

4.4 - SE/13/00481/FUL Date expired 23 April 2013

PROPOSAL: Proposed new vehicle crossover to Brittain's Lane.

LOCATION: New Beacon School , Brittain's Lane, Sevenoaks TN13 2PB

WARD(S): Sevenoaks Kippington

ITEM FOR DECISION

The application has been referred to Development Control Committee by Councillors Avril Hunter and Andrew Eyre who have concerns regarding the possible detrimental impact of the development upon highway safety.

RECOMMENDATION: That planning permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:-

1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

In pursuance of section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2) The gradient of the access should be no steeper than 1 in 10 for the first 1.5 metres from the highway boundary and no steeper than 1 in 8 thereafter.

In the interests of highway safety.

3) No development shall take place until details of the automated barrier have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The automated barrier with key pad/card swipe operation shall be placed at least 5m back from the carriageway edge in order to minimise backing up on Brittain's Lane and interruption to through traffic. The approved scheme shall be implemented before the use of the access commences.

In the interests of highway safety

4) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 11-006BEA-SP(60)601/602.

For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

In determining this application, the Local Planning Authority has had regard to the following Development Plan Policies:

Sevenoaks District Local Plan - Policies EN1

Sevenoaks District Core Strategy 2011 - Policies SP1T

The following is a summary of the main reasons for the decision:

The development would respect the context of the site and would not have an unacceptable impact on the street scene.

Any potentially significant impacts relating to highway safety can be satisfactorily

mitigated by conditions.

Informatives

- 1) The applicant will need to enter into a Section 278 agreement with the Highway Authority so that this authority can satisfactorily obtain appropriate construction details and integration with Brittain's Lane.

Note to Applicant

In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the NPPF Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals. SDC works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner, by;

- Offering a duty officer service to provide initial planning advice,
- Providing a pre-application advice service,
- When appropriate, updating applicants/agents of any small scale issues that may arise in the processing of their application,
- Where possible and appropriate suggesting solutions to secure a successful outcome,
- Allowing applicants to keep up to date with their application and viewing all consultees comments on line (www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/environment/planning/planning_services_online/654.asp),
- By providing a regular forum for planning agents,
- Working in line with the NPPF to encourage developments that improve the improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area,
- Providing easy on line access to planning policies and guidance, and

Encouraging them to seek professional advice whenever appropriate.

In this instance the applicant/agent:

- 1) The application was dealt with/approved without delay.
- 2) Did not require any further assistance as the application was acceptable as submitted.

- 1 Members will recall that this application was deferred at the 23rd May 2013 Development Control Committee for further clarification in terms of the need and operation of the new barrier and access, and for further comments from KCC Highways regarding the supporting Transport Statement.
- 2 The transport report by SLR Consulting Ltd was submitted in support of the application just before it went to Committee stating that the new access proposed will be 'used by staff and parents' and according to the agent who spoke at the committee, will be completely open at peak times (rather than barrier controlled by card).
- 3 Further clarification was submitted by the applicants through the submission of:
 - *Details of the gradient and gate position at the proposed new entrance*
 - *Plan indicating traffic analysis through the school site as existing.*
 - *Plan indicating traffic analysis through the school site as proposed.*

- 4 The applicants also (in response to the question being raised at Committee) clarified the reasoning for the new access and arrangements, which are stated as follows:
- 1) *the new access (now reduced in width as preferred by KCC) will reduce the congestion at the main (south) gate and will reduce the instances of cars turning into the site across oncoming traffic - reducing queues on Brittain's Lane.*
 - 2) *the new access and drop off for years 7 & 8 on the car park to the south of the Design & Technology block will reduce the number of cars dropping off at the north end/bottom of the site. This together with the additional parking provided at the bottom of the site should reduce congestion in front of the Sports Hall.*
 - 3) *the proposals will reduce instances of cars stopping on the main circulation route causing congestion.*
 - 4) *drop off and collection will be better distributed/dispersed throughout the site with reduced need for children to trek back up the site (across the main vehicle route) from the Sports Hall end.*
 - 5) *better traffic flow should reduce instances of stopping on the main circulation route through the site holding up general flow.*
 - 6) *drop off and collection to the south of the Design and Technology block should reduce instances of cars stopping between the Arts/Music block and the Main School Building which is currently very congested at peak times.*
 - 7) *the combination of the additional entrance off Brittain's Lane and the proposals for easing of traffic flow throughout the site described above will both reduce the volume of cars using the main entrance and reduce queues on Brittain's Lane.*
- 5 The KCC Highways officer has been consulted on the latest drawings and has stated that he would agree that there *'would be better distribution of vehicle movements within the school and thereby reduced congestion both within the school and for Brittain's Lane with this management plan. I confirm therefore that I have no objection to these proposals with respect to highway matters.'*
- 6 He also states that drawing 11-006BEA-SP(60) 601 rev:A shows an acceptable access arrangements in terms of width and set back, and contrary to his previous comments, a S278 agreement (regarding appropriate construction details and integration with Brittain's Lane) is no longer considered necessary.
- 7 It is therefore considered that the submitted information clarifies the development in terms of the need for it and in terms of highway impact, this will not be harmful.
- 8 Notwithstanding this, the committee report states that the nearest residential dwelling are along St Julians Way, however it is it should be noted that the dwelling immediately to the south of the northern exit to the site, No 1 New Beacon Bungalow, is not within the ownership of the school. The proposed access is sited approximately 35m from this property, and it is considered that this distance, along with the landscaping and screening along the boundary to the property, will prevent any unacceptable increased impact in terms of noise upon these property.

