

ITEM NO. 18**TO:** PLANNING & REGULATORY COMMITTEE**DATE:** 19 JULY 2006**BY:** PLANNING MANAGER**DISTRICT(S):** TANDRIDGE**ELECTORAL DIVISION (S):**

WARLINGHAM

Mr David Hodge

PURPOSE: FOR DECISION**GRID REF:** 541266 156675

TITLE: SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL APPLICATION: REGULATION 3: TA06/0740

SUMMARY REPORT

Land at and adjoining Tatsfield Village Hall, Ship Hill, Tatsfield

New 210 place primary school and associated parking, play areas, dual use sports pitches and amenity areas; new access from Ship Hill to serve school and village hall/surgery; reorganisation of existing village hall/surgery parking and access.

The County Council as education authority wishes to address deficiencies in the accommodation available at the existing Tatsfield Primary School arising from a recent small increase in the number of places to be provided there, the size of existing accommodation and the lack of space for specialist subject teaching. The identified need cannot be met through new development on the existing site because of its proximity to a high pressure gas pipeline. A new school is therefore proposed on a new but previously undeveloped site on the southern edge of the village but near to its functional centre and adjoining the village hall and parish room. The development utilises in part land held by the Parish Council and includes provision for a replacement access and parking for the village hall. The application site is in the Green Belt, outside the defined rural settlement boundary and is therefore by definition inappropriate development in the Green Belt. There are however considered to be no sites capable of accommodating a new school within the settlement area and the application site is considered to be the best of the possible sites identified in the Green Belt beyond the settlement boundary. The need for a new school and the lack of better alternative sites are considered to constitute the very special circumstances necessary to justify development which is inappropriate in the Green Belt.

The application site is in an Area of Great Landscape Value but the design of the new school is considered to respond to the local landscape character and be successful in integrating the development into the local landscape with only very localised impacts on existing landscape character. The design also takes due account in its style and scale of existing surrounding development such that new buildings do not impact adversely on residential amenities, and incorporates proposals to meet a significant proportion of its energy requirements from renewable sources. New access arrangements are a potential source of adverse impact on residential amenities but are not considered significant in the context of existing activity in the immediate vicinity and capable of being addressed by conditions to secure landscaping, achieve satisfactory lighting design and limit use of the facilities outside school hours. The new site is considered to provide better opportunities than the existing one for non car borne trips to and from school. The new access requires traffic calming and a reduced speed limit but subject to those modifications is acceptable to the highway authority. Conditions are necessary to manage possible impacts on wildlife and on a public footpath which crosses the site.

The recommendation is, subject to referral to the Secretary of State as a departure, to PERMIT subject to conditions.

APPLICATION DETAILS
Applicant

Executive Director for Children and Young People

Date application valid

10/05/06

Period for determination (13 weeks)

09/08/06

Amending documents

Letter dated 21 June 2006 and enclosures.

SUMMARY OF PLANNING ISSUES

This section identifies and summarises the main planning issues raised in the report. The full text should be considered before the meeting.

	Is this aspect of the proposal in accordance with the development plan?	Paragraphs in report where this issue is discussed
Whether very special circumstances exist which justify inappropriate development in the green belt outside a settlement	yes	25 - 31
Whether landscape character of AGLV is affected	yes	32 - 34
Whether the proposal represents the high standard of design necessary in a rural area of recognised landscape quality	yes	35 - 36
Whether the design incorporates appropriate measures to secure energy conservation and use of energy from renewable sources	yes	37 - 38
Impact on residential amenities	yes	39 - 40
Whether appropriate provision is made for access and parking	yes	41 - 46
Ecological impacts	yes	47
Impact of Lighting	yes	48 - 49

ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL

Site Plan

Plan

Aerial Photographs

Aerial

Site Photographs

- Fig 1 Ship Hill, location for proposed new school and village hall access.
- Fig 2 Ship Hill, location for proposed new school and village hall access.
- Fig 3 Site of access road, east of village hall and No 1 Ship Hill.
- Fig 4 Application site, looking south.
- Fig 5 Application site, looking west.
- Fig 6 Application site, looking north to L shaped field and village hall.
- Fig 7 Application site, looking south east.

BACKGROUND

Site Description

- 1 Tatsfield, though very close to the northern boundary of Tandridge District with the London Borough of Bromley, is a relatively isolated and self contained settlement largely surrounded by agricultural land about 0.8km (1/2 mile) north of the scarp of the North Downs. The Tandridge Local Plan identifies Tatsfield as a Green Belt settlement and defines the settlement boundary, although there are other loosely knit groups of housing on the periphery outside the defined settlement. Functionally, the centre of the village is the area around Westmore Green, where local shops, pub, village hall, parish room /surgery and the terminus / turning point for local bus services are all located. Physically, however, this area is on the southern edge of the settlement.
- 2 Approach Road and Ship Hill, the two roads into the village from the south run along the south side of Westmore Green and, with the exception of three houses, a commercial use and the village hall and parish room /surgery, mark the edge of the village's built up area at this point. An unkempt 'L' shaped field owned by the Parish Council surrounds the village hall and one of these houses (no. 1 Ship Hill) on two sides. Land to the south, west and east of this enclave is in agricultural use, with a golf course beyond that. Land between the southern edge of the village and the boundary of the Surrey Hills AONB (which corresponds broadly with the North Downs scarp) is designated an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV). On the north side of Ship Hill is the Ship public house and adjoining that, a newly built cul de sac of 9 houses (Vern Place) and longer established residential development.
- 3 The application site comprises mainly a large field on the south and east sides of the village hall but also includes the curtilage of the village hall itself and the 'L' shaped field. The site slopes downwards from west to east and in the main is bounded by substantial hedges. Another dense, but predominantly deciduous hedge separates the larger field from the 'L' shaped field. A public footpath (Footpath 21) runs across the north east

