

TO: PLANNING & REGULATORY COMMITTEE
BY: PLANNING DEVELOPMENT CONTROL TEAM
 MANAGER

DATE: 24 September 2014

DISTRICT(S) RUNNYMEDE BOROUGH COUNCIL

ELECTORAL DIVISION(S):
 Foxhills, Thorpe and Virginia Water
 Mr Few

PURPOSE: FOR DECISION

GRID REF: 501513 165750

TITLE: SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL PROPOSAL RU.14/0464

SUMMARY REPORT

Land at Lyne and Longcross C of E School, Lyne Lane, Lyne, Chertsey, Surrey, KT16 0AJ.

Construction of new 2 storey main school building and single storey extensions to existing hall and nursery buildings following demolition of existing main building and demountable building; extension of school site by approximately 75 m2 into adjoining church yard; construction of new access onto Lyne Lane; and associated external works including new car park, extension of hard play areas and culverting of existing ditch.

Lyne and Longcross is a 1 form of entry (FE) infant school which it is proposed be expanded to a 1FE primary school as part of the package of school expansions being proposed to address the forecast rise in demand for school places across Runnymede. It occupies a site to the south of Lyne village where it is adjoined by Lyne Parish Church and a number of isolated houses, commercial and equestrian establishments. The site is in the Green Belt. The buildings comprise a compact group of single storey buildings on the east side of Lyne Lane: a Victorian main building, a freestanding hall and kitchen dating from the 1990s and two modular classroom buildings.

The main component of the scheme is the replacement of the Victorian building and one of the modular classrooms by a new two storey building. There would be small extensions to the hall and the other modular building. As a result, the school's capacity would rise from its existing 90 places to 210 places. Overall the proposal would result in a 58% increase in the floorspace on the site. The new main building would be 93% larger than the one it replaces in terms of footprint and nearly 4 times larger in terms of floorspace. The development would however be contained within the existing compact envelope of built development within the site. The new main building is designed in vernacular style closely following the existing in terms of brick and stonework finishes, use of gables and a traditional pitched, tile roof. To accommodate this building, the vehicular entrance to the site would be relocated slightly and a new car park created. Both the existing and proposed parking areas are small but provide a similar ratio of spaces to staff numbers.

The application has attracted 11 individual letters of objection. The main grounds for objection are traffic impacts and impacts on Green Belt, the setting of an adjoining listed building and visual amenity, and traffic impacts. In addition, two petitions have been received. One objects to the proposals on the above grounds. The other supports the proposal on grounds that it addresses quantitative and qualitative needs for school places required in Runnymede, in well designed buildings which will facilitate high standards of education locally.

The Borough Council have raised objection on grounds that no very special circumstances have been advanced sufficient to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt arising from the scale of development proposed.

Officers consider it to be a well designed building which does not adversely affect the visual amenity of its immediate surroundings or the setting of the nearby listed building. Impact on trees can be satisfactorily dealt with by landscaping conditions and satisfactory measures have been proposed to deal with possible impacts on bats from demolishing an old building. The development does not adversely affect residential amenity through size, location or layout of buildings. The design of the proposed culvert is considered to be appropriate to avoid any risk of flooding and to deal with surface water.

The development clearly constitutes inappropriate development in the Green Belt. It causes harm to the openness of the Green Belt which is substantial but localised and to which officers attach moderate weight. It does not contribute to urban sprawl or the coalescence of settlements. Very special circumstances are considered to exist in the form of the contribution made by the proposal to a package of school development proposals addressing numerical, structural and choice aspects of the need for additional school places in Runnymede borough. These are considered to clearly outweigh harm due to inappropriateness and the loss of openness. Other non- Green Belt harm, in terms of the amenity impacts of traffic and parking and on trees and hedges can be reduced to acceptable levels by mitigation measures proposed and secured through appropriate conditions. Relevant planning policy consideration have been addressed and the development can therefore be permitted.

The recommendation is to PERMIT subject to conditions

APPLICATION DETAILS

Applicant

The Governors of Lyne & Longcross C of E School and Surrey County Council

Date application valid

19 March 2014

Period for Determination

14 May 2014

Amending Documents

Revised Transport Statement dated July 2014, Revised School Travel Plan dated July 2014, and Addendum to Transportation Statement dated July 2014, all received 23/07/14.

