) and a sports hall. All of the pitches are to be natural grass. The applicant has confirmed that the pitches and courts

(within the MUGA) will all adhere to NGB/Sport England dimension recommendations. The location of the pitches and MUGA is shown in **Figure 12**.

69. Ball stop fencing is proposed along the north-western side of the senior football pitch (5.0m high) and north-western and north-eastern sides of the junior football pitch (10m high and 7m high respectively). 3.0m high rebound fencing/netting is proposed around all four sides of the MUGA. No sports lighting is proposed.
70. Sport England and the NGB's for football and tennis have confirmed that the sports provision meets their standards. Concerns were raised about there being no provision for cricket. In response, the applicant has reviewed the site layout and advised that the only location a non-turf wicket could be included is between the athletics track and rugby pitch, effectively making the area one large sports field rather than two separate pitches. To provide this they would also need to review levels across both pitches and omit the swale. The applicant concluded that it is not possible to provide cricket facilities.

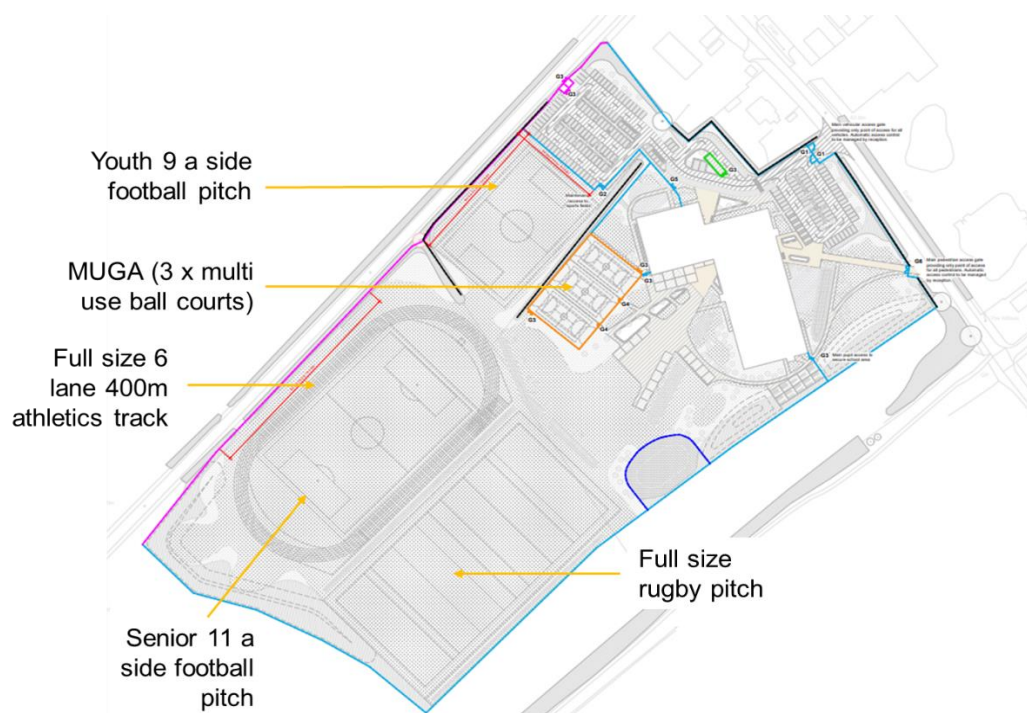


Figure 12: Outdoor Sports Facilities

71. It is disappointing that cricket facilities are not proposed as part of the school development. However, given that all the other proposed sports facilities meet the required standards and that they will provide for a range of different sports, I consider the lack of cricket facilities to be regrettable but acceptable.

Community Use

72. The sports hall; drama studio; classroom space (with IT provision); school hall and dance studio will be made available for community use outside of school hours. The school has also advised that the MUGA and grass pitches will be available for use by community clubs, although this will need to be managed to ensure the pitches remain in a suitable condition for pupil use throughout the week. No floodlighting of the outdoor sports facilities is proposed and therefore evening use will be limited in the winter months. Members of the community using the facilities will have access to car parking, toilet and changing facilities.
73. The intended community use of the sports pitches meets the aspirations of the AAP, in particular para 6.22 of Chapter 6 which advises that the council will encourage the dual use of sports pitch provision being brought forward as part of the secondary school. The AAP also seeks to ensure that community facilities are provided across the Chilmington Green development to meet the needs of residents. Whilst the role of the secondary school is primarily for education, the intention to allow access to the school's facilities to residents out of school hours meets the aspirations of the AAP.
74. To ensure the facilities referred to above are available for community use, I recommend a condition to require the submission of a community use agreement, to include details of pricing; hours of use; management responsibilities; and a mechanism for review. With this condition, I consider the application to be acceptable in respect of the community access to the school facilities proposed.

Sustainability and Climate Change

75. The AAP's 'Vision' for Chilmington Green identifies that sustainability should be integrated into all aspects of design. In light of this, I consider there to be two strands of sustainability that apply to the proposed secondary school, firstly its location and secondly its design.
76. The secondary school site is located close to the proposed Chilmington Green district centre, which will provide local shops, a primary school and a community hub. In addition, a new bus route is proposed to pass close by the school entrance, as illustrated in **Figure 13**, and new pedestrian and cycle routes will connect the school to the wider Chilmington Green neighbourhood.