corner from a stile accessed from Ship Hill. Beyond the site boundary, this path drops into a small, steep sided valley and continues across agricultural land on the far side of the valley which is at a similar level to the application site towards Church Lane.

- 4 The existing Tatsfield Primary School is an all-through primary school for children aged 4 – 11 occupying a site in Church Lane, on the south east side of the village. Though there are groups of houses close by, the existing site is about 450m beyond the nearest boundary of the defined Green Belt settlement of Tatsfield and 750m. from the functional centre of the village.

Planning History

- 5 Since 2003 the County Council as local education authority has been considering ways of accommodating a required increase in the published admission number for the school from 26 to 30 pupils per year and to address a number of deficiencies identified in the existing school's accommodation in delivering the school curriculum to current standards. A high pressure gas pipeline runs close to the southern boundary of the school's playing field and consultation with the Health and Safety Executive on feasibility studies to achieve the required additional facilities indicated that HSE would advise against planning permission being granted for such development. A decision was therefore taken to seek to achieve local primary school facilities to the desired standard by relocating the school to a new site.
- 6 A site search failed to identify any suitably sized site within the settlement area. Three sites around the southern edge of the settlement were shortlisted as being physically suitable and available within a reasonable timescale. Following local consultation, the education authority is seeking to develop a replacement school on the site adjoining the southern edge of the settlement and the village hall.

THE PROPOSAL

- 7 A new single form entry all through primary school is proposed, the main building of which would be approximately 60m south of Ship Hill and 50m south east of the village hall building. It would be single storey, although the school hall would be higher (equivalent in height to a two storey house) with its long axis orientated north – south along the grain of the local topography. External finishes on most of the school would comprise timber cladding on walls with a shallow pitch sedum 'green' roof. The exception would be the hall, which has a slate roof with a steeper pitch, a mix of blue-grey brickwork and rendered finishes to its walls.
- 8 Hard play areas would be located to the west (immediately adjoining the existing village hall boundary) and to the south of the main building. Formal playing fields would be laid out in the south west corner of the site. These more formal areas would be separated from the remainder of the existing field parcel to the east by a new fence line. The remainder would be managed by the County Council as part of the school site but, being a less secure environment outside the fence line, would only be used by pupils under supervision for environmental education purposes. The existing public footpath falls within this area and so unrestricted access to it would be maintained via the existing stile. Some levelling of the site through cut and fill would be necessary, principally to accommodate the formal playing field and the main building.
- 9 It is proposed to access the new school via new vehicle and pedestrian accesses from Ship Hill immediately to the east of 1 Ship Hill and almost opposite a new access recently created to serve new residential development at the rear of the Ship public house. This would provide access to dedicated parking for school staff (11 spaces), the existing car park at the rear of and serving the village hall (reorganised to provide 20 spaces) and another 20 new spaces which are primarily intended for village hall users

but, subject to the agreement with the Parish Council of detailed management arrangements, may also be available on a controlled basis to some school related traffic. The existing vehicular access to the village hall would then be closed except for deliveries but a pedestrian route through the village hall site to the new school would be maintained. The scheme does not include a dedicated pick up and drop off area for parents bringing their children to school by car. It is proposed that vehicle speeds on Ship Hill in the vicinity of the proposed new access would be limited by the installation of speed tables on either side and by imposition of a 20 mph speed limit.

- 10 The school has been designed so that key facilities such as the hall, ICT room and library are accessible outside school hours for community use. It is also anticipated that outdoor sports facilities are similarly available.

CONSULTATIONS AND PUBLICITY

District Council

- 11 Tandridge District Council: No objection subject to conditions

Consultees (Statutory and Non Statutory)

- 12 County Transportation Authority
– Transportation Development Control: Requests conditions to secure proposed highway works, parking provision and travel plan and provision of method of construction statement.
- 13 County Ecologist: Application contains sufficient ecological information. Safeguards necessary to limit timing of hedge removal and protection of retained hedges during construction.
- 14 County Arboriculturist:
- 15 Landscapes Manager: Considers scheme successfully integrates with local landscape. Identifies areas within the site where landscaping scheme as proposed should be strengthened and augmented.
- 16 County Archaeologist: Archaeological evaluation has been carried out in accordance with agreed specification. No further work required.
- 17 Rights of Way Officer: No objection subject to conditions and informatives to protect existing line of Footpath 21 during construction and replacement of existing stile with kissing gate
- 18 Environment Agency:
- 19 Thames Water: No objection. Requests informative.
- 20 Surrey Wildlife Trust: Considers site to be of low ecological value.