- 9 It should also be noted that, as stated, the application site is located within the Green Belt. The new access and barrier system will have no detrimental impact upon the openness of the Green Belt.
- 10 Finally two further letters of objection (from previous objectors) have been received since the May Committee, concerned with highway safety and the possible future expansion of the school.
- 11 The highways issue has been addressed above and previously in this report, and any future applications for the School will be considered on its own merits.
- 12 The recommendation for approval therefore remains unchanged.
- 13 The report originally submitted to the Development Control Committee on the 23rd May 2013 is attached as Appendix A, together with a copy of the late observation sheet for the 23rd May 2013.

Contact Officer(s): Ben Phillips Extension: 7387

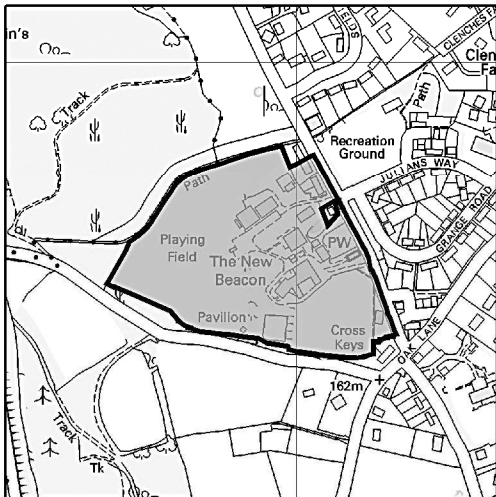
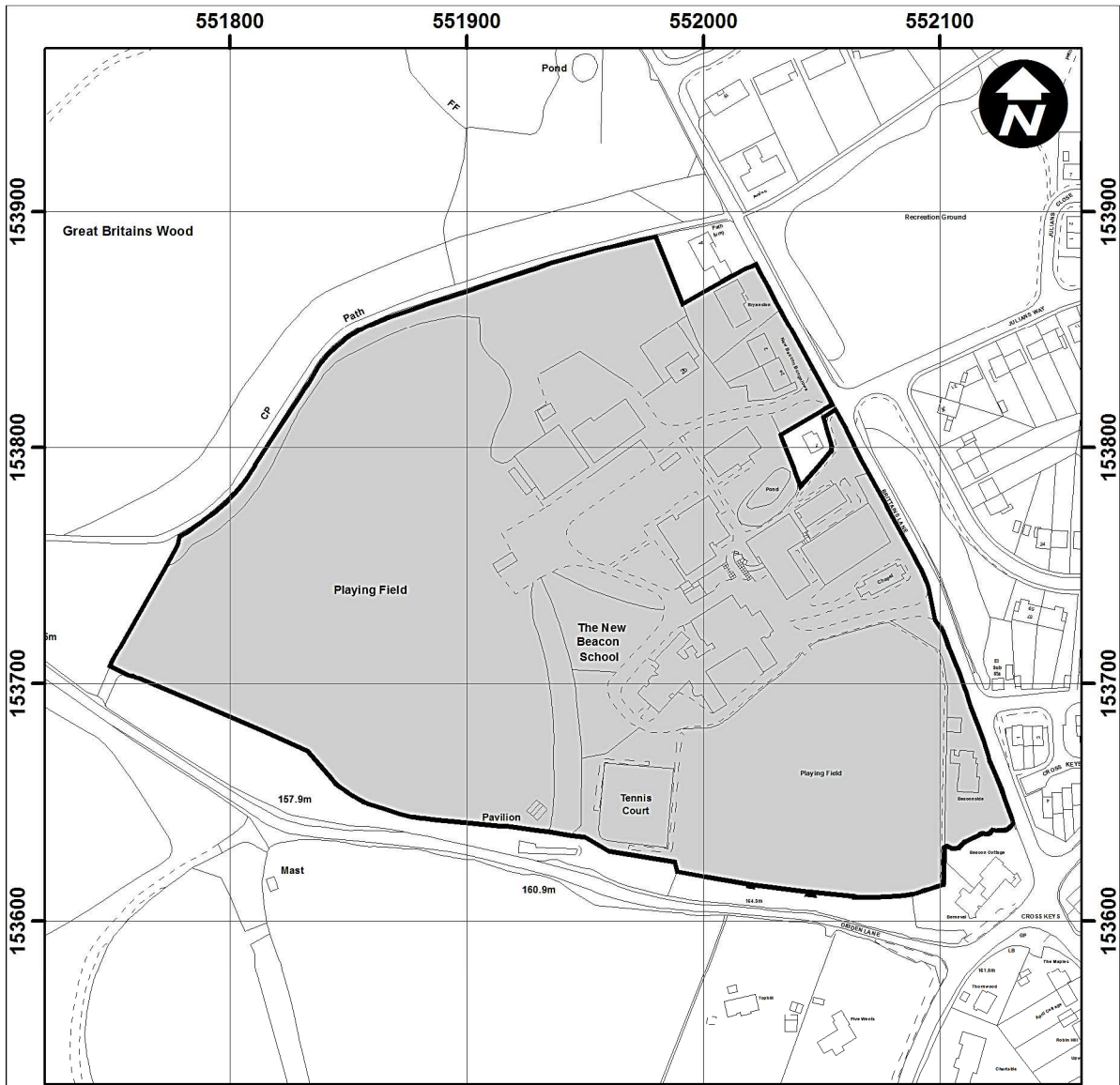
Pav Ramewal
Chief Executive Designate