Drawing no. 5067/2000/ W-4, 'Proposed External Works and Drainage Plan', received 23/07/14

SUMMARY OF PLANNING ISSUES

This section identifies and summarises the main planning issues 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 the report where this has been discussed
Inappropriateness of Development in the Green Belt	no	27 - 28
Design and Visual Amenity	yes	29 - 32
Impact on Residential Amenity	yes	33 - 35
Impact on Trees	yes	36 - 39
Impact on Listed Building	yes	40 - 41
Ecological Impacts	yes	42 - 45
Traffic and Parking Impacts	yes	46 - 56
Flooding and Drainage	yes	57 - 59
Very Special Circumstances to Justify Inappropriate Development in Green Belt	yes	60 – 62, 65 - 66
Loss of Openness	no	63 - 64

ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL

Site Plan

Plan

Aerial Photographs

Aerial

Site Photographs

Figure 1 Existing school building, with hall behind, viewed from south west across Lyne Lane

Figure 2 Location for rear extension to existing hall

- Figure 3 Location for rear extension to existing modular classroom building
- Figure 4 Existing main building and hall, viewed from rear (north)
- Figure 5 Lyne Lane, looking north from existing pedestrian entrance
- Figure 6 Lyne Lane north of school site, looking south
- Figure 7 Lyne Lane, looking south, with existing access to school site on left
- Figure 8 Demountable classroom and walnut tree to be replaced, location for proposed new vehicular access and car park.
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BACKGROUND

Site Description

- 1 Lyne and Longcross Infant School lies approximately 300m south of the built up area of Lyne village and 2km west of the western edge of the built up areas of Addlestone and Chertsey. It lies on the east side of Lyne Lane, adjoined to the south by the churchyard of Lyne parish church and to the north by a detached private dwelling, the School House. The church is a Grade II listed building. On the west side of Lyne Lane are several clusters of buildings in commercial and equestrian uses set in open fields mainly grazed by horses. There are isolated detached dwellings to the north and south. The school buildings occupy the road frontage, with playing fields at the rear, which also extend across the rear of the School House. To the rear of the playing field is woodland, and beyond that a mobile home park set in a wooded landscape on the south edge of Lyne village. To the north and south of the school and church are several detached houses set in extensive grounds.
- 2 The school buildings comprise:
 - a Victorian main building close to the road frontage. This is a single storey gothic style building built in a cream stock brick with stone dressings and pitched, clay tile roofs. A gable end with stone fascia faces the road, and main windows also have stone cills and lintels. There are later single storey extensions at the rear
 - also on the frontage is an old demountable classroom building used as a nursery
 - to the rear of the main building is an 'L' shaped modern building housing the school hall, kitchen and one classroom. This is also finished in brick, with a hipped, tiled roof
 - also to the rear, a modern, timber modular classroom building (the 'Homelodge' building), which is painted green and has a shallow pitched roof
 -
 - an open ditch runs across the front half of the site, separating the main building and hall on one side and the nursery and 'Homelodge' building on the other
- 3 There are three existing access points into the site from Lyne Lane; a vehicular access in front of the main building, leading to a small tarmaced parking area which can

accommodate up to 6 cars and about 8m to the north of that, a pedestrian gate. At the northern end another pedestrian gate gives direct access to the existing nursery building. An evergreen hedge marks the school’s front boundary. On the opposite side of the road, an informal lay by contains parking spaces clear of the carriageway, extending along the frontage of the churchyard as far as the southern end of the school site. To the north of that is the entrance to a gated commercial yard with a wide crossover and to the north of that, opposite the School House, another short section of informal layby.

- 4 The school is currently a one form of entry infant school (90 places), and it is proposed that it be enlarged to a one form entry primary school (210 places).

Planning History

- 5 RU10/1043 Erection of timber framed polycarbonate screen canopy to existing detached outbuilding. Permitted October 2010.
- RU09/0792 Erection of single storey extension to south side of existing hall to provide kitchen and store facilities. Permitted October 2009.
- RU08/0960 Erection of new kitchen and link corridor following demolition of existing servery. Permitted November 2008.
- RU08/0396 Erection of canopies at front elevation of classroom and linking two school buildings. Permitted June 2008.
- RU05/0997 Detached single storey modular timber building to be used as staff room and learning resource room. Permitted December 2005.
- RU04/0083 Extension of playground. Permitted February 2004.
- RU02/0028 Erection of shelter over part of play area. Permitted February 2002.