Welcome provision of sedum roof. Timing of hedgerow removal should be restricted in interests of nesting birds

21 Biggin Hill Airport: No objection.

Parish/Town Council & Amenity Groups

22 Tatsfield Parish Council: Support application, subject to ancillary lighting being unintrusive and sports pitches not being floodlit (written confirmation awaited)

Summary of publicity undertaken and key issues raised by the public

23 The application was publicised by means of press and site notices and direct notification of 40 surrounding residential and commercial properties. To date, two representations have been received. One raises objection on the grounds that there are sufficient other local schools to accommodate Tatsfield children, that the local road infrastructure indicates that the centre of the village is the wrong place to build a new school and that the problems associated with the proposed school access indicate that other alternative sites considered were better options. The second, made on behalf of residents of the new residential development close to the proposed access raises objection on the following grounds:

- noise and pollution impacts on residents arising from position of new school and village hall access and community use of school facilities outside of school hours;
- failure to consider prejudicial impact on human rights of occupiers of houses alongside benefits of the proposal to others;
- adverse impact on the wider area contrary to Green Belt and landscape protection policies;
- failure to demonstrate very special circumstances for inappropriate development in Green Belt;
- unsuitability of the proposed access point necessitating speed control measures; and the scale of the proposed access is excessive for traffic it is designed to serve.
- the development would, however, be supported if an alternative access option were pursued.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

24 The most significant issue of principle is the appropriateness of the development in the Green Belt and whether very special circumstances exist which would justify inappropriate development. The site's designation as AGLV also raises particular issues about the design of the scheme. Other significant issues arise from the proximity of the site to existing dwellings, the impact of the proposal on local roads and the adequacy of parking provision proposed.

Whether very special circumstances exist which justify inappropriate development in the Green Belt outside a settlement

Surrey Structure Plan 2004

Policy LO1 – The Location of Development

Policy LO4 – The Countryside and Green Belt

Policy LO5 – Rural Settlements

Tandridge District Local Plan 2001

Policy RE2 – Development in the Green Belt Outside Settlements

Policy CF2 – Provision of New Community Facilities

- 25 With the exception of the site of the curtilage of the village hall itself, the application site lies outside the settlement boundary defined in the local plan. The proposal does not fall within any of the categories of development which can be considered appropriate in the Green Belt outside settlements by reference to Structure Plan Policy LO4 and Local Plan Policy RE2. It can therefore only be permitted if there are very special circumstances which outweigh the harm due to inappropriateness and any other harm. Structure Plan Policy LO5 and Local Plan CF2 support the development of facilities to meet the social, economic and recreational needs of rural settlements in urban areas and Green Belt settlements only, provided they address the needs of the locality which cannot be met by existing premises and are located so as to be accessible to the population to be served.
- 26 The site is a green field site and there is a clear impact on the openness of the site arising from the scale of the buildings proposed and the developed appearance of the site arising from access roads, parking areas and hard play areas. The extent of actual harm to this characteristic of the green belt is significantly reduced by the design proposed but cannot be completely eliminated.
- 27 Use by the wider community of the school's built facilities outside school hours does not directly affect openness but does have some impact on the character of the Green Belt by increasing the duration of active use of a previously undeveloped site. This is, however, considered to be minor relative to the physical impact of buildings. Outdoor recreation facilities are an appropriate use of land in the Green Belt and provided community use of the school's sports facilities does not require the provision of other additional structures, dual use is not considered to result in additional harm due to inappropriateness. The application does not include floodlighting or any buildings specifically to accommodate dual use.
- 28 There is clear need to augment the accommodation available at the village primary school to address both the demands placed upon it by an increased number of pupils and the shortcomings this mix of turn of the century and temporary buildings has in the size, disposition and/or condition of spaces in delivering modern curriculum standards. These are set out in detail in the application. They include:
- Significantly undersized spaces for school hall, dining hall, 5 out of 7 classrooms, staff room, heads office and admin office
 - Lack of separate medical room, dedicated space for special educational needs and kitchen capable of providing food freshly cooked to meet developing DfES standards
 - Insufficient storage to enable full range of resources for subjects such as art, ICT, history, geography and PE, to the detriment of the curriculum offered.
- Overall, the school has a floor area of 853 sq m., against approximately 1400 sq. m. needed to meet modern standards of curriculum delivery.
- 29 The applicant has applied the Planning Advice for Development near Hazardous Installations (PADHI) methodology to the site. This is the methodology used by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to assess risks to new development arising from proximity to potentially hazardous installations. It is demonstrated that the school's proximity to a high pressure gas pipeline would cause the Health and Safety Executive to advise against development on the existing school site to address these needs. It is therefore considered that there is a strong case to relocate the school.
- 30 This does not on its own constitute circumstances so special as to justify new development on a predominantly undeveloped site outside a settlement. However, the site search carried out by the applicant has established that there are no sites of sufficient size to accommodate a new primary school within the settlement area of Tatsfield. The need is for a village school and it is not considered appropriate to look for sites beyond Tatsfield itself and its immediate environs. The site search identified 11 potential sites, none of which lies within the defined settlement area. Three sites around

