

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, TRANSPORT AND REGULATORY SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 13 January 2021

Ward: Thames

App No.: 192049/FUL

Address: Queen Annes School, Henley Road, Caversham, Reading

Proposal: Development of a new artificial pitch, fencing, floodlights and acoustic fence. Erection of a pavilion and changing rooms. Floodlighting of Tennis Courts. Erection of an Indoor Tennis building. Consolidation to remove dip in the natural grass playing fields.

Applicant: Queen Anne's School

Determination Date: Originally 06/4/2020; EOT to be agreed.

RECOMMENDATION:

To GRANT full planning permission subject to conditions including:

1. *Time limit - standard three years for implementation*
2. *In accordance with the approved Plans*
3. *Pre-commencement submission and approval of material samples*
4. *Pre-commencement submission of landscaping details to be approved*
5. *Pre-commencement submission of cemp to be approved*
6. *Pre-commencement AMS to be approved*
7. *Pre-commencement submission of archaeological field evaluation*
8. *Pre-commencement submission of construction method statement to be approved (including noise and dust control)*
9. *Pre-commencement submission of employment, skills and training plan to be approved*
10. *Pre-commencement submission cycle parking to be approved*
11. *Pre-commencement submission of SuDs Strategy to be approved*
12. *Pre-commencement biodiversity enhancement to be approved*
13. *Pre-commencement submission of maintenance scheme for tennis bubble*
14. *Pre-commencement BREEAM 'Excellent' to be achieved: Pre-Assessment Interim*
15. *Prior to occupation BREEAM 'Excellent' to be achieved: Post-Construction Review*
16. *Pre-occupation lighting survey to ensure light levels are as per specifications*
17. *Prior to occupation submission of community use agreement*
18. *Prior to occupation submission of AGP maintenance*
19. *Pre-occupation vehicle parking as specified*
20. *Pre-occupation electric vehicle charging points as specified*
21. *No plant equipment to be installed until noise report submitted and approved*
22. *No megaphones, loud speakers or other amplified sound shall be used on or used in connection with the use of the AGP.*
23. *Travel Plan*
24. *Travel Plan review*
25. *Hours of use of Tennis Courts*
26. *Hours of use of AGP*
27. *Hours of Use of Pavilion*
28. *Hours of use of Floodlights*
29. *Construction/Hours of Working*
30. *No Bonfires during construction*

Informatives

1. Terms and Conditions
2. Building Regulations
3. Highways
4. Pre-Commencement Conditions
5. Tree Works Application
6. Complaints about Construction
7. Positive & Proactive

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site comprises the Queen Annes School, located on the north side of Henley Road to the south and bound by Peppard Road to the west and Derby Road, a private road, to the north. The wider school site includes the main block and chapel which are Grade II Listed. The school is an independent (ie. private) boarding and day school for girls aged 11 to 18. There are around 450 pupils and nearly half are boarders.

Site Location Plan (not to scale)



Aerial Plan View



2. PROPOSAL

2. Full planning permission is sought to provide:

- A new artificial grass pitch (AGP)
- A new sports pavilion and changing rooms
- A tennis 'bubble' over existing tennis courts 7, 8 and 9
- Extension to existing pool (to provide a changing room)
- Regrading/level of existing playing fields
- Floodlighting to the existing tennis courts and proposed AGP
- Overflow carpark off Henley Road

Proposed Site Layout Plan:



- 2.1 The number of pupils or staff is not proposed to be increased at the site as the scheme is to provide better facilities for the existing pupils to use all year around alongside an additional community function to be used by outside organisations.
- 2.2 The proposed pavilion would be two storey in height and would contain male and female changing rooms and WCs (including for disabled use) and a plant room at ground floor with a balcony/terrace area and club room at first floor.
- 2.3 The proposed tennis 'bubble' would be 54.7m wide by 9m in depth and would rise to a maximum height of 9m. The bubble would be constructed out of high tensile vinyl-coated polyester fabric outer layer. This has been revised on the advice of officers from white to a darker grey. An inner layer of thermal and acoustic insulation would also be provided; this has been amended on the advice of officers to secure this as opaque, instead of translucent.
- 2.4 It is proposed to remove 4 trees (not protected by a Tree Preservation Order), to facilitate the proposals.
- 2.5 In addition, the application proposes floodlighting which includes 8 x 15m high floodlights around the artificial grass pitch and 11 x 10m high floodlights around the tennis courts.
- 2.6 The site will continue to be accessed via the main existing school access from Henley Road which will lead on to an overflow carpark off the main carpark, serving 17 spaces.
- 2.7 3 x electricity charging points are proposed.
- 2.8 The proposals are to be utilised by the school during the day and will be available for community use in the evenings and weekends.
- 2.9 Drawings submitted:

Proposed Layout Plan - Summer Sports S16-187/VW/LP0001
Acoustic Barrier Specification
Area of Ground Works
New Changing Room Floor Plans and Elevations 1921/01
Column Detail 1921/03
Drainage Plan 1921/06
Fence Detail 1921/05
Edge Detail 1921/04
Lighting Diagram
Pitch Elevation 1921/02
Sports Layout Option 1 2018-CAS-061-001
Proposed Framed Fabric Sportscover Tennis Hall 2018-CAS-061-003
Team Shelter Diagram 1921/07
Slab Plan
New Sports Pavilion Floor Plans Proposed 1.40
New Sports Pavilion Elevations Proposed 1.50
Received 23rd December 2019

Arboricultural Impact Assessment Plan AA AIA 02
Received 4th March 2020

Sports Facilities Masterplan 1.30 Rev B
Proposed Floodlighting Plan HLS613/005
5th May 2020

Tree Protection Plan AA TPP 02
Changing Room Cross Section Showing Screw Piles AA CR05 01
Received 12th August 2020

Predicted Sounds Levels Plan with Boundary Screen
Received 28th August 2020

Proposed Isometric Plans (with acoustic fence) S16-187/VW IP0001
Sports Facilities Masterplan (with addition of acoustic fence) 1.30 Rev B
Received 14th September 2020

2.10 Supporting information submitted:

Guidance notes for reduction of intrusive light
Maintenance requirements
Design, Access and Planning Statement
Bat Report EBD00653
Ecological Walkover
Badger Survey EBD00653
Noise Report 20190416_4375_AGPNA
Ground Investigation Report L741 Geo R0002
Preliminary Earthworks Spec
Received 23rd December 2019

Highways Statement (Revised)
Ecology Report
Received 5th May 2020

Arboricultural Method Statement AA AMS 02
Tree Schedule
Screw Piles Details
Received 12th August 2020

Pruning Examples
2nd September

Sustainability Statement
Received 21st October 2020

Community Use Agreement
Received 2nd November 2020

Flood Risk Assessment
Received 19th November 2020

Drainage Strategy (Revised)
Received 18th December 2020

- 2.11 The CIL requirement for schools is nil under the Council's adopted CIL Charging Schedule in relation to education related development.
- 2.12 The proposal is being considered at Planning Applications Committee by virtue of it falling within the 'Major' applications category. The site in relation to the wider area is shown below.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

Pre-application advice was sought on the site and discussions held under application 180773.

04/00855/FUL - Demolition of the existing bursary and arts blocks and the construction of a new science centre - Granted

10/00168/FUL - Demolition and erection of two new boarding houses and energy centre - Withdrawn.

10/00905/FUL - Erection of boarding house and energy centre (resubmission of 10/00168/FUL) (amended description). Granted

11/00074/FUL Erection of extensions to original Maddock House to provide new boarding accommodation, (amended description). Granted

140976 Construction of a wood cabin/pavilion on the grounds of Queen Anne's School, Caversham. Water and electricity to be provided to building. Granted

141288/FUL - Extension and remodelling of the existing Moore House building to form a two storey, contemporary style, building to house a sixth form centre and dining facility. The sixth form centre will include a library, a common room cafe and flexible teaching areas. The application also includes new external landscaping

to the edge of the building and within the large quadrangle space to the north.
Granted

141768/LBC - The refurbishment of the roof lantern on the Cafe (former Gymnasium) including replacement of the glazing and upgrading of the roof insulation together with replacement of the flat roof covering and rainwater goods.
Granted

151782/PREAPP - Internal and external alterations to the main block to create a new music centre, including demolition of a single storey extension used for storage and erection of a new single storey entrance way. Observations sent.