THE PROPOSAL

- 6 In order to provide the accommodation required for a primary school on this site it is proposed to replace the existing main building and nursery and to extend the hall and ‘Homelodge’ buildings.
- 7 The replacement for the main building would be on a similar alignment to the existing one, but two storeys high. It seeks to replicate the gothic style and materials of the building it would replace, and features a light brick, gables facing the road and stone window surrounds. The building would contain three classrooms, staff room and reception and office space on the ground floor, with a further three classrooms and library on the first floor. It would be closer to the frontage than the existing building and as a result the existing tarmac parking area would be lost.
- 8 The demountable classroom at the front would be removed, and the ‘Homelodge’ building would become the nursery, with a small single storey timber clad extension on its east

(rear) side. The hall would also be extended eastwards by approximately 5m, in similar style to the existing.

- 8
- 9 A new vehicular access is proposed towards the north end of the Lyne Lane frontage, giving access to a bin store and car park located in approximately the position of the old demountable building. In the form originally submitted, the car park provided 4 spaces, but the amended scheme now provides 8 spaces. This would require the removal of an existing large walnut tree. The old vehicular access would become the main pedestrian access to the school. The Transport Statement and School Travel Plan submitted in support of the application, as amended, propose the following other off site measures to mitigate the anticipated traffic and parking impacts of the school's expansion;
- improvements to the church car park at the southern end of the churchyard about 120m from the school site. These comprise widening the entrance to all simultaneous entry and exit, a footpath link to the existing footpaths across the churchyard leading towards the school, and a tarmaced waiting area. The church car park would then have a capacity for approximately 30 cars.
 - Operation by the school of walking bus and/or park and stride from the church car park. This has the full support of the vicar on behalf of the parish
 - Promotion of a walking bus and/or park and stride from the car park of Lyne Village Hall, approximately 700m to the north of the school. This car park has a capacity of about 45 spaces
 - Provision of a 20m section of parking restriction on the bend approximately 100m north of the school, to provide a passing place for traffic to wait where there can be expected to be a continuous line of parked cars around school start and finish times
- 10 To accommodate the various elements of the expanded school, it is proposed that the ditch bisecting the site be culverted. To the south of the proposed main building, a part of the churchyard measuring approximately 3m x 24m would be incorporated into the school, to enable paved access to the rear of the new building. A new hedge would be planted on the new boundary line. At the rear of the site, an existing hard play area would be extended in a strip approximately 4m x 38m onto the edge of the school playing field.

CONSULTATIONS AND PUBLICITY

District Council

- 11 Runnymede Borough Council: Object on grounds 1.) that very special circumstances sufficient to justify inappropriate and harmful development in the Green Belt have not been demonstrated and 2.) that it has not been demonstrated that parking, traffic and highway implications are acceptable.

Further comments received 01/10/14 – now object only on ground 1.)

Consultees (Statutory and Non-Statutory)

- 12 County Highway Authority
(Transport Development Planning): Location of school relative to catchment area makes site unusually reliant on private car for school travel. Sufficient mitigation has been identified to address impacts of additional traffic and parking likely to be generated. Recommends conditions.
- 13 County Historic Buildings Advisor: Does not consider school building to be worthy of listing. Proposals do not adversely affect setting of adjoining listed building, Proposal satisfies conservation policies of NPPF, so no objection.
- 14 County Arboriculturalist: No views received (29/09/14).
- 15 County Ecologist: Applicant has carried out building inspections and emergence surveys necessary before a Victorian building is demolished.
- 16 Environment Agency: Refer to standing advice. Site is crossed by an ordinary watercourse, which is the responsibility of the County Council as lead local flood authority.
- 17 Flood and Water Services Manager: Requires minimum dimensions for culvert and arrangements for access for maintenance, to be secured through application for Land Drainage Consent.

Parish/Town Council and Amenity Groups

- 18 None.