77. As explained above, the secondary school is being brought forward earlier than the surrounding residential development and the district centre (with the exception of the primary school which is already open). In addition, the bus stop/service proposed close to the secondary school entrance is not required to be delivered until 2772 dwellings are occupied. Local pedestrian and cycle routes will come forward with the associated residential development. This is not ideal, as when the school initially opens it will be located remote from the community it will serve and there will be limited access to the school by public transport and active travel routes. However, this will only be temporary and the benefits of bringing forward infrastructure, such as the school, early in the development should also be acknowledged. Once the Chilmington Green development is delivered the school will be in a highly sustainable location. (I consider the access and highway implications of this aspect of the development in the Access and Parking section of this report below).

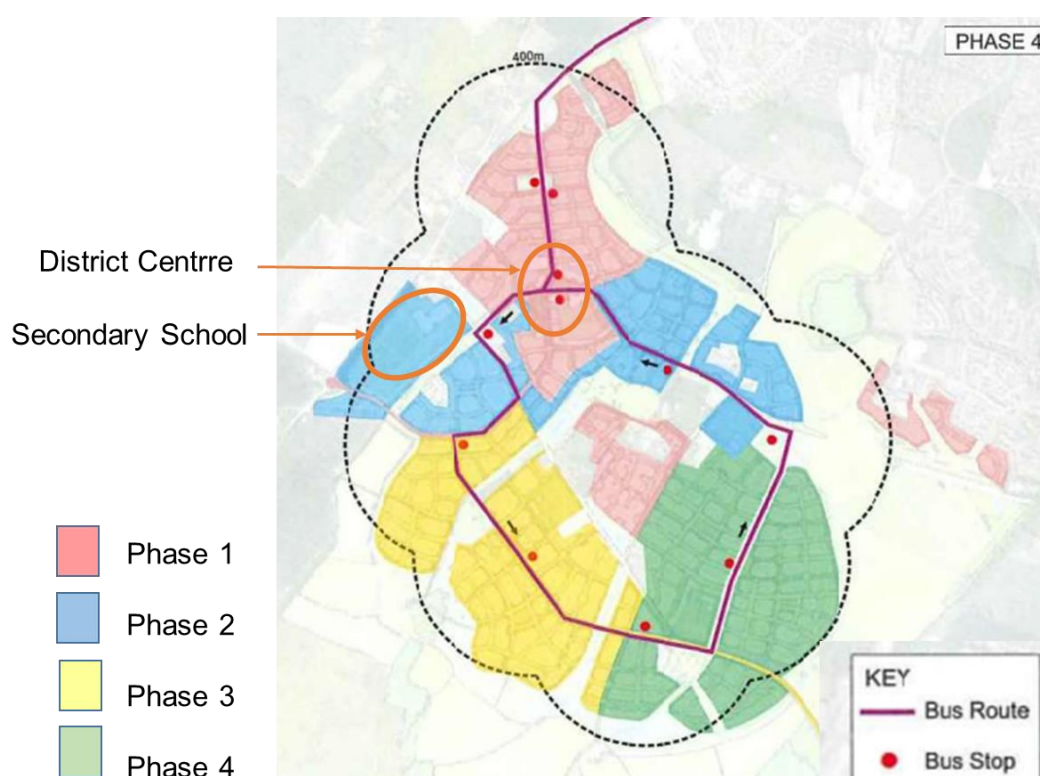


Figure 13: Chilmington Green Proposed Bus Route and Phasing

78. The school is designed to be Net Zero Carbon (NZC) in operation, and is a NZC Pathfinder project by the Department for Education (DfE). Section 3.4 of the applicant's Design and Access Statement advises that '*as a pathfinder project it is expected to generate ideas and approaches to NZC that can be used across the wider school estate in the future. Some of the key points to enable this are:*

- *Put the long-term needs of the school users (all pupils and staff) at the centre of all decisions;*
- *Ensure the designs are future-proofed against the risks of climate change as defined by UK adaptation policy i.e. higher temperatures and prolonged rainfall;*
- *Achieve NZC in Operation, as defined by the standards within the NZC Buildings: A Framework Definition UK Green Building Council (UK GBC), recognising a development of targets over a timeline;*
- *Create a healthy and productive whole school setting, in response to the UK's 25-year Environment Plan including biodiversity net-gain.'*

79. In addition, the applicant's Design and Access Statement identifies some of the design considerations in making sure the building is NZC, as follows:
- a. Building orientation to maximise passive environmental controls;
 - b. Efficient form factor - proportion between external walls and plan area is maximised to reduce thermal losses;
 - c. Improved thermal fabric performance to reduce energy demand;
 - d. Allow for natural ventilation;
 - e. Incorporate renewable technologies in the form of solar PVs on the roof;
 - f. Protective landscape concept - soft landscape provides a cooling effect and air flow;
 - g. Adapted fenestration to allow ventilation without causing drafts;
 - h. Client plug loading implications – the building user has a great impact on the operation of the building, and more efficient systems will be used to reduce the energy consumption.
80. The applicant has advised that, in addition to energy efficiency measures, the school will include heat pump and adiabatic cooling technology to maintain comfort conditions within the building. Heat and chilled water generating technologies have been selected to ensure very low-carbon energy generation.