152250/FUL External alterations to the main block to create a new music centre.
Granted

152251/LBC Internal and external alterations to the main block to create a new music centre. Granted

4. CONSULTATIONS

Statutory:

- 4.1 Sport England - No objection.
- 4.2 Environment Agency - Do not wish to comment.
- 4.3 RBC Highways Officer - Has provided detailed input on the application and, subject to revised plans, does not object to the proposals. Detailed commentary is provided in the appraisal below.

Non-statutory

- 4.4 RBC Ecologist - Further to revised information, no objection subject to conditions. Detailed commentary is provided in the appraisal below.
- 4.5 RBC Conservation and Urban Design Officer - No objection.
- 4.6 RBC Natural Environment (Tree) Officer - Further to revised information, no objection subject to conditions. Detailed commentary is provided in the appraisal below.
- 4.7 RBC Environmental Protection Officer - Further to revised information, no objection subject to conditions. Detailed commentary is provided in the appraisal below.
- 4.8 RBC SUDS Manager - No objection subject to conditions.
- 4.9 RBC Parks and Leisure - No objection.
- 4.10 Berkshire Archaeology - No objection subject to condition.
- 4.11 Reading UK CIC - In discussion regarding a site-specific Employment Skills and Training Plan. No objection.

- 4.12 Councillor Paul Carnell - Queries raised over process. Specifically, whether objectors would be advised of revisions and whether objections would be accepted up until the date the application is heard at the Planning Applications Committee meeting. *Officer comment: All neighbours were reconsulted on revised plans. Any objections will be received up until the Committee meeting. If necessary, further comment will be provided in an update report should additional letters of representation be received.*

4.13 Public consultation

- 4.14 Letters were sent to surrounding neighbouring properties on Derby Road, Donegal Close, Fairfax Close, Field View, George Close, Greystoke Road, Grosvenor Road, Henley Road, Lady Jane Court, Longhurst Close, Moss Close and Waller Court and 6 site notices were displayed around the site for the requisite period.
- 4.15 67 letters of objection have been received. Members should note that there have been comments that were multiple objections from some objectors (i.e. the same objector has commented more than once).

The issues raised in the representations received are summarised below.

Impact on Visual Amenity/Design

- Concerns over multi-storey building creating an eyesore
- Concerns that buildings would be out of keeping with the area
- Concerns that the tennis building would be akin to an industrial unit
- Covered tennis building would be too large and overbearing
- Concerns that floodlights would be visible
- Concerns over interrupting the historic boundary wall for access to car park area
- Excessive size of the pavilion

Landscaping/Environment/Ecology

- Concerns over the impact the new carpark and hardstanding at the north east end of the site would have on badgers
- Concerns about the impact floodlighting would have on badger, bat and owl wildlife
- Concerns over impact on existing trees

Impact on Parking/Highways/Traffic

- Concerns over the proposed new carpark at the north east end of the site, that it is not required and will increase traffic and encourage additional public use of the private Derby Road and Grosvenor Road. *Officer comment: this proposed parking area has been removed from the scheme*

- Concerns over the proposed access via Grosvenor Road and the use by non-resident traffic; how will increased maintenance due to increased traffic, be funded. *Officer comment: the parking area and associated use of Grosvenor Road has been removed from the scheme*

- Concerns over potential future lighting at the new carpark

- Concerns that increased traffic, where there are no pavements for pedestrians, would be dangerous

Noise and Light Pollution

- Concerns over increase in light pollution particularly in the evenings

- Concerns over increase in noise pollution particularly in the evenings

- Opening the courts to the public will cause 24/7 noise interference

Overbearing and Overlooking Effects

- Concerns that the covered tennis courts would result in a loss of light

- Concerns that the covered tennis courts would result in overlooking

Other Issues Raised

- The use of site by Caversham Lawn Tennis Club and its large number of members, associated social activities of the club and associated increase in traffic and use of the site. *Officer comment: It has been confirmed during the course of this application that the use of the Caversham Lawn Tennis Club (and Gary Drake Tennis Club) does not form part of this application and therefore the use can be discounted. To confirm, this proposal is not connected to any arrangement with the Caversham Lawn Tennis Club.*

- That there is a covenant on the site. *Officer comment: This is not a material planning consideration*

- That the proposals are not required given recent approvals of sports facilities elsewhere in the Borough at Rivermead and Palmer Park

- CLTC recent refusal 170176. *Officer comment: This application has been determined on its own planning merits*

- Lack of notification *Officer comment: Dwellings directly adjoining the application site were notified of the application by letter whilst six site notices were displayed around the site*

5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which states at Paragraph 11 "Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable

development”. However, the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. In this case the development plan consists of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

5.2 Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.

5.3 Accordingly, the following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

5.4 National Planning Policy Framework (2019) The relevant sections of the NPPF are:

Section 2 - Achieving Sustainable Development

Section 4 - Decision - Making

Section 8 - Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities

Section 11 - Making Effective Use of Land

Section 12 - Achieving Well-Designed Places

Section 14 - Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change

Section 16 - Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

National Planning Policy Guidance (2014 onwards)

5.5 **Reading Borough Local Plan 2019:**

CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction

CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change

CC4: Decentralised Energy

CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage

CC6: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development

CC7: Design and the Public Realm

CC8: Safeguarding Amenity

CC9: Securing Infrastructure

EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

EN2: Areas of Archaeological Significance

EN6: New Development in a Historic Context

EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network

EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland

EN15: Air Quality

EN16: Pollution and Water Resources

EN17: Noise Generating Equipment

EN18: Flooding and Sustainable Drainage Systems

TR1: Achieving the Transport Strategy

TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters

TR4: Cycle Routes and Facilities

TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

OU1: New and Existing Community Facilities

5.6 **Relevant Reading Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):**

Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)

Planning Obligations Under Section 106 (2015)

Sustainable Design and Construction (2019)
Employment, Skills and Training (April 2013)

5.7 Other relevant documents:

Reading Open Spaces Strategy
Tree Strategy (2010)
Draft Tree Strategy (currently out for consultation)
Draft Biodiversity Action Plan (currently out for consultation)
Draft Climate Change Strategy (currently out for consultation)

6. APPRAISAL

The main issues to be considered are:

- Principle of Development
- Design Considerations and Impact on Heritage Assets
- Amenity for Nearby Occupiers
- Landscape/Trees
- Transport
- Ecology
- Archaeology
- Sustainability
- Suds
- Other Matters - Flood Risk, Employment Skills and Training Plan, S106 Legal Agreement
- Accessibility, CIL

Principle of Development

- 6.1. As noted in the introduction, Queen Anne's School is a private school. It is an established school site which is seeking to provide additional and updated outdoor sport provision for its pupils. The proposal does not seek to change the educational use of the site and no increase in the number of pupils is proposed. Policy OU1 seeks to promote 'new, extended or improved community facilities, particularly where this will involve co-location of facilities on a single site'. Whilst acknowledging the private school status, supporting text of the policy states at Para 4.7.3 that 'The range and quality of facilities serving Reading's communities should be improved'. In this respect it is acknowledged that the school offers their existing facilities to the general public for the following community benefits:
- Reading Symphony Orchestra and Berkshire Maestros (in the school hall and music rooms)
 - Henley Swimming Club and Reading Octopush Club (pool)
 - Ju-jitsu, badminton, 5-a-side football, basketball, yoga and gym (sports facilities)
- 6.2 Given the above, it is considered that the school already offers significant existing community benefits to the Borough, and the proposals would provide enhanced facilities to an existing school, and within the school curtilage. It is considered that this would broadly comply with Policy OU1 in this respect.
- 6.3 The proposed pavilion would be sited on land that currently features a tennis court and as such this would result in a loss of open space. Further to this, Policy OU1, which acknowledges that on-site intensification of some school facilities may

result in some loss of open areas, states that the loss of sports pitches and playing fields should only developed where:

(b) “the loss would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or

(c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

- 6.4 This is also supported by Policy EN8 (Undesignated Open Space) - acknowledging that the existing Queen Annes School playing fields do not form designated open spaces as per Policy EN7 (Local Green Space and Public Open Space) but does form undesignated open space - which states that “There will be a presumption in favour of retention of undesignated open space...and that development may be permitted where it is clearly demonstrated that...improvements to recreational facilities on remaining open space can be provided to a level sufficient to outweigh the loss of the open space.”
- 6.5 The above objectives are supported by the NPPF which adds, at Para 97, that such facilities /land should not be built on unless “the development is for an alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use”.
- 6.6 Furthermore, Paragraphs 91 and 92 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 seek that planning decisions should enable and support healthy life styles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs through provision of facilities and infrastructure, including sports facilities. Paragraph 96 seeks that development provides access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity due to the importance of these for the health and well-being of communities.
- 6.7 In this instance, the proposals relate to existing established sport and recreational facilities for the school, with limited existing public use of the playing fields currently (noting the pool and gym are used by the public). Whilst acknowledging the loss of open space as a consequence of the proposed pavilion, this would be relatively small scale in the context of the size of the site. It is considered that the improvements to the recreational and sporting facilities, to include the artificial grass pitch (AGP), the re-grading of existing playing fields so that they become usable, the provision of tennis ‘bubble’ for all year-round play/enjoyment and a pavilion to provide facilities that would enhance peoples enjoyment of the remaining open space, is considered to outweigh the small area of open space to be lost. Furthermore, the proposed floodlighting to an existing sport provision would enhance the sport and recreation offer of the existing facility. As the proposal is for a combination of improvements to existing sports provision and provision of alternative sports facilities, there would be no overall loss of sports provision. Whilst acknowledging that the proposals would include the loss of a natural grass pitch, this would be replaced with an artificial grass pitch, with no loss of playing field overall.
- 6.8 As above, the proposed pavilion building would be relatively small scale. Given its size and location on the site, it is not considered to significantly detract from the open spacious character of the playing fields either visually or spatially. What is more, the proposed pavilion would be viewed within the context of the main school campus to the west and the existing outdoor recreational and sporting facilities - it would not be seen as an isolated building standing alone in a field. Similarly, given the position of the tennis ‘bubble’ on the site and indeed its

curved roof design (discussed further below), it is again not considered to significantly detract from the open spacious character of the playing fields. The site would remain screened by existing tree/vegetation and, furthermore, a significant amount of the site would retain its open spacious character. Overall, given the site context and scale of the proposals, it is not considered that the proposed facilities would result in significant harm to the openness of the site. Indeed, the small amount of open space to be lost is considered to be outweighed by the significant benefits of the facilities to be provided in this instance.

6.9 The application submission details that the sports facilities will be available for use for the school and for the community. The school would use this provision during school time and at the weekends (as they do currently) and the wider community would be able to use the facilities during the evenings and at weekends. This wider public use gives weight to the proposal and is supported by Sport England (discussed further below). This enhanced sports provision for wider community use is a clear public benefit of the scheme which would be secured through a Community Use Agreement (CUA). These improvements and facilities would reinforce the overall usability of the sports provisions as valued areas of non-designated open space.

6.10 Further to the above, Sport England, as a statutory consultee, have given detailed consideration of the proposal, and also advised the applicant prior to submission of the application. Sport England have considered this application against the NPPF (particularly Para 97) and against its own playing fields policy which states:

'Sport England will oppose the granting of planning permission for any development which would lead to the loss of, or would prejudice the use of:

- *all or any part of a playing field, or*
- *land which has been used as a playing field and remains undeveloped, or*
- *land allocated for use as a playing field*

unless, in the judgement of Sport England, the development as a whole meets with one or more of five specific exceptions contained within Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and Guidance document'.

6.11 Sport England are satisfied that the proposed development meets Exception 5 of the playing fields policy which states:

"The proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor facility for sport, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice to the use of the area of playing field".

6.12 In that whilst the proposals would include replacement of a playing field with an artificial grass pitch, there would be no loss of playing fields overall. Sport England consider that the loss of the natural grass pitch could be compensated via a formal community use and that overall the scheme would benefit the pupils and staff of Queen Annes School, along with the wider community (to be secured through community use agreement) which would outweigh the negative aspect of replacement of grass playing field.

6.13 Sport England have raised no objection to the proposal, subject to the school entering into a Community Use Agreement (CUA), which could be secured by way of a pre-commencement condition. Sport England also consider that it would be appropriate to ensure that the maintenance of the AGP is addressed. It is

considered that this could be dealt with by way of a suitably worded condition requiring a management and maintenance scheme to be submitted and approved in writing before the AGP is brought in to use.

- 6.14 Also counting in favour of the scheme is the support from England Lacrosse, who currently run one of their Triple Arrow camps on the site each year and England Hockey, who consider the AGP could be used as an overspill pitch for Reading Hockey Club.
- 6.15 Given the above, it is considered that the sporting benefits of the proposals are clear and that these would be of benefit to the wider community as an extension to the existing sports facilities and enabling tennis practice and matches to be carried out at all times of year and in all weather.
- 6.16 This is also supported by Policy CC9, which identifies education as a particular aspect of infrastructure within the Borough in which the highest priority must be given in the planning process.
- 6.17 In summary, based on the assessment above, it is considered that the proposal for new, improved sporting facilities would broadly comply with the principles of Policies, EN7, OU1 and CC9 and is acceptable subject to other considerations including the impact on the character of the area, trees, ecology, transport and the amenity of neighbours.

Design Considerations and Impact on Heritage Assets

- 6.18 Policy CC7 aims to preserve or enhance the character of the area in which a development is proposed in terms of layout, landscape, density, scale, height, massing, architectural detail and materials. Policy EN1 seeks to preserve or enhance the historic character and setting of heritage assets and Policy EN6 seeks that new development will make a contribution to the historic character of the area by respecting and enhancing its architectural and visual qualities and considering how heritage considerations can influence the design of new development.
- 6.19 Paragraph 127 of the NPPF 2019 details that decisions should ensure that developments are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping and are sympathetic to local character including the surrounding built environment
- 6.20 Paragraph 193 of the NPPF 2019 details that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
- 6.21 Due to the nature of the existing sports pitches and the location of the proposed pavilion and tennis bubble some significant distance (at least 300m) from the main listed school, it is not considered that the proposals would have any adverse effect on the setting of the listed building contained within the site. Similarly, given the distance, there would be no 'competition' between the more modern design of the pavilion and the listed building, noting also the more modern extensions and builds about the school. Furthermore, it is considered that the proposed level changes to the grass pitches closest to the listed building would

improve the overall setting. There is no objection from the Council's Heritage Officer.

Pavilion

- 6.21 The proposed pavilion building would be located at the eastern end of the site, close to the northern boundary. It would be relatively small scale in its footprint and height relatively to the playing fields and sited a significant distance to all side boundaries. The proposed function of the building largely as changing rooms/toilet facilities with viewing balcony is reflected in its simplified design and it would have a function that compliments the use of the tennis courts. Many of the existing school buildings on the site are finished in brick and tile but modern buildings and extensions on the site have used more contemporary materials. Given the distance from the proposed building to the site boundaries and other built structures, the combination of brick, timber boarding and dark grey roof is considered acceptable. The functional design and appearance is not considered to compete with other buildings in the vicinity (including the main listed school building at the western end of the site) and its two storey height is considered acceptable. It not considered to have any adverse effect on the visual amenities of the wider area.
- 6.23 The applicant has provided an example of a similar pavilion in terms of size and appearance which has been built at The Amersham and Wycombe College.



Artificial Grass Pitch

- 6.24 An artificial grass pitch (AGP) in broad terms is a manmade material that imitates natural grass. The AGP is proposed at the eastern end of the site, adjacent the tennis courts. Whilst an AGP is generally a starker feature than a natural grass playing field, the Queen Annes land used only for recreation (not including the tennis courts) covers a total area of 3.7ha. The proposed AGP (and running track) covers 0.7ha and results in 16% of the total existing natural grass area that is currently available - noting the existing limitation to use of the playing fields as a consequence of the undulating land which rules out part of the playing fields from use.
- 6.25 The AGP would be more durable than natural turf and would offer the benefit of reducing wear and tear on the remaining grass pitches as some of the activities that currently take place on the grass pitches would be transferred to the AGP. The AGP would be coloured green resulting in a similar appearance to the existing pitch and reflective of the character of the playing fields. The proposed replacement pitch is considered to be a sympathetic addition to the site and overall it is not considered that it would appear out of keeping in this sporting location.
- 6.26 It is acknowledged that the proposed mesh ball stop fencing around the AGP would be relatively high at its highest points - at an overall height of 4.5m at the ball stop ends. However, the fencing would be green to reflect the surroundings and highly visually permeable - permitting light and views throughout - to reduce the visual impact of the fencing. The southern and northern ends, most readily visible, would largely be screened by the existing trees along these boundaries. The applicant has provided an example of similar mesh fencing (in terms of height style and colour) at an AGP in Sonning:



Extension to Pool Building

- 6.27 The proposed extension to the existing pool building would be small scale in nature, with a pitched roof hipped back towards the main building to further minimise the impact. It would be subservient to the host building and not readily visible from the wider public domain.