the southern fringe were considered physically suitable, taking account of size, topography, location in relation to the main catchment in the village itself, availability and access and as a result of direct contact with the owners, all were potentially available for school purposes. All involve an extension of the developed area of Tatsfield southwards into open Green Belt. Of these, the application site is closest to the edge of the village and therefore is considered to have least impact upon openness. It also has the added benefit of being closest to the functional centre of the village and in particular the opportunities for strengthening community focus and dual use of facilities presented by its proximity to the village hall.

- 31 Officers consider that the need to relocate the village school to a new site, and the absence of any suitable sites located outside the Green Belt or in a Green Belt settlement, constitute the very special circumstances necessary to justify new school development on the application site which is by definition inappropriate. The choice of a site close to the built area of the village minimises the impact on openness that is otherwise justified by very special circumstances.

Landscape impact of development

Surrey Structure Plan 2004

Policy SE8 – Landscape

Tandridge District Local Plan 2001

Policy RE17 – Areas of Great Landscape Value

Policy BE1 – General Policy for New Development

- 32 Structure Plan Policy SE8 seeks to conserve the quality of landscape in AONBs and AGLVs. Development in AGLVs will be expected to maintain their existing character, particularly where they are visible from the AONB or contribute to the setting of urban areas. Local Plan Policy RE17 resists development in AGLV inconsistent with the intention of protecting its distinctive landscape character. Local Plan Policy BE1 contains general development control considerations, including the need to respect the character and appearance of a locality.
- 33 The potential landscape impact of a significant built development such as a school could be addressed in one of two ways – either to screen it off from the landscape or to seek to integrate it into the fabric of the landscape to minimise the change to landscape character. The applicant has in this case adopted the latter approach. The design of the proposal responds to landscape character in the following ways:
- The main building of the school is essentially linear, with its long axis running along the line of the prevailing slope across the site, rather than cutting across it. This aligns with the long, narrow profile of the village hall, the largest existing building in the immediate vicinity and the long narrow curtilages of this and other sites on the south side of Westmore Green.
 - On the east side of the site, the downward slope is to be modified by creation of a ha-ha which significantly reduces the visual impact of the principal parking areas at the front of the school
 - Most of the building deploys shallow pitched roofs covered in a living green sedum. This provides a degree of continuity with the natural slopes and the ha-ha beyond.
 - The proposal requires the removal of existing hedges between the 'L' shaped field and the main field, and to provide adequate sightlines on the frontage to Ship Hill. New hedges are to be planted on the western boundary, as a continuation of an existing hedgeline, on the frontage behind the sightline visibility splays, separating the hard play and sports field elements of the school's outdoor facilities and to augment the new fenceline proposed to separate the formal and informal parts of the school grounds. The latter takes an organic line in response to topography rather than in

response to formulae for minimum size of outdoor areas required for a school of this size.

- 34 The landscape assessment submitted with the application indicates that, after taking account of the new landscaping works proposed for the site, the development will have a moderate impact on the landscape from two of the seven points used as a framework to assess its visual influence. These are both on the east side of the site, along Footpath 21 towards Church Lane. The Landscape Manager has suggested areas where landscape proposals need to be augmented and where further detail is needed. This can be secured by condition. Subject to that, officers consider that the scheme successfully reflects and integrates with the landscape character of the AGLV and is acceptable in the context of development plan policies relating to landscape, given the need for a new school to serve Tatsfield.

Design

Surrey Structure Plan 2004

Policy SE4 – Design and the Quality of Development

Tandridge District Local Plan 2001

Policy BE1 – General Policy for New Development

- 35 Structure Plan Policy SE4 requires that development contributes to the quality of urban and rural areas, retains features which contribute to a sense of place and is of high quality in terms of the buildings themselves and the way they relate to their surroundings. Local Plan Policy BE1 requires that new development is appropriate to the site and area in terms of scale, form, design and external materials and does not constitute over development by reason of scale, height, bulk or relationship to boundaries and surrounding development.
- 36 Most of the proposed school building is low rise and uses contemporary materials in response to landscape considerations, rather than seeking to continue the dominant themes in surrounding buildings, which are predominantly of red brick /clay tile construction. This is, however, considered to be an appropriate response to the particular landscape context of this site., subject to the submission of samples for approval, especially in relation to the proposed sedum roof. The relationship of the proposal to its wider surroundings is dealt with in para 33 above. Positioning of the main buildings within the site is such that they do not dominate surrounding land. There are generous spaces around the building so that it does not appear cramped. The roof of the school hall is of necessity higher because of the activities it needs to accommodate, but not disproportionately so given the scale and height of the adjoining village hall. The steep pitch of the school hall roof is similar to that on the village hall.

Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation Measures

Surrey Structure Plan 2004

Policy SE2 – Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation

- 37 Structure Plan Policy SE2 requires that new commercial and residential development is designed so that a minimum 10% of their energy requirement is provided from renewable sources. All development is expected to incorporate best practice in energy efficiency. The applicant has stated that an objective of this proposal is that it achieves the highest standards of sustainability under the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method for new schools. The scheme includes provision for heating of the school by means of a ground source heat pump (GSHP) system and water heating partially through a photovoltaic system to be mounted on the roof of the school hall.
- 38 A feasibility report has been submitted which calculates the total energy requirement for the building expressed in terms of carbon emissions and demonstrates that the proposed GSHP would reduce carbon emissions by 27.9%. The proposed development is therefore consistent with the requirements of Policy SE2.

Impact on Residential Amenities**Tandridge District Local Plan 2001*****Policy BE1 – General Policy for New Development******Policy CF2 – Provision of New Community Facilities***

- 39 The criteria in Local Plan Policy BE1 include consideration of impacts on residential amenities by reason of noise, traffic or other environmental effects. Local Plan Policy CF2 requires new community facilities to avoid adverse impacts on local amenities, especially those of neighbouring properties. Potentially, the dwelling most affected by the proposal is no 1 Ship Hill, which is surrounded on three sides by the application site. On two sides this reflects the reorganisation of the parking at the village hall to accommodate the new school, rather than new development. On the third side, the access road into the new school runs along flank boundary of this property, but separated from it by a buffer which is a minimum of 4m. wide, widening to about 10m at the flank of the house itself. The existing boundary hedge provides some screening, but this is discontinuous even in spring and summer and needs supplementing to give adequate levels of privacy in winter. Further details of landscaping in this part of the application site can be secured by conditions. Any perceived impacts on amenity arising from traffic noise associated with the use of this access should be considered in the context of existing use of the village hall car park which already abuts the rear boundary of this property. The positioning and scale of the buildings of the new school are such that they are considered not to have an overpowering or overshadowing effect on nearby dwellings.
- 40 Officers do not consider the scale of changes to traffic movements along Ship Hill as a result of the new school to be so great as to justify formal quantified studies of noise or air quality impacts. The proposal is not expected to increase school related traffic movements in the area, and a significant proportion of the movements to and from the existing school site will be along Ship Hill. Material changes in the noise or air quality climate which amount to a significant impact on residential amenities are not therefore anticipated. The proposed access to the school and village hall is only 40m from the existing village hall access and 90m from the car park of The Ship public house. The characteristics of traffic on Ship Hill are not therefore considered likely to change as result of community use of the development outside school hours to the extent that they amount to a material deterioration in standards of residential amenity for dwellings on and accessed from Ship Hill. Subject to planting along the boundary with 1 Ship Hill being reinforced and secured by means of a planning condition, officers consider that the impact on residential amenity will be limited and otherwise acceptable in the light of the need for and benefits of the proposal to the wider community.

Access and Parking**Surrey Structure Plan 2004*****Policy DN2 – Movement Implications of Development******Policy DN3 – Parking Provision*****Tandridge District Local Plan 2001*****Policy BE1 – General Policy for New Development******Policy MO13 – Movement and New Development******Policy MO14 – Parking Standards******Policy CF2 – Provision of New Community Facilities***

- 41 Structure Plan Policy DN2 requires development to be compatible, or capable of being made compatible with local transport infrastructure and to incorporate measures to encourage walking, cycling or public transport. Local Plan Policy BE1 supports development if it provides safe access and traffic circulation, and parking in accordance with current standards. Policy CF2 has similar requirements specifically in relation to new community facilities. Policy MO13 requires new development which attracts a significant amount of traffic to be accessible by a choice of means of transport, to meet

highway design standards and avoid creating hazards and for highway works necessary to accommodate the development to be funded by the developer and meet the highway authority's design requirements. Policy MO14 seeks the provision of parking in accordance with standards and provision of facilities to encourage alternative means of travel to the private car.