Sub-metering will be incorporated to enable energy consumption to be monitored.

81. The school building will be constructed via a Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) Framework which means the building will be manufactured off-site, formed out of modules built in a factory which are then transported to and erected on site. The school will achieve BREEAM 'excellent' standard.
82. The applicant has provided a more detailed description of the sustainability measures incorporated into the design of the school in their Utility Statement and Low and Zero Carbon Technology Feasibility Report.
83. I support the sustainable approach to the design and the intention for the school to be Net Zero Carbon in operation. I also note that this accords with condition 74 of the outline planning permission which requires each non-residential building to be carbon neutral and to be constructed to achieve BREEAM (or subsequent equivalent quality assured scheme) 'excellent' standard.
84. The application complies with AAP policies CG0, CG1 and CG19 and the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD. The application also complies with the NPPF and is consistent with the Council's wider approach in other parts of its area, with reference to Ashford Local Plan policy ENV11.

Site Layout and Building Design

85. The site layout and external appearance of the building has evolved through pro-active pre-application discussions between officers and the applicant, plus a presentation of the proposal to the South East Design Review Panel and a presentation to the community. I consider that the scheme submitted is of a high quality design and demonstrates careful consideration of the aspirations of the Chilmington Green Design Code, Quality Charter and the AAP vision in respect of design.

Site Layout

86. The school building will be located on the eastern part of the Parcel E5 site, facing Chilmington Green Road. The applicant's Design and Access Statement explains that the school has been positioned on the site to provide the optimal orientation for the NZC in operation aspirations for the project and has been angled within these parameters to give a street presence on Chilmington Green Road.

87. The school building will be set back from Chilmington Green Road, with a landscaped area provided in front of the building. The pedestrian/cycle access will be from the south-eastern corner of the site, in closest proximity to the proposed district centre, bus route and pedestrian/cycle routes connecting to the wider Chilmington Green development. Vehicle access (off Chilmington Green Road); coach drop off/pick up; servicing; and car parking will all take place on the north-eastern side of the site away from the pedestrian access. The sports pitches and wider landscaped amenity space for the school will be located on the western side of the school building, extending parallel to the A28. The proposed site plan is shown in **Figure 2** above.
88. I consider the site layout to be acceptable and to be based on good urban design principles. In particular, the landscaped area to the front of the building will provide a visually 'green' setting for the school, with the more hard landscaped areas for access, parking and servicing positioned further away from public vantage points to the side of the site and building. The location of the pedestrian/cycle access will also enable a direct route for pedestrians into the school from the district centre and the wider Chilmington Green development, which is supported.
89. The location of the school building within the site is also acceptable when consideration is given to the nature of the development proposed on the neighbouring land parcels. The parcels to the south and south-west will, once complete, provide housing. To the east, on the opposite side of Chilmington Green Road, is a flood attenuation pond (Parcel F2) beyond which is land proposed for housing. Adjacent to the south-west corner of the site a new access into the Chilmington Green development off the A28 is proposed (Access C), which will comprise a new roundabout and associated landscaping.
90. I consider that the location of the school building and sports fields will not compromise the ability of the neighbouring land parcels to be effectively brought forward for their intended land uses. In particular, the siting of the building and sports facilities takes into account the proximity to future residential development plots adjacent to the south/south-west.

91. The school will initially accommodate six forms of entry, however, the outline planning permission requires the site to be able to accommodate eight forms of entry in the future, if required. The application includes an expansion site plan indicating the potential location of a future three-storey extension to the building to be located to the southern end of the teaching block, connected by a single storey link building, refer to **Figure 14**. Whilst any future extension to the school building would be subject to a separate planning application it is important to ensure at this stage that an extension could be accommodated. The potential extension would be close to the boundary with future neighbouring residential properties, circa 26 metres at its closest point. I consider that, with careful design and landscaping, an extension to the school could be sited on the southern side of the school site with limited negative impacts upon neighbouring future homes.