Link to application details:

<http://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=MIEOXZBK8V000>

Link to associated documents

<http://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=MIEOXZBK8V000>



Site Plan

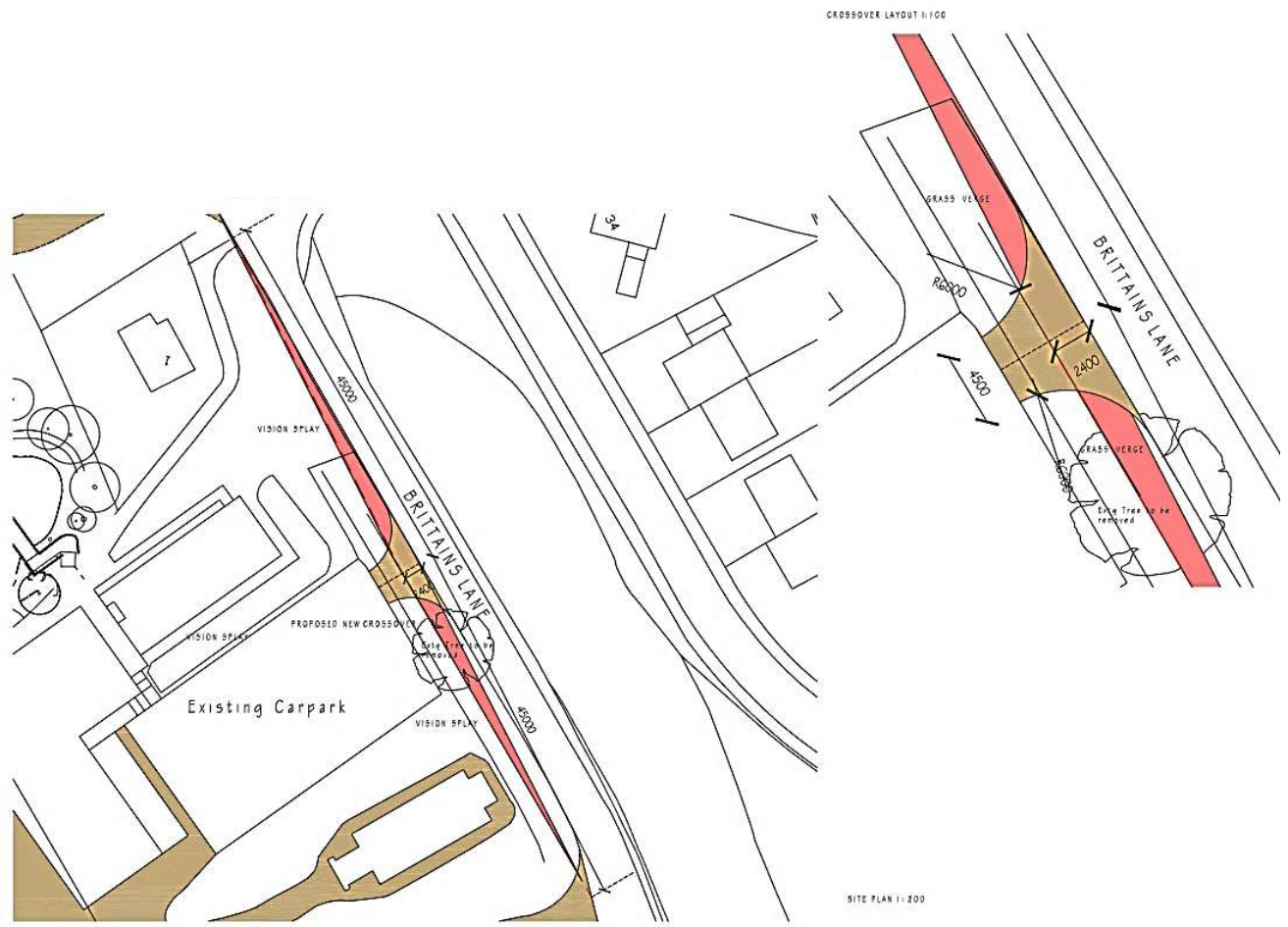
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Date 09/05/2013



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BLOCK PLAN



Original Development Control Committee report – 23rd May 2013

4.2 – SE/13/00481/FUL Date expired 23 April 2013

PROPOSAL: Proposed new vehicle crossover to Brittain's Lane.

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WARD(S): Sevenoaks Kippington

ITEM FOR DECISION

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In the interests of highway safety.

3) No development shall take place until details of the automated barrier have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The automated barrier with key pad/card swipe operation shall be placed at least 5m back from the carriageway edge in order to minimise backing up on Brittain's Lane and interruption to through traffic. The approved scheme shall be implemented before the use of the access commences.

In the interests of highway safety

4) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 11-006BEA-SP(60)601/602.

For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

In determining this application, the Local Planning Authority has had regard to the following Development Plan Policies:

Sevenoaks District Local Plan - Policies EN1

Sevenoaks District Core Strategy 2011 - Policies SP1

The following is a summary of the main reasons for the decision:

The development would respect the context of the site and would not have an unacceptable impact on the street scene.

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Any potentially significant impacts relating to highway safety can be satisfactorily mitigated by conditions.

Informatives

- 1) The applicant will need to enter into a Section 278 agreement with the Highway Authority so that this authority can satisfactorily obtain appropriate construction details and integration with Brittain's Lane.

Description of Proposal

- 1 Following recent developments on site, the school wish to open up a new vehicle access to Brittain's Lane, to provide access to the existing staff car park located between the teaching blocks and chapel. The new access will be located on the eastern side of the site, in between the two existing accesses to the site.
- 2 Use of the new access will be controlled by automatic barrier featuring card swipe/keypad protection, will involve the removal of a grass verge and close boarded fence and will be constructed of tarmac.

Description of Site

- 3 New Beacon School is located along Brittain's Lane on the outskirts of Sevenoaks, within the Green Belt.
- 4 The school is in the process of implementing a number of improvements to the facilities. Part of this involves the creation of a more efficient parking layout.

Constraints

- 5 Metropolitan Green Belt

Policies

Sevenoaks District Local Plan

- 6 Policies - EN1, VP1

Sevenoaks Core Strategy

- 7 Policy - SP1

Others

- 8 Supplementary Planning Documents Sevenoaks Character Area Assessment'
- 9 NPPF

Planning History

- 10 A number of historic applications for new school building, none particularly relevant.