Summary of publicity undertaken and key issues raised by public

- 19 The application was publicised by the posting of 2 site *notices* and an advert placed in the local newspaper. In addition, 11 surrounding properties, mostly residential, were directly notified by letter. Eleven individual letters of representation have been received, raising objection on the following grounds;
- reduction in on-site parking despite increase in pupils and staff numbers; relatively small increase in staff numbers proposed is questioned; existing and proposed parking for staff is incompatible with standards for similar sized commercial development and does not accord with Local Plan PolicyMV9
 - existing conditions for parking are unsafe; parking takes place on verges near school despite availability of parking elsewhere; safety issues for access and egress from residential and commercial properties as a result of parked cars
 - school drop off would coincide with rush hour on a busy through road; there would be a conflict with traffic generated by nursery at junction of Almnors Road and Hardwick Lane

- relocation of school access to a point opposite a builders yard, combined with increased traffic and reduced parking provision would result in severe transport impacts contrary to Local Plan Policy MV4 and para 32 of NPPF
- The school travel Plan is unrealistic in promoting walking and cycling to this location; local roads are unsuitable and distances too great; walking buses are not reliable and are not used in bad weather
- the school is dependent on the private car for access and lacks public transport. Expansion fails sustainability criteria contrary to NPPF. Emerging Runnymede Core Strategy directs housing to existing settlements and education provision should follow housing; other communities within the catchment area are served by other local schools; a school designed to serve the much smaller local community of Lyne is not suitable for expansion
- under NPPF, new buildings are not acceptable in Green Belt if materially larger than those they replace; new building would be wider, higher and deeper than the ones it would replace; it would be closer to frontage and more visible in street scene
- the existing building is small and attractive and should be retained; it respects setting of adjoining Listed Building; there is an unobstructed view from church and churchyard towards existing building; listed building's setting would be altered by poor design quality and scale of replacement contrary to Local Plan Policy BE10
- attractive, traditional design of existing building, especially its stone finish reflecting that of the church is not replicated; the building is out of character with Lyne village; it has a functional design lacking in architectural detailing
- site is too small to accommodate sport and recreation needs of junior age children
- support principle of expansion but parking and traffic issues have not been adequately dealt with
- school will be less popular with parents of older children who have the option to attend other larger schools; its existing appeal is as a small village school
- proposals could be altered to benefit of neighbouring property by moving the 'Homelodge' building to the other side of the site. This would enable provision of slightly more on site parking (10 spaces), retention of walnut tree on site frontage and a grounds maintenance access directly through the site; the existing grounds maintenance access along the far side of School House would be redundant; plans do not accurately reflect width of existing grounds maintenance access or its relationship to School House; neighbours prepared to fund 'Homelodge' relocation subject to title of redundant grounds maintenance access being transferred.

The above comments were all made in response to initial consultation carried out. Neighbours were notified of the receipt of additional traffic parking information in July 2014. No further representations have been received following this later consultation.

- 20 In addition, two petitions have been received. One, with 43 signatures (and 115 signatures on an online petition), raises objection to the school's expansion on grounds of the adverse traffic impacts it will have. The other, with 206 signatures, supports the proposal on grounds that it addresses quantitative and qualitative needs for school places required in Runnymede, in well designed buildings which will facilitate high standards of education locally.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 21 The County Council as County Planning Authority has a duty under Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to determine this application in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Section

70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) (1990 Act) requires local planning authorities when determining planning applications to “have regard to (a) the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, (b) any local finance considerations, so far as material to the application, and (c) any other material considerations”. At present in relation to this application the Development Plan consists of the Runnymede Borough Local Plan Second Alteration 2001.