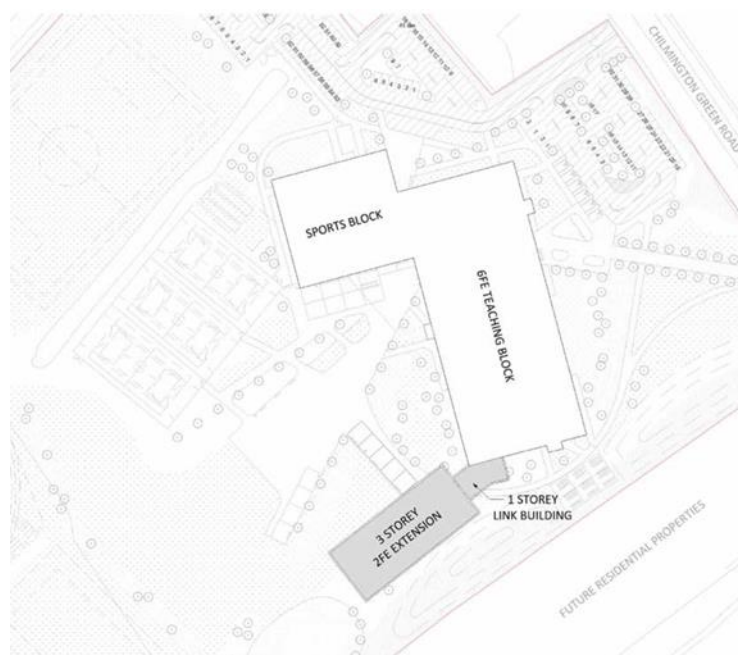


Figure 14: Potential School Expansion Plan

External Appearance

92. The Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) Framework has determined, to a certain extent, the materials palette for the elevations, with consideration also given to the materials palette within the Design Code.
93. The school is a large building and without careful design could appear as a large, long block. It was important to break up the elevations by introducing vertical emphasis and including accent materials to add texture, colour and visual interest. This has been achieved by grouping/framing the windows on the upper floors with yellow-clad surrounds inset with timber effect

weatherboarding. The main entrance is defined by a double-height black canopy with yellow reveals, the front of which includes stainless steel school signage. This entrance canopy is connected to the main stair core which is extended in height to act as a visual beacon to be topped with the school logo on three sides. The entrance canopy and stair core combine to create a strong entrance to the school building. The sports block has been given its own design identity which comprises the charcoal grey cladding used on the teaching block alongside colour accents of green and reddish brown to add colour and interest. Visualisations of the school building are provided in **Figures 15, 16 and 17.**



Figure 15: Aerial view towards the main entrance from the north east



Figure 16: View of the main entrance



Figure 17: View of the sports block from the rear.

94. The applicant team have worked hard to develop the design of the elevations within the limitations of the MMC materials palette. The result is a building that has been designed to reflect the council's aspirations for high design quality in the Chilmington Green development. The quality and specification of the materials proposed will be secured via condition.

Internal layout

95. Teaching spaces are arranged around the perimeter of the building to optimise natural light, with the main assembly hall, activity studio and triple height dining space, lit with roof windows, within the centre of the building. The design allows internal circulation to be a continuous loop around the school, which can be managed as a one-way system if required. Three main stair cores are proposed to provide access to upper floors, plus a fourth more open stair leading to the upper floors in the dining area that would be visible from the main entrance. A lift is proposed outside the main hall in close proximity to the main entrance.
96. The applicant's Design and Access Statement explains that the school has been designed with in-built flexibility so that it can adapt to future educational requirements. For example; internal walls can move to adjust the size of teaching spaces; lighting, power and data connections can be easily removed and reconfigured; ventilation rates can be increased/decreased in

response to occupancy levels to ensure the internal environment is always pleasant without wasting energy.

97. In conclusion, the application is in accordance with the vision and aspirations to deliver design quality within the Chilmington Green development as set out in the AAP and the Design Code. The application also complies with the NPPF and is consistent with the Council's wider approach in other parts of its area, with reference to Ashford Local Plan policy SP6.

Landscaping

98. The school site will be split into two zones, to the front of the building will be the more public area which will be landscaped and accessible to the public and includes the car parking and servicing areas. The second zone comprises the school building and landscaped area/sports facilities to the rear. The front elevation of the school building will provide the line of security between the school and public areas. This arrangement is illustrated in **Figure 18**.



Figure 18: School Zones

99. These two zones will have a unified landscape approach. The spaces immediately adjacent to the school building, which provide access and social gathering spaces, will be landscaped with turf and meadow planting, and native tree planting to the boundaries. In addition, existing boundary

hedgerows and road verge vegetation will be retained where appropriate to maintain a 'green' boundary to the school site. Tree planting is proposed to define pedestrian routes to the front and rear of the school building.

100. During the course of the application, the landscape scheme has been amended to increase the amount of tree and amenity planting throughout the car parking, vehicle access and servicing areas, to reduce the dominance of hard standing and provide a green setting to these areas. The landscape proposals are shown in **Figure 19**.



Figure 19: Landscape Masterplan

101. I consider the landscape scheme to be well thought out and, with the increased tree planting, will provide a strong landscape setting for the school. Detailed landscape plans have been provided, however I consider it necessary to include a condition to require the submission of a detailed landscape planting scheme, plus management and maintenance scheme prior to first occupation of the building so that the council can be assured that a high quality landscape scheme is delivered.

102. The application is in accordance with the vision and aspirations to deliver high quality landscaping within the Chilmington Green development as set out in the AAP and the Design Code. The application also complies with the NPPF and is consistent with the Council's wider approach in other parts of its area, with reference to Ashford Local Plan policy SP6.