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Consultations

KCC Highways

- 11 *Thank you for inviting me to comment on this application. I write to confirm that I have no objection to this proposal. The visibility splays proposed are appropriate and acceptable. If this application is approved I would be grateful if you could add as a condition that the applicant will need to enter into a Section 278 agreement with the Highway Authority so that this authority can satisfactorily obtain appropriate construction details and integration with Brittain's Lane.*
- 12 *Gradient of the access should be no steeper than 1 in 10 for the first 1.5 metres from the highway boundary and no steeper than 1 in 8 thereafter.*
- 13 *I note that it is intended to provide an automated barrier with key pad/card swipe operation.*
- 14 *This feature will need to be placed at least 5m back from the carriageway edge in order to minimise backing up on Brittain's Lane and interruption to through traffic.*
- 15 *I hope the above is helpful but if I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.*

Further comments:

- 16 *Thank you for your enquiry. I can confirm that there have been no injury crashes on this section of Brittain's Lane for at least the last 10 years. The new access proposed is in a more prominent position with better visibility than that currently used.*
- 17 *Whilst there is no accounting for all the actions of all individuals, it is a fundamental principle that Kent Highways and Transportation would not favour any arrangement that it regarded as unsafe. Counter intuitively whilst there may be congestion, this condition is one that is conducive to slow speeds and is relatively safe. Despite fears, injury crash records outside schools are often very good.*
- 18 *I reconfirm that I am satisfied with the safety aspects of this proposal but consider that more design work will be required to ensure that appropriate gradients can be attained between Brittain's Lane and the existing car park.*
- 19 *I hope the above is helpful but please do not hesitate to get back to me if I can be of any further assistance*

Sevenoaks Town Council

- 20 *Sevenoaks Town Council recommended refusal unless the Highways Officer confirms that the proposals will improve highway safety.*
- 21 *Informative: The Town Council requested that a more holistic view of the site be taken when rethinking current access/egress arrangements.*

Representations

- 22 *Four letters of objection were received, which are summarised as follows:*

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- Ways of reducing vehicle movements should be explored before expanding car parking and yet more vehicle movements in this very narrow part of Brittain's Lane.
- The new access is being proposed at the brow of a hill close to a junction so good sight lines will be very difficult to achieve.
- This proposal will generate queuing traffic on an already very busy stretch of road. As far as I can see this is just going to cause a bottleneck and further congestion.
- The lane is dangerous and isn't designed for the level of traffic that it is now supporting. The proposal will cause more queues and traffic misery.
- The proposal is likely to slow down the process of vehicles entering and leaving the school.

Group Manager Planning Services Appraisal

23 The main considerations of this proposal are:

- The impact upon the character and appearance of the area
- Impact upon highway safety
- Impact upon residential amenity of neighbours
- Impact of the proposal on the character of the area and upon highway safety

The impact upon the character and appearance of the area

24 Policy EN1 states that development should ensure satisfactory means of access for vehicles and pedestrians and provides parking facilities in accordance with the Council's approved standards. It also states that the proposed development should not create unacceptable traffic conditions on the surrounding road network and is located to reduce where possible the need to travel.

25 Also relevant is policy SP1 from the Sevenoaks Core Strategy which states 'All new development should be designed to a high quality and should respond to the distinctive local character of the area in which it is situated'.

26 In terms of the impact of the development on the visual amenity of the street scene, the siting of the proposed access is over a shallow grass verge with an unattractive 1.5m close boarded fence.

27 One tree will have to be removed, however on balance; it is not considered that the removal of this one tree will detract from the open, verdant character of the road.

Highway safety

28 Turning to highway safety, the proposed access will be sited between the two existing accesses to the school, and will provide for teachers and staff only

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(access controlled by a barrier). This is intended to relieve existing pressure on the schools main entrance (southern) and will not serve extra traffic.

- 29 The KCC Highways Officer has concluded that the *new access proposed is in a more prominent position with better visibility than that currently used*, and that he has no objection to the proposal (subject to conditions/informatives regarding integration, gradient, and a 5m set back of the barrier from the highway).
- 30 As such therefore, it is not considered that the proposed development will have a detrimental impact upon highway safety or traffic conditions on the surrounding road network, and will comply with the above policies.