Tennis Bubble

- 6.28 The proposed tennis 'bubble' would also be located at the eastern end of the site, close to the southern boundary adjacent Henley Road. It would be located over courts 7, 8 and 9 and is proposed so that the courts are protected from inclement weather conditions and can still be satisfactorily utilised ie during winter months.
- 6.29 At an overall height of 9m, it is acknowledged that this would have a visual impact on the surrounding area, representing a marked change from the existing open tennis courts. It is also acknowledged that its presence would be more noticeable at night given the illuminated nature of the 'bubbles'. However, the proposed 'bubble' will largely be screened Henley Road by the existing Cypress trees on the southern boundary which are to be retained and proposed to be

increased via the proposed landscaping scheme.

- 6.30 Given the design of the proposals with the curved flank ends and ‘bubble’ nature over each court with gaps in between each court rather than one continuous stretch across the 3 courts at 9m high, this would soften the impact adjacent the Henley Road. Moreover, the design relates specifically to its nature, function and purpose as an indoor tennis facility - on existing tennis courts.
- 6.31 The original proposal was for a predominantly white coloured ‘bubble’ and it is considered that this would have accentuated its presence adjacent the Henley Road. A more neutral grey colour has now been agreed; a green colour was also considered but this may appear as too dark a mass in the landscape. Precise details are recommended to be secured by way of condition.

Floodlights

- 6.32 Floodlights are proposed around the AGP and the tennis courts. There would be 8 floodlights 15m high around the AGP and 11 floodlights 10m high around the tennis courts. It is recognised that the proposed floodlights would be tall, with a maximum height of 15m. However, they would be slender in design and would not appear overly bulky or out of place within the context of the existing school sport and recreational facilities. It is considered that when viewed against the backdrop of these existing sporting facilities, combined with the separation distance to residential properties and existing tree screening, they are not considered to result in such intrusive features to warrant a refusal.

Consolidated Dip

- 6.33 It is proposed to alter the levels of the land to the west of the site to provide an improved natural grass playing field and sports surface in this area. This will improve the general function of this part of the site with improvements also providing safer usage of the site. This in itself is not considered to be intrusive in more distance views, given the existing undulations of this part of the site. Indeed, this improved surfacing is considered to represent an overall benefit of the scheme and is also supported by Sport England.
- 6.34 In overall terms, subject to a condition requiring the submission of materials and together with the proposed additional landscaping elsewhere (discussed below) the proposals are considered appropriate in design and heritage regards, in compliance with Policies CC7, EN1 and EN6.

Amenity for Nearby Occupiers

- 6.35 Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) seeks to ensure development does not cause harm to the living environment of existing properties, in terms of loss of privacy, overlooking and visual dominance, amongst other things. Policy EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources) seeks to protect surrounding occupiers from the impact of pollution. Lighting issues will be discussed separately below.
- 6.36 All aspects of the proposals are set within the existing school site, within the existing school playing fields, which feature existing sports facilities. Given the distance to neighbouring properties, whilst the tennis ‘bubble’, pavilion and floodlights are likely to be seen, it is not considered that there would be any adverse effect on neighbouring properties in terms of loss of light, privacy or overbearing impact.

- 6.37 The main issues and concerns in terms of neighbouring amenity are considered to be potential impacts due to light spill from the proposed floodlighting and tennis 'bubble' lighting and/or the potential impact from activities associated with the proposed development e.g. in increased noise.
- 6.38 A significant number of objections have been received from surrounding properties concerned that the proposal will result in a loss of amenity, with particular reference to noise and lighting. These matters are dealt with individually below (although it is acknowledged that there is some overlap). Concerns have also been raised that the use of the site by the Caversham Lawn Tennis Club would result in a significant intensification of the site, amplifying the noise and light concerns. As has been confirmed elsewhere in this report, the use of the site by the CLTC is not proposed as part of this application.

Lighting

- 6.39 Policy EN16 requires that developments should not be damaging to sensitive receptors such as residential properties through light pollution.
- 6.40 Concern has been raised that the proposed tennis 'bubble' and floodlighting will result in unacceptable levels of light pollution. It is recognised that there is the potential for lighting installations to have a negative impact upon residential amenity due to light spillage, glare and sky glow.
- 6.41 In respect of floodlighting, during the course of the application, the following amendments were made:
- Confirmation of no weekend use of floodlights on the tennis courts
 - Confirmation of no floodlighting past 18:00 on the APG at weekends
 - A reduction in the number of tennis courts to be lit
 - A re design of the floodlighting to install back louvres to the lights to further reduce spillage within the site.
- 6.42 The Council's Environmental Protection Officer has reviewed the details of the floodlighting, which outline the potential light spillage from the tennis courts and AGP. The proposed lighting scheme incorporates modern floodlighting technology with the floodlights designed to create a consistent level of illumination across the tennis courts and AGP, which would be further reduced by the proposed back louvres to the rear of each luminaire focusing light on the tennis courts and AGP and minimising light beyond. Furthermore, the proposed lighting units would be downward facing to aim to minimise glare. Importantly, no objection has been raised by Environmental Protection Officers who considers that the lux (light intensity) levels would be within guidance levels, that any light spillage would be contained within the grounds of the site. Further mitigation of nuisance light would be achieved through the inclusion of a condition limiting the hours of use of the floodlights.
- 6.43 In respect of the tennis 'bubble', whilst a certain level of glow would be visible to local residents, the opaque nature would help to prevent light spillage. It is considered appropriate to get specific material detail in this respect by way of condition. Furthermore, the existing row of conifers along the boundary would also help to provide a degree of screening from the tennis 'bubble'. The Environmental Protection Officer has not raised any objection to this element of the scheme subject to a condition requiring confirmation of the opaque material (and hours of use).

- 6.44 Given the above, the siting of the floodlighting columns and tennis 'bubble' and set against the context of the nature of the (existing tennis courts and playing fields) with existing screening, is not considered to appear unduly intrusive during the daytime and the proposed floodlighting is not considered to have a significant unacceptable visual impact during evening use.

6.45 The hours of use of the proposed tennis courts are 09:00hrs - 18:30hrs, with no community use proposed at the weekend. This will be secured by way of condition.

- 6.46 The hours of use of the proposed AGP are 09:00hrs - 21:00hrs weekdays and until 18:00pm at the weekends. This will also be secured by way of condition. The Applicant has indicated that there will be no external usage on a Sunday for either the AGP or the tennis courts and have further suggested that a condition is attached in this respect.
- 6.47 In view of the above it is not considered that the proposals would result in such significant light nuisance which would harm the amenities of the local residents to warrant a refusal.

Noise

- 6.48 As set out in Policy EN16, new development would be expected to incorporate appropriate attenuation measures to mitigate the effect on residents.
- 6.49 Concerns have been raised about the potential for increased noise as a result of the development, in particular in the evenings and weekends.
- 6.50 In respect of the tennis courts, it was originally proposed that the tennis courts, including the tennis 'bubble' would be available for use until 21:00hrs weekdays and until 18:00hrs weekends and bank holidays. Further to revised information, the community use of the tennis courts is now proposed to be until 18:30 weekdays with no community use available at the weekend.
- 6.51 In respect of the AGP, it is proposed that this is available for use until 21:00hrs weekdays and until 18:00hrs weekends.
- 6.52 It is recognised that there would be increased levels of usage of the site and the potential for a greater level of noise than existing. However, it is also noted that the tennis courts exist and are in use. Indeed, the proposed 'bubble' would help contain existing noise emanating from this part of the site.
- 6.53 A noise assessment has been submitted with the application which indicates the proposed courts would have the potential to cause an impact on nearby residential properties to the east of the site along Grosvenor Road if not properly mitigated. Given this, an acoustic fence, that would bring the impact down to within Sport England guidance recommended levels (50dBA) is proposed. Importantly, the Council's Environmental Protection Officer considers this to be acceptable and, furthermore, considers that the amendments to the hours of use of the tennis courts will help control noise from this source adequately.
- 6.54 In terms of the AGP, the Environmental Protection Officer originally raised concerns about the impact to the residents at Field View, to the north of the site. Further to this, an acoustic fence similar to that at the south western end of the site has been proposed, which the Environmental Protection Officer considers will provide added protection and bring noise levels down to an

acceptable limit. The Environmental Protection Officer considers the use of the AGP until 18:00 at weekends to be acceptable, which can be secured by way of condition.