Ecology and Trees

103. The site is predominantly arable and hay meadow fields, with scrub along field margins and hedgerows along the boundaries, plus some scattered trees. The results of the applicant's surveys found that one tree on site has the potential to support roosting bats and the site and immediate surroundings offer suitable habitat for bat foraging and commuting. Suitable bird nesting habitat is also present and there is potentially suitable habitat for dormouse, great crested newt and reptiles. Notwithstanding the suitability of the habitat on site for these species, the surveys only identified evidence of common lizards within the site boundary.
104. AAP Policy CG21 (Ecology) states that '*development at Chilmington Green will avoid the loss of locally important ecological networks and semi natural habitats*'. The policy continues '*where any part of the development would impact on important ecological assets, it will be necessary to demonstrate that appropriate mitigation is already in place and suitably established, prior to the commencement of that part of the development.*'
105. The AAP is also consistent with the Council's wider approach in other parts of its area, with reference to Policy ENV1 of the Ashford Local Plan 2030. It is also noted that paragraph 180 of the NPPF seeks to ensure that biodiversity is maintained and enhanced through the planning system.
106. The applicant's ecology report identifies opportunities to include biodiversity enhancements as part of the development. This includes the installation of bird and bat boxes and a hedgehog house within the site, the incorporation of a wildlife friendly planting scheme using native plant species to benefit invertebrates, plus native tree planting; and the incorporation of hedgehog boxes.
107. The County Council Ecology Advice Service has highlighted that there is a reasonable amount of meadow/swale planting proposed on the school site. They note that it is important this is managed properly to ensure it retains its biodiversity value. In particular, as evidence of a reptile population was found on-site, it is especially important that areas of quality meadow (connected to the wider landscape) are provisioned.

108. A total of nine individual trees, two areas of trees and nine hedges have been identified on the site. To facilitate the development it is necessary to remove one hedge and two sections of hedge, two trees and undertake minor surgery to one tree. An additional single tree also requires removal irrespective of the proposed development. The alignment of the proposed school building does not encroach within the Root Protection Areas of any trees that are to be retained. Details of the trees and hedgerow to be removed to facilitate the development are provided in the table below.

Tree Number	Species	Category	Works Proposed
A001	All area of Blackthorn scrub within centre of site	C	To facilitate installation of the running track.
H002	Existing field boundary hedge alongside the A28	B	Two sections to facilitate construction of a substation.
H005	boundary hedge on edge of a watercourse within north-east part of site	B	To facilitate construction of proposed parking area and sports fields.
H008	Retained boundary hedge located on edge of a watercourse alongside Chilmington Green Road	B	Two sections to create site access.
T003	All, multi-stemmed Hawthorn located on the edge of a watercourse in centre of site	C	To facilitate construction of proposed sports pitches.

109. The trees to be removed are categorised as 'C' (low quality and value) and the hedges to be removed are category 'B' (of moderate quality and value). There are no category 'A' trees or hedges (of high quality and value) on the site. I consider that the tree and hedge removal would not have a significant detrimental impact upon the character and appearance of the site or the wider area. I also note that new tree planting is proposed on the site as part of the development. It will be important to ensure that substantial new tree planting is secured as part of the development and therefore a condition is

- recommended to require the submission of a detailed tree planting plan, including details of species and size.
110. Conditions 58 and 59 attached to the outline planning permission for the Chilmington Green development ensure appropriate tree protection measures are put in place during construction, however, these conditions do not refer to hedges and hedgerows. I therefore recommend that similar conditions be attached to the reserved matters consent in respect of hedgerows.
111. Subject to these conditions, I consider that the proposed development will not result in significant or unacceptable harm to the trees and hedges to be retained on the site.
112. To ensure that ecologically productive habitats will be established and managed appropriately on the site as part of the development and to mitigate the impact of the loss of hedgerow, the County Ecology Advice Service recommend a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) is secured via condition.
113. In addition, to mitigate against potential adverse effects on bats, the County Council suggest that the Bat Conservation Trust's 'Guidance Note 8 Bats and Artificial Lighting' is consulted in the lighting design of the development. They advise that a lighting design plan for biodiversity be secured via condition, as recommended in the applicant's ecology report.
114. During the course of the application, the applicant was asked to consider the feasibility of installing a green roof on the school building. In response, the applicant has advised that it is not possible for a number of technical reasons, in particular, because the entire roof is covered in PV panels which are required to meet Net Zero Carbon in operation. In addition, the off-site construction method proposed does not allow for the additional load required to accommodate a green roof. It is for these reasons that a green roof will not be provided. This is disappointing, however, I acknowledge the requirements for PV panels to be located on the roof and the limitations of the construction methods proposed and consider the approach taken to be acceptable in this instance.
115. It should be noted that the Standing Advice from Natural England (NE) regarding the water quality at the nationally and internationally designated wildlife habitat at Stodmarsh Lakes, east of Canterbury does not apply to this development. This is because the school does not provide overnight accommodation. Therefore, in order for the Council to lawfully grant planning permission, it is not necessary to undertake an Appropriate Assessment (AA)

under the Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended) nor identify suitable mitigation to achieve 'nutrient neutrality'.

116. On the basis of the information submitted by the applicant and the advice provided by the County Council, I consider that the proposed development would conserve biodiversity on the site and that sufficient opportunities to incorporate and enhance biodiversity on the site can be secured as part of the development. The proposed development, therefore, complies with AAP Policy CG21. The application also complies with the NPPF and is consistent with the Council's wider approach in other parts of its area, with reference to Ashford Local Plan policy ENV1.