- 42 Ship Hill is a winding and undulating rural road with high hedges. The proposed access is in a position on the site's frontage where sightlines are maximised. Elsewhere on that frontage, the vertical alignment of Ship Hill would necessitate more extensive alterations. The new access also makes alternative provision for access to the village hall, enabling closure of the existing village hall access to vehicles other than for deliveries. There is therefore no net increase in the number of accesses onto this part of Ship Hill. In these circumstances, subject to the provision of speed tables on Ship Hill (which are included in the application proposals), and to the applicant securing a reduction in the speed from 30 mph to 20 mph in the vicinity of the site, the proposed access is acceptable to the County Transportation Authority. The field which makes up the larger part of the application site does have a frontage to Approach Road, although that part of the site has not been made available to the applicant for school purposes by its current owner. An access to Approach Road has the potential to achieve more generous visibility. It would, however, involve crossing a wide verge with specimen trees on the highway edge. This verge is registered common land forming part of Westmore Green. The green and the trees on it are considered to make a more significant contribution to public amenity than the hedge on Ship Hill required to achieve the access proposed in the application.
- 43 Ship Hill is typical of all the narrow, rural roads which lead into and out of Tatsfield. None of the other alternative sites identified have a clear advantage in terms of access onto the highway which is not outweighed by the advantages of the application site in terms of a relatively central location which has the potential to minimise car borne trips.
- 44 The School has an existing Travel Plan, which forms part of the information submitted in support of the application and which it intends to keep under regular review. The Travel Plan identifies opportunities and aims for reducing car trips to school including an improved walking bus and boosting cycling, but has not yet been endorsed by the County's School Travel Officer. The application incorporates cycle storage provision for both pupils and staff. Regular updating is desirable to reinforce the advantages of the application site as a more sustainable location for the school and can be achieved by means of conditions.
- 45 Dedicated parking for the school is limited to that needed for operational needs of staff and visitors, in line with the County Council's adopted parking strategy. Parking proposed at the front of the new school is primarily to replace what is lost from within the curtilage of the village hall as a consequence of changing its access arrangements. It is not intended as a drop off/pick up area for parents. The existing school has a drop/off pick up area created in the early 1990s and in pre application discussions a desire for a similar facility at the new school was strongly expressed. This is considered to be at odds with current County Council policy expressed in the parking strategy because it encourages rather than discourages car use. Provision of a dropping off area is not considered justified in the more central location of the new school where road conditions are not as restrictive as at the existing site.
- 46 It is therefore considered that appropriate provision has been made for access and parking, and due regard has been paid to the promotion of means of transport other than the private car, consistent with Local Plan Policies BE1, MO13 and CF2.

Ecological Impacts
Surrey Structure Plan 2004
Policy SE6 – Biodiversity

Tandridge District Local Plan 2001***Policy NE7 – Protected Species***

- 47 The main part of the application site has recently been used for arable crops and is not considered likely to have any significant ecological interest, in the opinions of the County Ecologist and Surrey Wildlife Trust. The hedges on the site's boundaries and within the site marking the edge of the 'L' shaped field are areas which provide potential nest sites for birds. All birds nests and their eggs are protected by wildlife legislation. Protection of boundary hedges on the east, south and west which are to be retained under the scheme, and limits on the timing of clearance of hedges which are to be removed are considered to be an appropriate response to potential nature conservation interest and protected species legislation. These measures can be secured by means of conditions.

Lighting Impacts**Tandridge District Local Plan 2001*****Policy CF2 – Provision of New Community Facilities******Policy RT5 – Sports Pitches in the Green Belt***

- 48 Some external lighting is likely to be necessary on the site on security and safety grounds in support of use of the site during the winter months. The application does not include details of lighting proposed but it should be the minimum necessary to support safety and security needs and be designed in accordance with best practice to minimise possible impacts on residential amenities as required by Local Plan Policy CF2 through excessive or poorly designed lighting schemes. This can be secured by means of a condition requiring the submission of lighting details for subsequent approval.
- 49 Local Plan Policy RT5 resists the provision of floodlighting at sports pitches located in the Green Belt. There are no proposals at this stage to provide floodlights for any of the sports pitches or play areas proposed as part of the new school. If proposals were to come forward at some point in the future, the merits of the proposal would have to be considered then in the light of that policy and any other relevant considerations. It would not be appropriate to use conditions now to proscribe possible future developments.

HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

- 50 The Human Rights Act Guidance for Interpretation, contained in the Preamble to the Agenda is expressly incorporated into this report and must be read in conjunction with the following paragraph.
- 51 In this case, the Officer's view is that while potential impacts on amenity caused by the proposed new access are acknowledged, the scale of such impacts is not considered sufficient to engage Article 8 or Article 1 of Protocol 1. Their impact can be mitigated by conditions. As such, this proposal is not considered to interfere with any Convention right.

CONCLUSION

- 52 Very special circumstances relating to need and lack of suitable non Green Belt sites are considered to exist which outweigh harm due to inappropriateness of school development on this Green Belt site outside a settlement. Officers therefore consider that an exception to Green Belt policy is justified. Relevant development plan policies relating to landscape impact, design, access and parking, impacts on residential amenities and energy use are considered to be satisfied, subject to the imposition of appropriate planning conditions.

RECOMMENDATION

That

- A application no. TA06/0740 be forwarded to the Secretary of State as a Departure from the provisions of the development plan and
- B in the absence of any direction by her and pursuant to Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992, the application be PERMITTED subject to the following conditions:

Conditions:

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out and completed in all respects in accordance with the plans and details as permitted or as subsequently approved and no variation or omission shall take place unless first agreed in writing with the County Planning Authority
- 3 No development shall take place until details and samples of materials to be used in the construction of external surfaces of the building hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with those details.
- 4 Notwithstanding the details submitted with the application, before the development hereby permitted is first occupied further details of proposed planting and landscaping shall be submitted for the approval of the County Planning Authority. The further details shall include numbers and sizes of plants to be used
 - a.) in creating new hedges on the western boundary of the site,
 - b.) between the hard play area and sports pitches and
 - c.) on the new fenceline between the formal and informal parts on eastern side of the site
 - d.) to reinforce the existing hedge marking the eastern boundary of no 1 Ship Hill and the application site and the development shall thereafter be carried out fully in accordance with those details.
- 5 All hard and soft landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The works shall be carried out no later than in the first planting season after the first occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme to be agreed in writing by the County Planning Authority. Thereafter the landscaping shall be maintained for a period of five years. Such maintenance shall include the replacement of any tree or shrub which is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies or becomes in the opinion of the local planning authority seriously damaged or defective. The replacement shall be of the same species and size and in the same location as that originally planted unless the County Planning Authority's consent has been given in writing to any variation.
- 6 In carrying out the development hereby permitted no tree shall be cut down, uprooted or destroyed other than in accordance with the details contained in the application without the prior approval in writing of the County Planning Authority. If any tree to be retained is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies within 5 years from the date of the building's first occupation for its permitted use, a replacement shall be planted in a location and of a size and species which has first been agreed in writing by the County Planning Authority.
- 7 Before the development hereby permitted is commenced details of measures for the protection during construction works of trees to be retained shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority and the development shall be carried out fully in accordance with the details as approved.
- 8 Before the development hereby permitted is commenced details of measures to prevent any obstruction during construction works of the public footpath crossing the application

- site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority and the development shall be carried out fully in accordance with the details as approved.
- 9 Before the development hereby permitted is first occupied, details of a kissing gate to replace the stile at the boundary of the application site with Ship Hill shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority and the development shall be carried out fully in accordance with the details as approved.
 - 10 No tree or hedge required to be removed in carrying out the development hereby permitted shall be felled between the dates of 31 March and 31 August.
 - 11 Before the development hereby permitted is first occupied, details of all external lighting proposed in connection with the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority and the development shall be carried out fully in accordance with the details as approved.
 - 12 Use of the school facilities hereby permitted other than for uses directly connected to the provision of education shall not take place after 22.00.
 - 13 No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the necessary consents and approvals to secure the modifications proposed to the highway and reduction of the speed limit in the vicinity of the site set out in the application.
 - 14 Before the development hereby permitted is first occupied details of the proposed highway modifications and speed limit reduction shall be implemented in accordance with design and construction details which have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority.
 - 15 Before any other operations are commenced the proposed vehicular access to Ship Hill shall be designed and constructed and provided with visibility zones in accordance with the approved plan reference 1500/AD-22, all to be permanently maintained to a specification to be agreed in writing with the County Planning Authority and the visibility zones shall be kept permanently clear of any obstruction.
 - 16 The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until space has been laid out within the site in accordance with the approved plan reference 1500/AD-10 rev. C for cars and cycles to be parked and for vehicles to turn so that they may enter and leave the site in forward gear. The parking/turning area shall be used and retained exclusively for its designated use.
 - 17 No development shall take place until a Method of Construction Statement, to include details of:
 - (a) parking for vehicles of site personnel, operatives and visitors
 - (b) loading and unloading of plant and materials
 - (c) storage of plant and materials
 - (d) programme of works (including measures for traffic management)
 - (e) provision of boundary hoarding has been submitted to and have been approved in writing by the County Planning Authority and the development shall thereafter be carried out fully in accordance with those details
 - 18 Before any operations which involve the movement of materials in bulk to or from the site are commenced details shall be submitted to and have been approved in writing by the County Planning Authority of measures to keep the public highway clean and prevent the creation of a dangerous surface on the public highway and the development shall thereafter be carried out fully in accordance with those details.

- 19 The applicant shall implement the School Travel Plan submitted with the application and thereafter keep it under regular review in accordance with details which shall be submitted to and have been approved by the County Planning Authority before the development hereby permitted is first occupied.
- 20 Before the development hereby permitted is commenced, details of measures to deal with drainage of surface water on the site shall be submitted to and have been approved by the County Planning Authority and the development carried out fully in accordance with the details as approved. The scheme shall include measures to prevent the discharge of water on to the public highway.

Reasons:

- 1 To comply with Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 (1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2005.
- 2 To accord with the terms of the application in the interests of the landscape character and amenities of the area pursuant to Policies RE17, BE1 and CF2 of the Tandridge District Local Plan 2001.
- 3 In the interests of the design quality of the development pursuant to Policy SE4 of the Surrey Structure Plan 2004 and Policy BE1 of the Tandridge District Local Plan 2001.
- 4-7 In the interests of the landscape quality of the site and surroundings pursuant to Policies SE4 and SE8 of the Surrey Structure Plan 2004 and Policies BE1 and RE17 of the Tandridge District Local Plan 2001.
- 8,9 To ensure the public footpath crossing the site is not adversely affected by the development pursuant to Policy DN13 of the Surrey Structure Plan 2004 and Policy RT12 of the Tandridge District Local Plan 2001.
- 10 To minimise the impact of the development on nesting birds in the interests of maintaining biodiversity pursuant to Policy SE6 of the Surrey Structure Plan 2004 and Policy NE7 of the Tandridge District Local Plan 2001.
- 11,12 In the interests of the residential amenities of the area pursuant to Policies BE1 and CF2 of the Tandridge District Local Plan 2001.
- 13-18 In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users pursuant to Policy DN2 of the Surrey Structure Plan 2004 and Policies BE1, CF2 and MO13 of the Tandridge District Local Plan 2001.
- 19 To encourage the use of means of transport other than the private car, pursuant to Policies DN2 and DN3 of the Surrey Structure Plan 2004 and MO13, MO14 and CF2 of the Tandridge District Local Plan 2001.
- 20 To minimise the risk of flooding elsewhere pursuant to Policy SE3 of the Surrey Structure Plan 2004 and Policy EV4 of the Tandridge District Local Plan 2001.