Impact on the amenity of adjacent properties

- 31 *Policy EN1 from the Sevenoaks District Local Plan states that the proposed development does should not have an adverse impact on the privacy and amenities of a locality by reason of form, scale, height, outlook, noise or light intrusion or activity levels including vehicular or pedestrian movements.*
- 32 The nearest residential properties are opposite along St Julians Way, separated by Brittain Lane and the highway of Julians Way, as well as the substantial tree screening along this side of Brittain Lane. It is not considered that the new access will have a detrimental increased impact in terms of noise upon these properties.

Other Issues

- 33 Four letters of objection were received, the relevant issues pertaining to which have been addressed above. As detailed in the comprehensive comments of the KCC Highways Officer, the proposal as submitted is acceptable, subject to details.

Conclusion

- 34 In conclusion, it is considered that the proposed new vehicle crossover to Brittain Lane complies with the provisions of Policy EN1 of the Sevenoaks District Plan and Policy SP1 from the Sevenoaks Core Strategy, will not have a detrimental impact upon the existing street scene and is not considered to have an unacceptable impact upon highway safety or traffic conditions.
- 35 The proposal therefore complies with the advice given in the Supplementary Planning Document 'Residential Extensions' and with Policies EN1 and H6B of the Local Plan and SP1 of the Core Strategy.

Background Papers

Site and Block Plans

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(Item No 4.4) 11

Contact Officer(s):

Ben Phillips Extension: 7387

Pav Ramewal
Chief Executive Designate

Link to application details:

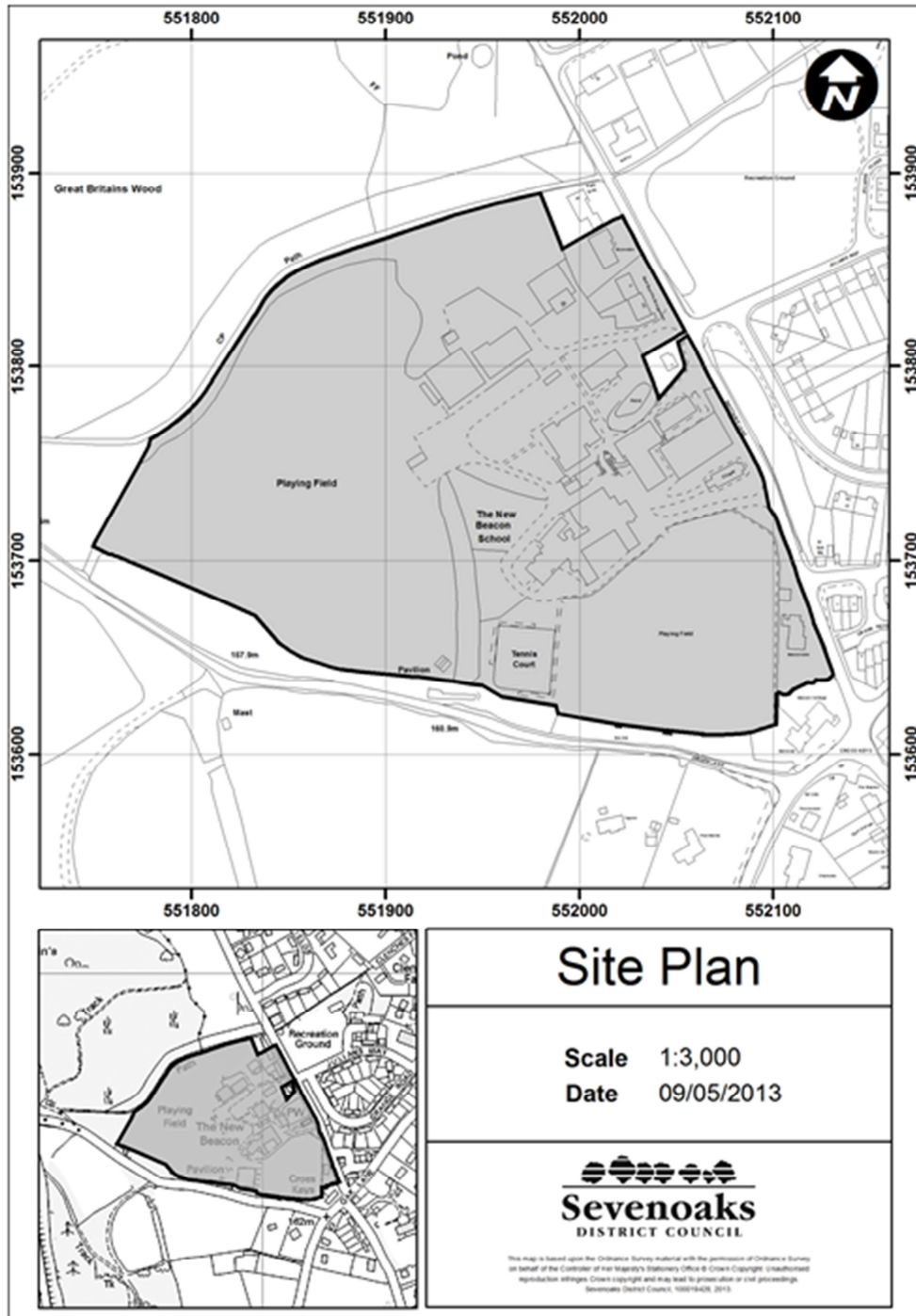
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Site Plan