- 6.55 Further to the above, the use of the pavilion is another potential noise source, especially if this was to be used late in the evening. The pavilion is primarily for the use of the pupils and the applicant has confirmed that it is not proposed to have any late night events at this venue, that users of the AGP will be able to use the changing rooms at ground floor but there will be no access to the upper floor on a week day evening when the AGP is available for use by the community. It is considered that this should be controlled by way of condition.
- 6.56 The application site is a well-established school with sports facilities, including a number of (11) existing tennis courts already in use. The proposal would result in 3 existing outdoor courts being available for use during the winter months which, subject to weather conditions, might not be used. With the application of conditions and provision of acoustic fences, it is not considered that the noise levels would significantly increase over and above what occurs during the peak months when the existing courts would otherwise be in use.
- 6.57 It is recognised that there would be an intensification of use of the site. However, the development has been revised since the initial submission including a reduction in the hours of use and it is considered that the termination of sporting activities on the site by 21:00hrs at the latest on weekdays and 18:00 at the latest at the weekends would prevent any undue noise and disturbance to residents at antisocial hours of the day which could otherwise result in significant harm to their amenity. The proposed use of the tennis courts may result in increased noise in this location during the hours of play; however, the use of the outdoor area for sports and recreation during appropriate hours is not considered to have a detrimental impact on the amenities of the occupiers of nearby residential properties for the same reasons as the proposed controls over the use of the AGP. Furthermore, Environmental Protection Officers have raised no concerns in this respect subject to conditions.
- 6.58 Officers consider it necessary and appropriate to restrict the times of use of the tennis courts and AGP and proposed floodlighting in order to ensure that a satisfactory level of residential amenity is retained for nearby properties. It is noted that Sport England advise that community uses of AGPs usually extend until 22:00 on weekday evenings; however, in this instance officers consider the proposed hours of use in this case would achieve an appropriate balance between meeting the needs of the school; achieving the benefits for community sports use and protecting the amenities of nearby residential properties.
- 6.59 It is unlikely that the usage times of the proposals between users of the school and wider community would overlap. However, the proposed community use agreement can ensure that both users can be accommodated. In this respect, the applicant has provided a draft timetable for the pitch usage to give some confidence and comfort in the hours proposed:

	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	6.30	7	8	9
Monday	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	OL	OL	OL	C
Tuesday	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	OL	OL	OL	L
Wednesday	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	OL	OL	OL	O
Thursday	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	OL	OL	OL	S
Friday	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	OL	OL	OL	E

Saturday	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	C	C	C	D
Sunday	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	C	C	C	C

QA = SCHOOL USE

OL = OUTSIDE LETTING

C = CLOSED

- 6.60 The above timetable clearly shows that the school will be using the facilities most of the time. Further to this, and recognising the strong concerns raised by residents over the use of the site by Caversham Lawn Tennis Club, and as stated elsewhere in this report the applicant has confirmed as part of this application that there is no prospect of a sharing of the facilities with Caversham Lawn Tennis Club. Furthermore, the applicant has also stated they would be willing to accept a condition restricting the use of the tennis courts to exclude the Caversham Lawn Tennis Club, to offer some comfort and confidence to residents in this respect. A condition in this manner would not pass the 6 tests (circular 11/1995) in respect of conditions. However, it is considered that the size of the site combined with the hours available will limit the potential for the Caversham Lawn Tennis Club to use the facilities to some extent. Furthermore, the Community Use Agreement will secure priority groups, to include local non-commercial sports clubs.
- 6.61 It is also noted that there would be no increase in staff or pupil numbers. Regarding mechanical plant, whilst none is currently proposed, a condition is recommended for details of any mechanical extraction to be submitted and approved, in order to maintain neighbour amenity.
- 6.62 Conditions requiring the submission of a Construction Method Statement and restricting hours of construction work and prohibiting bonfires are also recommended to protect neighbouring amenity.
- 6.63 In overall terms the proposals are not considered to give rise to noise, light pollution and disturbance to such a degree that would warrant a refusal of planning permission. The proposals are therefore considered to comply with policies CC8 and EN17 in particular.

Landscaping/Trees

- 6.64 Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) requires development to contribute positively to the area of Reading within which it is located, including by way of landscaping. Policy EN14 (Trees Hedges and Woodlands) states that individual trees, groups of trees, hedges and woodlands will be protected from damage or removal, and the Borough's vegetation cover will be extended with new development to make provision for tree planting within the application site, or off-site in appropriate situations.
- 6.65 Further to this, the Reading Climate Emergency Strategy, which has completed the consultation stage, recognises the importance of tree cover and how the natural environment can make a significant contribution towards reducing Reading's carbon footprint. To help deliver important elements of Reading's climate emergency strategy is the Borough's adopted Tree Strategy and the Revised Sustainable Design and Construction SPD which states that "Development will not be permitted which would undermine current levels of tree cover as this is likely to be damaging to climate change adaptation strategies". Furthermore,

draft revised Tree Strategy and Biodiversity Action Plans have also completed their consultation stage and are due to be adopted, both of which recognise the importance of increasing the canopy cover in the borough.

- 6.66 The Council's Natural Environment Officer originally raised concerns that the submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment (and tree survey) did not include the trees around the proposed changing room extension, that the root protection areas of the Henley Road trees had not been shown correctly and that the individual root protection area of the Horse Chestnut (adjacent to the proposed AGP pitch) should be shown.
- 6.67 Further to the above, revised and additional tree information was received commenting on and confirming the various points above, which has been reviewed by the Natural Environment Officer.
- 6.68 Four trees are proposed to be felled; three for arboricultural reasons and one to facilitate the AGP. The tree survey submitted identifies that these trees are of low quality (Category U trees) and the Natural Environment Officer has raised no objection to their removal.
- 6.69 Whilst the removal of these trees is considered acceptable and noting the remaining existing tree coverage on the site, given the aims of the Tree Strategy it is appropriate to seek replacement planting. A condition is recommended to secure a tree planting scheme to include a minimum of four trees indicated along the southern boundary (also to help minimise the impact of the tennis bubble) The Natural Environment Officer has also recommended that an Arboricultural Method Statement is submitted and approved prior to development commencing to ensure the remaining RPAS potentially affected by the proposals are protected.
- 6.70 On the basis of the above, the proposals are considered in accordance with policies CC7, CC2 and EN14 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 as well as objectives 5 (Climate Adaption) and 8 (The Role of New Developments) in the adopted Tree Strategy.

Transport

- 6.71 Policies TR3 (Access, Traffic and Highway related matters), TR1 (Achieving the Transport Strategy) and TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging) seek to address access, traffic, highway and parking relates matters relating to development.
- 6.72 The plans as originally submitted included a new car parking area to the east of the site, adjacent the northern boundary, to be accessed from Grosvenor Road.
- 6.73 A significant area of concern expressed by local residents is in terms of parking and the impact the proposed development would have on traffic, as well as encouraging public use of Derby Road and Grosvenor Road, both of which are private roads with little/no pavements and no parking restrictions.
- 6.74 RBC Transport Strategy raised concerns that such an intensified use of the Grosvenor Road as access could result in road safety issues, as well increased levels of congestion and conflicting turning movements in and out of Grosvenor Road.
- 6.75 Transport Strategy also raised concerns that the provision of additional on-site

parking to provide increased parking facilities for sixth form students would encourage a greater proportion of employees and sixth form students to drive to the school, thereby also resulting greater congestion within the wider Reading area. It should be noted that the Council's Parking Standards and Design SPD makes no provision for Sixth Form parking.