Access and Parking

117. The school will be accessed off Chilmington Green Road via a new road, known as The Avenue (Phase 2), to be constructed to the south of the school site linking to the proposed Access C to the south-west. In addition, access from the north-east will be via The Avenue (Phase 1) and the already constructed Access A. Chilmington Green Road, to the north of the school, will be closed to vehicle traffic (pedestrian and cycle access will be retained). The closure of Chilmington Green Road and the provision of Access C and The Avenue (Phase 2) prior to the opening of the secondary school is secured via conditions attached to the outline planning permission for the Chilmington Green development and the full planning permission for The Avenue (Phase 2). These highway arrangements were agreed as part of the outline planning permission for Chilmington Green and are shown on the approved access and strategic vehicular routes parameter plan, refer to **Figure 20**.

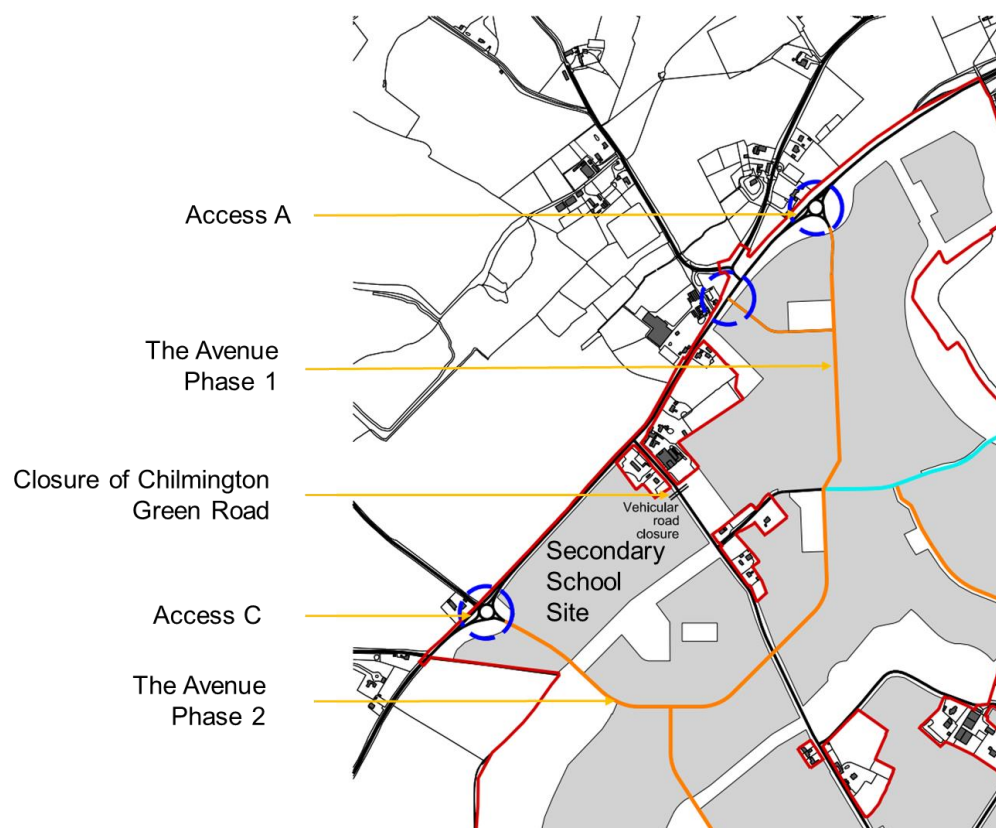


Figure 20: Secondary School Highway Access Arrangements

118. As originally submitted the proposed car and coach parking and the detailed design of the highway access arrangements for the school were not considered to be fit for purpose and would have resulted in negative impacts on the highway. Following further junction modelling and the submission of revised plans, the proposed highway design and parking arrangements are considered to be acceptable and sufficient to accommodate school parking and traffic.
119. The proposed new crossroads junction between The Avenue and Chilmington Green Road has been redesigned to widen the south east arm of the junction. This will enable side by side queuing for any vehicles wishing to turn left or right, providing sufficient capacity to accommodate the predicted traffic at this junction. The other arms of this junction have been assessed as being capable of accommodating the predicted traffic flows as single lanes, this includes bus/coach movements.
120. The access into the school site off Chilmington Green Road has been amended to incorporate entry and exit lanes separated by a traffic island on the driver side for entering vehicles. The entry gate is set back at least 16

metres from the highway to allow a 15 metre long coach to safely wait off the highway whilst the gate is being opened.