Scale 1:3,000
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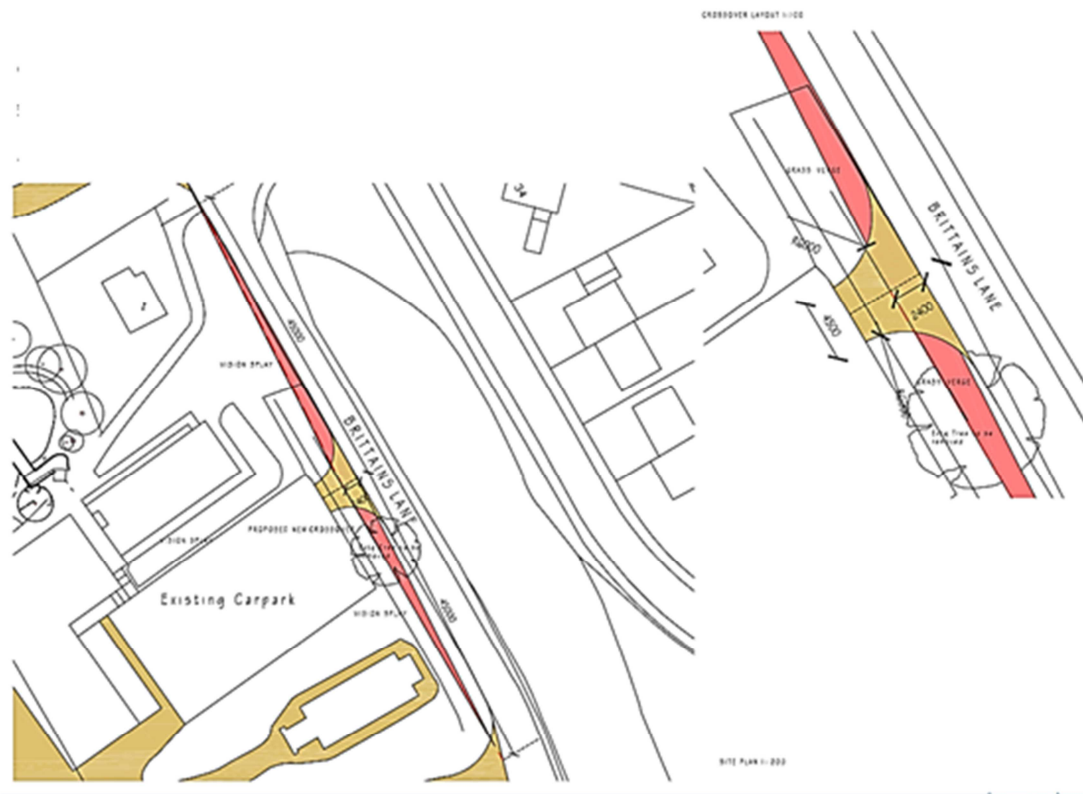


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BLOCK PLAN



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Late Observations for New Beacon School, Brittain's Lane, Sevenoaks 23rd May 2013

Item 4.2 - SE/13/00481/FUL - New Beacon School, Brittain's Lane, Sevenoaks TN13 2PB

Further information

A report by SLR Consulting Ltd, consulting highways engineers has been submitted (copy attached as **Appendix 1**), which sets out their assessment of the highway considerations associated with the new access.

The report concludes that the additional access is designed in accordance with the relevant technical standards and will provide an improvement to the existing situation by helping to accommodate the high volume of traffic accessing the school site at peak times.

Officers Recommendation

These conclusions support the KCC Highways Officer's comments as addressed in the report, and the Officer's Recommendation remains unchanged.