- 6.76 Concern was also originally raised by Transport Strategy about the potential transport implications should the Caversham Lawn Tennis Club also utilise the site, as indicated in the original submission.
- 6.77 Further to the above, the applicant submitted revised plans removing the car parking area for sixth form girls from the scheme and removed the proposed alteration to the access arrangements in Grosvenor Road. Instead, a new overflow parking arrangement is proposed in the main car park area - served from the existing main access off Henley Road - with an overall reduction in parking spaces proposed. The applicant also confirmed, as discussed earlier in this report, that the Caversham Lawn Tennis Club will not be joining/sharing the school's facilities as part of this application.
- 6.78 The Council's Highways Officer has assessed the revised and additional information. It is recognised that the enhanced facilities provide opportunities for an increased level of bookings throughout the year. However, during the school day, the facilities will be used by the school only and it is noted that the public use of the facilities will be during evenings and weekends, outside of the peak traffic hours. Therefore, the Highways Officer considers that the main consideration is the parking provision within the site.
- 6.79 There are 115 tarmac spaces within the front area of the school. There is also some capacity on the access roads within the school, where Transport Strategy notes casual parking can occur without causing circulation issues. In total, it has been calculated that there are approximately 140 spaces within the front of the school area. The revised proposals include the provision of an additional 17 car parking spaces, to be served from the main access off Henley Road.
- 6.80 Transport Strategy has further confirmed that the removal of the car parking area access from Grosvenor Road from the scheme alleviates the previous transport/highways concerns in this respect. Furthermore, the revised location of the overflow car park is considered acceptable, with acceptable dimensions of parking spaces provided.
- 6.81 It is recognised that the existing community clubs at the school, as referenced earlier in the report, all generate a demand for on-site parking outside of school hours. The applicant considers that, following examination of the use of the car park in the evening after 6.30 (when external usage starts), this indicates that parking is not fully utilised. The applicant considers that Thursday is the only day when there is a possibility of a full car park.
- 6.82 Further to the above, the Highways Officer has assessed the parking demand for the new facilities based on the Council's adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD. Given that there is not increase in the number of tennis courts, the main new facility is the artificial pitch which can accommodate up to 25 people at any one time. Based on the parking standards, a parking requirement of 12 spaces per hectare is required (including associated changing facilities). It is indicated that the artificial pitch is 0.66h, equating to 8 parking spaces. When considering that the artificial pitch will require a crossover period, this equates to a parking provision of 16 spaces.

- 6.83 As above, the revised location of the overflow car parking provides an additional 17 car parking spaces served from the existing main access off Henley Road. Therefore, the additional parking provision proposed complies with the adopted parking standards. The Highways Officer has confirmed that there is no objection from a transport/parking perspective but considers that any intensification of the facilities on-site (noting the original interest by Caversham Lawn Tennis Club) should be subject to a new planning application, where the transport impacts of such a proposal can be appropriately assessed. This could be secured by way of a suitably worded condition. It is further noted that the extended community club use (who they are and what their requirements are) will form part of the Community Use Agreement.
- 6.84 Additional cycle parking facilities should be provided near to the tennis courts and artificial pitch to accommodate public/club use outside of school use of the facilities. However, it is considered that this can be dealt with by way of condition.
- 6.85 The Council's Local Transport Plan 3 Strategy 2011 - 2026 includes policies for investing in new infrastructure to improve connections throughout and beyond Reading which include a network of publicly available Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points to encourage and enable low carbon or low energy travel choices for private and public transport. Policy TR5 of the Local Plan also states that *"Within communal car parks for residential or non-residential developments of at least 10 spaces, 10% of spaces should provide an active charging point."* In view of this, 3no. new electricity charging points are being provided to ensure that electric vehicles have sustainable means of fuelling, which is appropriate.
- 6.86 Overall, the proposals are not considered to result in significant increased vehicular movements to and from the site during the school day and the use by the public would not overlap with the main school hours, which could be secured as part of the Community Use Agreement. Therefore, the proposals are unlikely to increase the number of vehicles along the Henley Road at a particular time of the day.
- 6.87 On the basis of the above and no adverse comments from Transport Officers, the proposals are considered to be acceptable in respect of transport matters subject to conditions in respect of a construction method statement, vehicle parking, cycle parking, electric vehicle charging points and intensification of the site.

Ecology

- 6.88 Policy EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network) states that development proposals should retain, protect and incorporate features of biodiversity.
- 6.89 The applicant submitted a badger survey report and bat survey report apart of the submission and, further to discussion with the Council's Ecologist, also submitted a Phase 1 Habitat Survey report during the course of the application.
- 6.90 The Council's Ecologist considers that the badger sett is located some distance from the proposed new lighting columns (noting that some of which have also been removed from the scheme) and agrees with the findings of the Badger Survey Report that the sett is unlikely to be affected by the proposals.
- 6.91 The Ecologist also considered that as bat activity is low on the site and that the

lighting scheme has been designed to minimise light spillage outside of the site boundary, that the scheme is also unlikely to have any significant impact on bats. Floodlighting will be secured as proposed by way of condition.

- 6.92 Concern has been raised by the Ecologist that the artificial pitch may shed pieces of plastic (and the filler) into its environment over its lifetime. By its nature, it will also result in a sterile piece of land devoid of wildlife. However, the Ecologist acknowledges that the existing lawned pitches have limited existing value for wildlife and notes the grass pitches to be levelled would be an improvement in terms of usability and does not consider would warrant a reason for refusal.
- 6.93 Further to the above, Policy EN12 seeks that development should provide for a net gain in biodiversity wherever possible. It would be appropriate for ecological enhancements, over and above wildlife-friendly planting, including integral bird nesting and bat roosting opportunities on and around the new pavilion building. Whilst these have not been indicated on the plans, it has been recommended in the Ecology Report and they can reasonably be secured by way of a specific ecological enhancement condition, as also supported by the NPPF.

Archaeology

- 6.94 The site lies within an area of high archaeological potential due to its location within the archaeologically rich 'Middle Thames Valley' area. The proposals will involve significant groundworks, particularly in relation to the re-grading of the existing playing fields and construction of the pavilion building. Berkshire Archaeology has raised no objection to the proposals but considers that in view of the archaeological potential of the site, a programme of archaeological work should be undertaken. It is considered that this can be dealt with by way of a suitably worded condition in compliance with Policy EN2.

Sustainability

- 6.95 Policy CC2 (Sustainable Design and Construction) seeks that new development should reduce the consumption of resources and materials. Policy CC3 (Adaption to Climate Change) seeks that proposals should incorporate measures which take account of climate change. Policy CC4 (Decentralised Energy) seeks that developments of over 1,000m² should consider the inclusion of combined heat and power plant (CHP) or other form of decentralised energy provision unless demonstrated that this is not suitable, feasible or viable for the type of development proposed.
- 6.96 A sustainability statement has been submitted with the application which highlights a number of sustainability measures which are welcomed. This includes mechanical ventilation to the pavilion rooms to ensure heat distribution and steam removal, solar controlled glazing to prevent overheating, insulation products to have a zero-ozone depleting potential, motion sensors for the floodlights to ensure minimum lights on during the evening, dual flush toilets and aerate taps and showers. The applicant does not consider that there are any further opportunities for a decentralised energy system which is considered acceptable in this instance given that the actual development itself is less than 1000m². However, the proposals will also include air source heat pumps as well as the aforementioned measures.
- 6.97 Notwithstanding the above, as a major application for non-residential development, Policy CC2 seeks that the proposals meet a BREEAM 'Excellent'

standard where possible, albeit the supporting text (Para 4.1.4) to this policy accepts that *“some types of development, such as industrial uses, warehouses and schools might find it more difficult to meet these standards. In these cases, developments must demonstrate that the standard to be achieved is the highest possible for the development, and at a minimum meets the BREEAM ‘Very Good’ standard”*. No detailed information demonstrating that the development cannot meet a BREEAM Excellent standard has been provided as part of the application. With regard the tennis ‘bubble’ it is considered that compliance with these standards would be difficult as it is not a conventional building. Acknowledging the benefits in providing this facility in sporting and community benefit terms, it is nevertheless considered reasonable to secure further details of heating and thermal insulation to ensure that opportunities are taken to reduce energy use, including the use of renewable energy where appropriate. Officers consider that the proposal would be sufficient overall to meet sustainability policy requirements subject to conditions regarding the submission and approval of pre- and post-construction BREEAM as included in the recommendation above.

- 6.98 Notwithstanding the above, it is recognised that the tennis ‘bubble’ might have different maintenance requirements compared to a more conventional building. Whilst there would clearly be an educational imperative for the school to keep the ‘bubble’ well maintained, in the interests of the maintenance of the bubble, its sustainable operation and its visual appearance and to have some assurance over the longevity and upkeep of the ‘bubble’ it would be reasonable to attach a condition requiring a programme of maintenance that could include, for example, a replacement ‘bubble’ at a certain interval. It is noted that planning permission was granted for a similar construction - an air dome - by the Planning Applications Committee application reference 152110/FUL at Reading University which has been implemented with no apparent subsequent concern over the longevity of the structure.