121. The applicant predicts that eight coaches will serve the site, the plans originally proposed to provide only one coach parking space on site. Following concerns raised by KCC Highways, the drawings have been amended to provide space for six coach drop off / pick up spaces.
122. Condition 20 of the outline planning permission for the Chilmington Green development requires parking provision for non-residential uses to be in accordance with the provisions of the adopted parking standards applicable at the time of the reserved matters application. Ashford Local Plan Policy TRA3(b) sets out the council's up to date standards for non-residential parking provision, however it does not specify a particular standard for schools. Instead, the policy advises that the level of parking should be proportionate to the activity and provision should be agreed with the Local Highway Authority.
123. The car parking provision on site has been increased to 162 spaces, including six DDA spaces and 24 spaces for sixth form students. This provision complies with the Kent Design Guide – Parking Standards, which, for a secondary school, requires one space per member of staff plus 10%. The Design Guide does not specify a standard where a sixth form forms part of a secondary school, however, KCC Highways have advised that one space per ten sixth form students is appropriate. The applicant has advised that the school will employ 120 staff and there will be 240 sixth form students. Therefore, the 162 spaces proposed will meet the required standards and sufficient car parking will be provided to serve the school. It is also noted that 15 parking spaces will have active electric vehicle charging points. In addition, underlying infrastructure is to be installed during construction to enable this provision to be increased to cover the whole car park in the future, if required. Details of this can be secured via planning condition.
124. As with car parking, the outline planning permission for the Chilmington Green development (condition 31) specifies that cycle parking for non-residential uses should be in accordance with the provisions of the adopted parking standards applicable at the time of the reserved matters application. Ashford Local Plan policy TRA6 and the Kent design Guide provide the current standards.
125. The development will provide 228 secure and covered cycle parking spaces (one space per five students) in an area on the south side of the school building, close to the pedestrian/cycle access. The amount of cycle parking complies with the Kent Design Guide and Ashford Local Plan policy TRA6. I consider this to be acceptable and sufficient to cater for the needs of the school. The finer details

- of the cycle parking can be secured via condition, in addition to the requirement for the cycle parking to be provided prior to the first occupation of the school.
126. The Chilmington Green development, once complete, will be served by a frequent bus service and a network of footpaths and cycleways which will ensure the secondary school is well connected by sustainable and active travel modes to the community that it will serve. However, it is acknowledged that due to the slower than expected rate of construction of the housing and delivery of the associated infrastructure, when the secondary school opens, safe pedestrian and cycle routes to the school could be more limited and the public bus service serving the school site is unlikely to be in operation.
127. The school has advised that upon opening, currently envisaged to be from the beginning of the 2023/2024 academic year, the school will have an initial intake of 120 pupils in Year 7. The number of pupils will increase each year until reaching its full capacity of 1140 pupils by 2031/2032. Once fully occupied, it is envisaged that 61% of pupils will reside in the Chilmington Green development and 39% from wider South Ashford. The applicant also advises that a large proportion of pupils are expected to travel to/from the school via school bus with the school anticipated to be served by up to eight bus routes.
128. Planning permission has recently been granted for an active travel route along the western side of Chilmington Green Lane which will link to the pedestrian and cycle routes proposed along The Avenue (Phase 1 & Phase 2). This will provide pedestrian and cycle links to the west and north. A condition attached to the planning permission for The Avenue (Phase 2) secures its provision prior to the opening of the secondary school. The Avenue (Phase 1) will provide pedestrian and cycle links to housing within Phase 1 of the Chilmington Green development, however, there is no similar condition to require its provision prior to the opening of the school. To make completely sure that all the infrastructure required to support access to the school is in place, KCC Highways consider a condition is necessary to require The Avenue Phase 1 & 2, the Active Travel Route and the Access C roundabout to be constructed and open to the public prior to the opening of the school.
129. In light of the above assessment, I consider that the development can be accessed by active travel routes and via the local road network, that traffic can be accommodated by local roads and that the development would not result in harm to highway safety. The application, therefore, complies with AAP policies CG11 and CG13 and is consistent with the Council's wider approach in other parts of its area, with reference to Ashford Local Plan policies TRA5, TRA6 and TRA7 and the NPPF.

Residential Amenity

130. The closest existing residential properties to the proposed school comprise a detached house located on the western side of Chilmington Green Road and properties on the northern side of Mock Lane. These properties are located within the Chilmington Green development area and therefore it has already been established that their existing outlook onto fields and lanes will change. Notwithstanding this change, I consider that the proposed school development will not result in overlooking to these existing neighbouring properties, nor will it result in an unacceptable loss of daylight or sunlight to these properties.
131. I also consider that the proposed school development will not result in unacceptable overlooking or daylight/sunlight conditions for the residents of future properties proposed on land parcels immediately adjacent to the school site to the south and west.
132. The sports pitches are located away from the proposed housing land parcels neighbouring the school site. I also note that the school playing pitches will not be floodlit. I therefore consider that the relationship between the school outside spaces and future neighbouring residents is acceptable. Whilst it is to be expected that some noise disturbance may occur from outside activities, this would not be at an unacceptable level.

Heritage and Archaeology

133. The nearest listed building to the school site is Minden Cottage, a Grade II Listed Building located on the southern side of the A28. Given the distance and orientation from the school site, I consider that the school site is not located within the setting of the listed cottage and therefore there would be no impact on the historic significance of the cottage from the proposed development.
134. With regard to archaeology, KCC Archaeology have advised that the wider Chilmington Green site has potential for multi-period archaeological remains. On the basis of the preliminary desk based assessment, targeted non-intrusive fieldwork and targeted fieldwork undertaken, Bronze Age, Iron Age, Roman, Medieval and later remains have been located. As such, the site is subject to a variety of conditions placed on the outline planning permission for the wider development.
135. The specific archaeological potential of the school site relates to Prehistoric, Iron Age and Roman remains. The site has not been subject to any intrusive archaeological evaluation but there are geophysical survey results which do suggest the site has potential for prehistoric and later activity. As such, there will

be a need for a phased programme of archaeological works undertaken. KCC suggest that archaeological evaluation fieldworks on the site are undertaken prior to the determination of this planning application. The applicant has confirmed that the archaeological fieldwork was undertaken in February 2022.