Informatives:

- 1 The Highway Authority has no objection to the proposed development, subject to the above conditions but, if it is the applicant's intention to offer any of the roadworks included in the application for adoption as maintainable highways, permission under the Town and Country Planning Act should not be construed as approval to the highway engineering details necessary for inclusion in an Agreement under Section 38 of the Highways Act 1980

- 2 The permission hereby granted shall not be construed as authority to obstruct the public highway by the erection of scaffolding, hoarding or any other device or apparatus for which a licence must be sought from the Highway Authority.
- 3 The permission hereby granted shall not be construed as authority to carry from the Highway Authority before any works are carried out on any footway, footpath, carriageway, verge or other land forming part of the highway.
- 4 The developer is reminded that it is an offence to allow materials to be carried from the site and deposited on or damage the highway from uncleaned wheels or badly loaded vehicles. The Highway Authority will seek, wherever possible, to recover any expenses incurred in clearing, cleaning or repairing highway surfaces and prosecutes persistent offenders. (Highways Act 1980 Sections 131, 148, 149).
- 5 A pedestrian inter-visibility splay of 2m by 2m shall be provided on each side of the access, the depth measured from the back of the footway and the widths outwards from the edges of the access. No fence, wall or other obstruction to visibility between 0.6m and 2m in height above ground level shall be erected within the area of such splays
- 6 The applicant is advised that as part of the detailed design of the highway works required by the above condition(s), the County Highway Authority may require necessary accommodation works to street lights, road signs, road markings, highway drainage, surface covers, street trees, highway verges, highway surfaces, surface edge restraints and any other street furniture/equipment.
- 7 Applicants are reminded that the granting of planning permission does not authorise the obstruction or interference in any way with any public right of way. This can only be done by prior permission of the Highway Authority (Surrey County Council Countryside Access Group).
- 8 All public rights of way must be kept open at all times, allowing the public safe and unhindered access. Materials, plant and chemicals must not be stored on or adjacent to the route in any way that endangers the public.
- 9 Thames Water will aim to provide customers with a minimum pressure of 10m head (approximately 1 bar) and a flow rate of 9 litres/minute at the point where it leaves Thames Water pipes. The developer should take account of this minimum pressure in the design of the proposed development.

Town And Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 (As Amended) - Reasons for the grant of planning permission and development plan policies/proposal relevant to the decision.

- 1 The development does not accord with development plan policies controlling the types of development normally permitted in the Green Belt and the location of development serving the needs of Green Belt settlements. The following other material considerations outweigh these policy considerations:
 - the need to improve the size and facilities for primary education in Tatsfield,
 - the obstacles to achieving that improvement on the site of the existing primary school,
 - the absence of suitably sized sites for a replacement in school within the defined Green Belt settlement area of Tatsfield and
 - the absence of any more suitable less constrained site in the Green belt outside the settlement.

- and there are no material considerations which indicate otherwise.
- 2 it is considered that the development will provide the following benefits;
- a new school which provides education facilities of a suitable scale and quality to meet modern needs, is better located in relation to the village than the existing school and reinforces the role of the village hall and parish room as a focus for community activities.
- 3 Any other harm can be adequately mitigated by the mitigation measures proposed in the application and the conditions subject to which planning permission is granted.

The proposal has been considered against the following development plan policies/provisions:

Surrey Structure Plan 2004

Policy LO1	The Location of Development
Policy LO4	The Countryside and Green Belt
Policy LO5	Rural Settlements
Policy SE2	Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation
Policy SE3	Flooding and Drainage
Policy SE4	Design and the Quality of Development
Policy SE6	Biodiversity
Policy SE8	Landscape
Policy DN2	Movement Implications of Development
Policy DN3	Parking Provision
Policy DN13	Leisure and Recreation Facilities

Tandridge District Local Plan 2001

Policy RE2	Development in the Green Belt Outside Settlements
Policy RE17	Areas of Great Landscape Value
Policy BE1	General Policy for New Development
Policy NE7	Protected Species
Policy MO13	Movement and New Development
Policy MO14	Parking Standards
Policy CF2	Provision of New Community Facilities
Policy RT5	Sports Pitches in the Green Belt
Policy RT12	Rights of Way
Policy EV4	Drainage and Sewerage of Foul and Surface Water

CONTACT

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

The deposited planning application documents and plans, responses to consultations, notifications and representations received, as referred to in the report and included in the planning application file.