Drainage and Flood Risk

- 6.99 Policy EN18 requires all major developments to incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) with runoff rates aiming to reflect greenfield conditions or be no worse than existing.
- 6.100 A revised drainage note in respect of SuDs has been submitted as part of the application. This has been reviewed by the Local Flood Authority and it is considered that overall the proposals would improve water quality across the site and there is no objection subject to the inclusion of standard conditions requiring the submission and approval of a sustainable drainage plan and maintenance and management plan in accordance with Policy EN18.
- 6.101 It is also noted and welcomed that the consolidation of the dip on the site would improve drainage and the provision of 3G artificial turf would provide a permeable drainage system that would also help to limit future flooding on the site, with the finish and drainage system allowing surface water to permeate and reduce potential flooding on the site.
- 6.102 A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been submitted with the application, as required for all Major planning applications. The site is within Flood Zone 1, with a low risk of flooding and the Environment Agency have confirmed that they do not wish to comment on this application. Notwithstanding, the FRA deals with on-site flood risk and permeability and is controlled within the drainage note.

Other Matters

Employment, Skills and Training Plan

- 6.103 As the scheme falls within the Major category it would be required to provide an Employment Skills and Training Plan for the 'Construction Phase', or equivalent financial contribution. In this instance the applicant has specified their intention to provide a site specific ESP. The exact form is, at the time of writing, under discussion with Reading UK CIC (who delivers ESPs on the behalf of the Borough Council). It is proposed in this instance, as it will not require a financial contribution to be secured, for this to be secured by a suitably worded condition rather than secured through s106 legal agreement.

S106 Legal Agreement

- 6.104 Advice from the Council's Planning Solicitor is that securing the Community Use Agreement can be satisfactorily dealt with by way of condition. Therefore, no Section 106 Legal Agreement is required for this proposal.

Accessibility

- 6.105 Accessible toilets will be provided on the ground floor of the proposed pavilion and the car park has two disabled car parking spaces. The proposals would also need to conform to the Building Regulations.

Community Infrastructure Levy

- 6.106 CIL would apply to the proposals, subject to the usual reliefs or exemptions set out in the CIL Regulations. In this respect, although the proposed scheme would be CIL liable development, because education facilities attract a zero CIL charge in the Borough there would be no CIL payable for this scheme.

Pre-commencement conditions

- 6.107 Pre-commencement conditions - In line with section 100ZA(5) of the Town and Country Planning Act (as amended) discussions are being undertaken with the applicant regarding pre-commencement conditions. At the time of writing a response is awaited from the applicant in terms of agreement to pre-commencement conditions. If appropriate, a response will be reported in an update report prior to committee.

Equalities Impact

- 6.108 When determining this application, the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application. Therefore, in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

7 Overall Planning Balance and Conclusion

- 7.1 As detailed at the outset of the assessment, the application is required to be determined with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

7.2 The site would lead to the loss of some existing trees and replacement of a natural grass pitched with an artificial turf. However, this has been weighed against other material considerations which are the benefits the proposal would bring including:

- the proposals would upgrade an existing educational facility and relatedly, secure further community use
- the provision of new AGP will provide increased usage for the benefit of pupils of the school and to some extent the wider community too
- the regrading of existing playing fields will improve the use of these fields
- the provision of tennis 'bubble' will allow for all year-round tennis to be played
- the provision of floodlights would improve facilities for existing pupils as well as having wider community benefits including public use in the evenings
- the proposals will result in physical and mental health improvements/well-being knock on benefits and contribute to facilitating social interaction and creating healthy inclusive communities (as referenced in the NPPF)

7.3 When applying an overall critical planning balance of all material considerations, the proposals are considered to be acceptable within the context of national and local policies, as detailed in the appraisal above, and therefore the application is recommended for approval, subject to the recommended conditions.

Case Officer: Miss Ethne Humphreys

Plans:

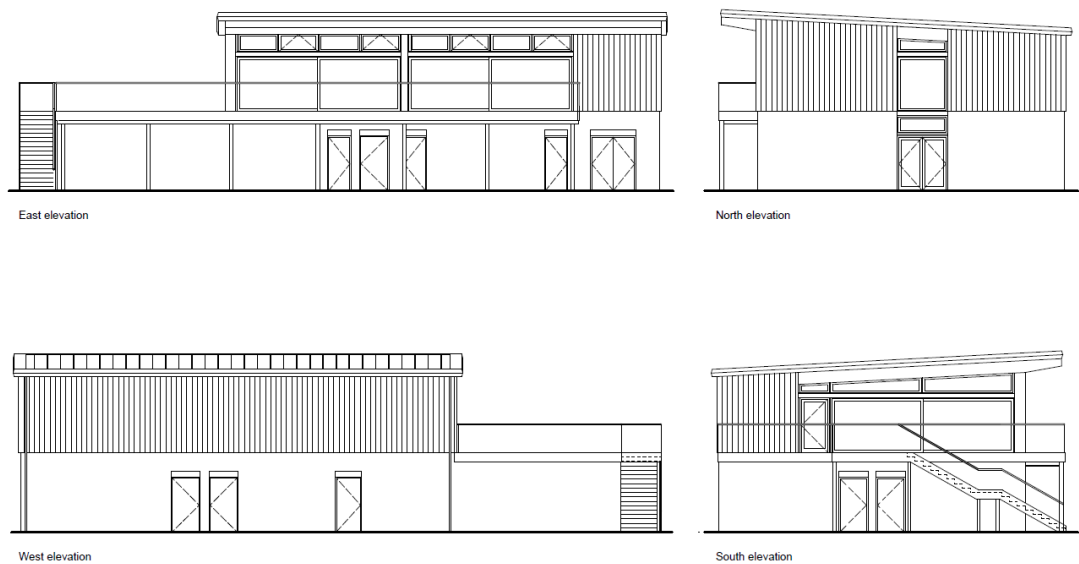
Proposed Site Plan



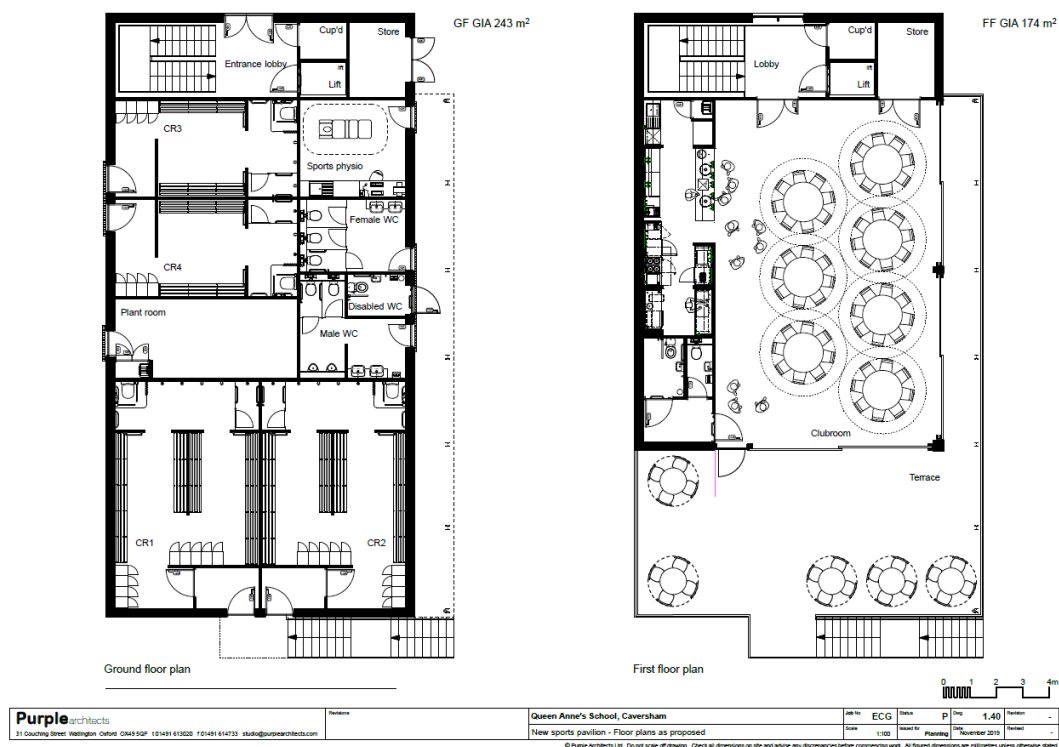
Proposed Floodlighting Plan



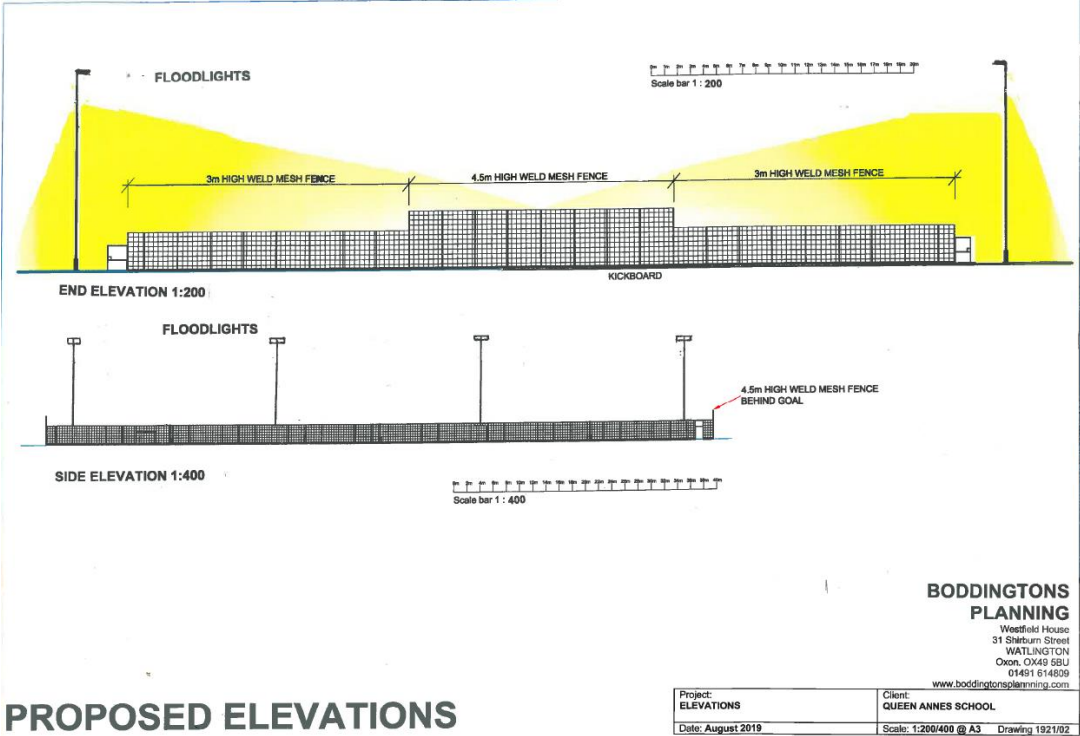
Proposed Pavilion Elevations



Proposed Pavilion Floor Plans

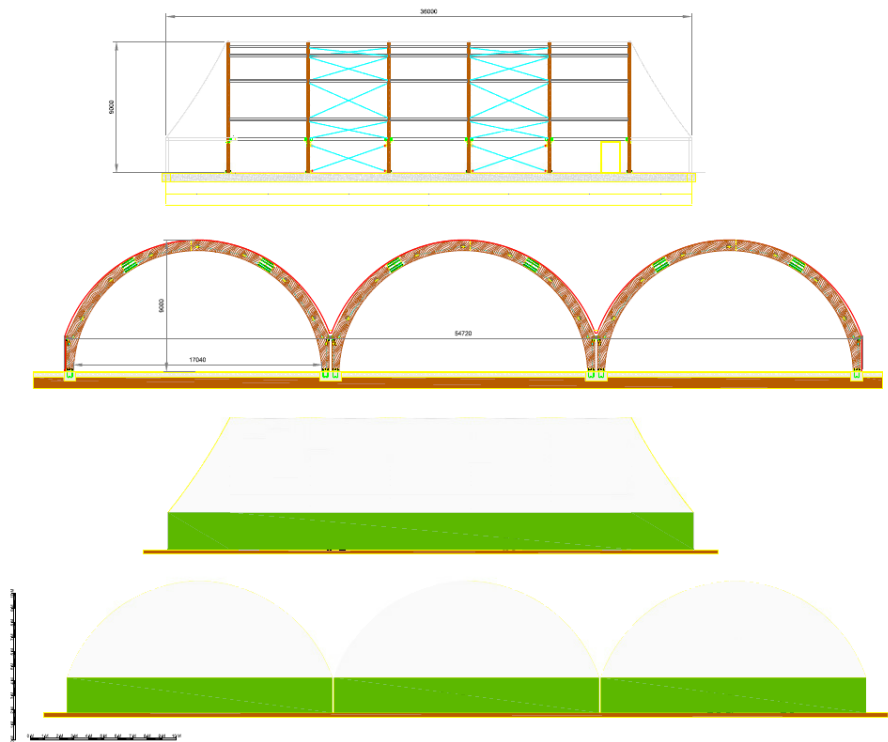


Proposed Pitch Fence Elevations



PROPOSED ELEVATIONS

Proposed Tennis Hall Elevations



THIS IS AN A3 DRAWING AT A SCALE OF 1 TO 200

Rev	Date	Description
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Site Location:
QUEEN ANNE'S SCHOOL
HENLEY ROAD
CAVERSHAM
BERKSHIRE. RG4 6DX

Project Title:
STANDARD INDOOR MODULAR

Client:
QUEEN ANNE'S SCHOOL

Drawing Title:
PROPOSED FRAMED FABRIC :
SPORTCOVERS TENNIS HALL

SPORTSFACILITY
PLANNING&DESIGN LTD

39 Hemwood Road, Windsor, Berkshire, SL4 4YX
Tel: (01753) 850123 Mob: (07770 368289)
E: Mail: office@sportsfacility.co.uk
Web: WWW.SPORTSFACILITY.CO.UK

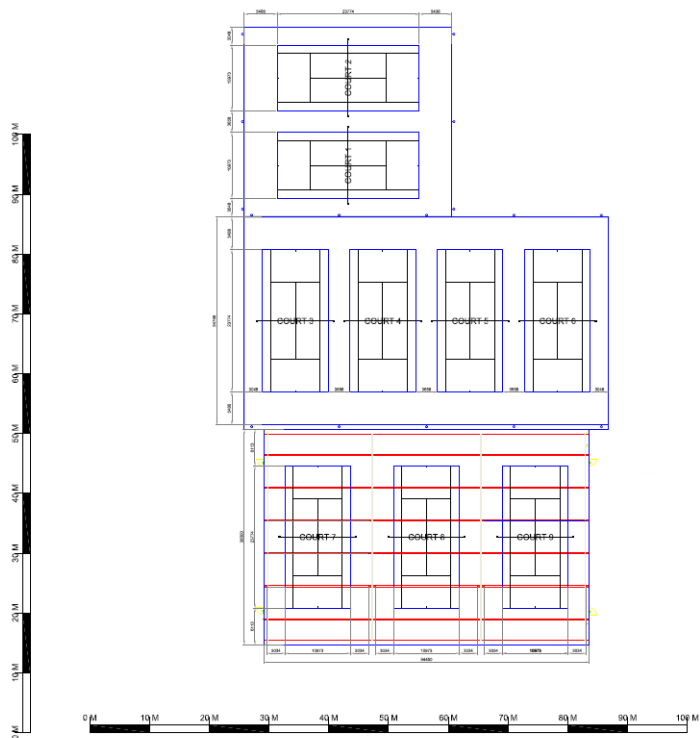
CONSULTANCY SERVICES

Drawn By:	Checked By:	Date:
L. WEST	S.F.P.D.	18.10.2019

Scale:	Sheet:	Revision:
1/200	-	-

Drawing No:
2018 - CAS 061 - 003

Proposed Tennis Hall Layout



THIS IS AN A3 DRAWING AT A SCALE OF 1 TO 200

Rev	Date	Description
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Site Location:
QUEEN ANNE'S SCHOOL
HENLEY ROAD
CAVERSHAM
BERKSHIRE. RG4 6DX

Project Title:
STANDARD INDOOR MODULAR

Client:
QUEEN ANNE'S SCHOOL

Drawing Title:
PROPOSED LAYOUT OPTION 1 :
THREE INDOOR & SIX OUTDOOR

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2018 - CAS 061 - 001

Proposed Changing Room Elevations and Floor Plans