136. In light of the advice from KCC Archaeology, I consider that the proposed development will not have a negative impact on any archaeology on the site and sufficient conditions to safeguard archaeology are attached to the outline planning permission for Chilmington Green.

Drainage and Flood Risk

137. The site is within Flood Zone 1 and therefore has a low risk of flooding. The applicant has submitted a drainage assessment which presents a strategy for managing surface water and foul water from the developed site. KCC Flood and Water Management have reviewed the information submitted and raised no objection subject to the submission of a detailed sustainable drainage scheme and verification report which can be secured via condition.

138. In light of the advice from KCC Flood and Water Management, I consider the proposed development would not be at risk of flooding or result in a higher risk of flooding elsewhere and that a suitable drainage scheme can be accommodated on the site.

Environmental Impacts

139. An external lighting statement has been submitted for the site which considers lighting for the main building entrance, building perimeter, car parking area, pedestrian access walkways, bin store and cycle storage areas. The proposed lighting design considers the dark skies criteria and ILP guidance for obtrusive light with light spill remaining minimal. To ensure there are no detrimental lighting impacts on the amenity of nearby neighbouring properties a condition is recommended to ensure that lighting levels do not exceed acceptable levels
140. The applicant has submitted an updated Geo-Environmental Assessment, a Phase 1 and Phase 2 study has been carried out previously for the site and a summary provided. The site had been used for agriculture and risk assessed as low. Intrusive sampling identified a number of contaminants however the concentrations did not exceed the relevant generic assessment criteria and a revised conceptual site model has been submitted. No further site investigation is required unless potential contamination is discovered during the construction phase of the works.

141. A noise impact assessment has been submitted with the application. The primary noise source for the area is the A28. Modelling software has been used to assess the proposed changes to the site. Acoustic fencing will be installed along the western boundary of the site (A28) and the proposed building will fall within criteria for teaching and education spaces. No concerns were raised by the report.
142. The Council's Environmental Services officer has raised no objections to the development in respect of ground conditions, lighting and noise. I therefore consider the proposed development to be acceptable in respect of environmental impacts.

Human Rights Issues

143. I have also taken into account the human rights issues relevant to this application. In my view, the "Assessment" section above and the Recommendation below represent an appropriate balance between the interests and rights of the applicant (to enjoy their land subject only to reasonable and proportionate controls by a public authority) and the interests and rights of those potentially affected by the proposal (to respect for private life and the home and peaceful enjoyment of their properties).

Working with the applicant

144. In accordance with paragraphs 38 of the NPPF, Ashford Borough Council (ABC) takes a positive and creative approach to development proposals focused on solutions. ABC works with applicants/agents in a positive and creative manner as explained in the note to the applicant included in the recommendation below.

Conclusion

145. The AAP and the outline planning permission for the Chilmington Green development support the principle of the construction of a secondary school on the site. The proposed development would be of a high quality design in both its architecture and landscaping and would not cause harm to residential amenity. In addition, the proposed school development would not result in a severe impact on the highway and sufficient parking provision will be provided within the site. I therefore consider the proposed development to be acceptable, subject to the conditions details below.

Recommendation

Permit

Subject to planning conditions and notes, including those dealing with the subject matters identified below, with any 'pre-commencement' based planning conditions to have been the subject of the agreement process provisions effective 01/10/2018

Conditions

1. Development carried out in accordance with the approved plans.
2. Development constructed with materials approved.
3. Details of all boundary treatments, including acoustic fencing and ball stop fencing.
4. Landscaping Scheme, including replacement trees
5. Tree and Hedgerow Protection
6. Landscape Ecological Management Plan (LEMP)
7. Compliance with Reptile Survey Report
8. Lighting Design for Biodiversity
9. Sustainable Surface Water Drainage Scheme
10. Sustainable Surface Water Drainage Scheme Verification Report
11. Construction of Playing Pitches and MUGA
12. Assessment of Playing Pitch Ground Conditions
13. Playing Pitch Maintenance Schedule and Programme for Implementation
14. Electric Vehicle Charging Points
15. Details of Cycle Parking

16. Provision of Car and Coach Parking, Vehicle Loading/Unloading and Turning Facilities

17. Completion of Vehicle and Pedestrian Accesses

18. Provision of Visibility Splays.

19. Provision of Refuse Storage and Collection

20. Submission of a Travel Plan

21. Delivery of off-site Highway Infrastructure

22. Land Contamination

23. Lighting Levels

24. Community Use Agreement

Note to Applicant

1. Working with the Applicant
2. List of plans / documents approved
3. Bird nesting season
4. Highways informatives
5. Sport England informatives
6. Environmental Health Informatives

Background Papers

All papers referred to in this report are currently published on the Ashford Borough Council web site (www.ashford.gov.uk). Those papers relating specifically to this application may be found on the [View applications on line](#) pages under planning application reference //AS)

Contact Officer: Faye Tomlinson
Email: faye.tomlinson@ashford.gov.uk
Telephone: (01233) 330275