- 22 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was adopted in March 2012. This document provides guidance to local planning authorities in producing local plans and in making decisions on planning applications. The NPPF is intended to make the planning system less complex and more accessible by summarising national guidance which replaces numerous planning policy statements and guidance notes, circulars and various letters to Chief Planning Officers. The document is based on the principle of the planning system making an important contribution to sustainable development, which is seen as achieving positive growth that strikes a balance between economic, social and environmental factors. The Development Plan remains the cornerstone of the planning system. Planning applications which comply with an up to date Development Plan should be approved. Refusal should only be on the basis of conflict with the Development Plan and other material considerations.
- 23 The NPPF states that policies in Local Plans should not be considered out of date simply because they were adopted prior to publication of the framework. However, the guidance contained in the NPPF are material considerations which planning authorities should take into account. Due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies are to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight they may be given).
- 24 The site is in the Green Belt and involves replacing an existing school building with a materially larger one and small extensions to two other school buildings. It is necessary to consider whether the proposal constitutes inappropriate development in the Green Belt, and if so, whether very special circumstances exist which clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt. The application states that this proposal is one of a number being brought forward to address a significant identified shortfall in school places in the area.
- 25 Other issues to be taken into account are whether the design of the proposed new main building is of sufficient quality, given that it would replace a building of character which contributes to the quality of townscape in the immediate area; whether there are any adverse impacts on the setting of the adjoining listed building or other heritage considerations; whether the scale and layout of the proposed development would impact on the residential amenities of the adjoining dwelling; whether there are any ecological impacts; and whether the proposed changes to the school’s access, or the traffic generated as a result of its expansion are acceptable in terms of highway safety or residential amenity.
- 26 Para 72 of the NPPF highlights that the Government attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. It continues by stating that Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. It states that Local Planning authorities should *inter alia* give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools.

**Inappropriateness of Development in the Green Belt
Runnymede Borough Local Plan Second Alteration 2001
Policy GB1 – Development Within the Green Belt
National Planning Policy Framework 2012 – paras 87 and 89**

- 27 Local Plan Policy GB1 states that there will be a strong presumption against development in the Green Belt which would conflict with the purpose of the green belt or adversely affect its open character. NPPF para 87 states that development which is inappropriate should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Para 89 states that new buildings in the Green Belt are inappropriate with certain listed exceptions. The exceptions include the extension or alteration of a building provided it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original buildings; and replacement of a building providing the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces.
- 28 The main component of this proposal is the replacement of the existing single storey main building of the school with a new two storey one. The new building would have a footprint only slightly larger but the building would be higher and deeper. The overall net increase in floorspace on the site on the site as a result of the scheme, which is attributable largely to this new building, would be about a 58% increase over the aggregate of the existing buildings. The replacement main building has footprint 93% larger than the existing main building, and nearly four times as much floorspace. It must therefore be considered to be materially larger. Notwithstanding that the other extensions are relatively modest and not in themselves inappropriate, by virtue of the replacement building, the development as a whole must be considered to constitute inappropriate development.

**Design and Visual Amenity
(No relevant development plan policy identified)
NPPF, Section 7**

- 29 Para 17 of the NPPF states that planning should always seek to ensure a high quality of design. Section 7 of the NPPF promotes the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for individual buildings and public and private spaces. Para 58 states that planning decisions should aim to ensure that all developments satisfy a number of criteria, including establishment of a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit; respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation; are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.
- 30 The application proposes a design for the replacement two storey block in a vernacular style highly reminiscent in its detailing, form and choice of materials of the Victorian building it would replace. In particular, it incorporates roof and facing brick types similar to the existing, gables with a similar profile and use of stone cills. The approach to the appearance of this building, using traditional materials and a building form and incorporating details which reflect and perpetuate the character of the building to be demolished, which itself has continuity with other prominent local building, the church, is one that can be supported. The development in its main element responds to and maintains local character and history and reinforces local distinctiveness. As a result of its two storey nature, greater size and positioning slightly closer to the site frontage than the existing, this building will be a prominent feature in the street scene, but because of its

careful design, integrated with the adjoining church, the impact on visual amenity and the street scene is not considered to be a negative one.

- 31 The proposed extensions to the other existing buildings both also closely follow their existing form and appearance. Both are rearward extensions which have no impact on the street scene.
- 32 Officers consider that the development meets the requirements of planning policy in relation to design quality.

Impact on Residential Amenity (No relevant development plan policy identified)

- 33 Para 17 of the NPPF states that planning should always seek to secure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.
- 34 There is one residential property bordering the school site (The School House). This adjoins the northern boundary of site. Its flank elevation faces the existing school buildings on the front part of the site, and the outdoor play areas and circulation areas immediately around them. The main flank elevation of the school house is approximately 1.5m from the boundary, but a single storey extension at the side and rear extends right up to the boundary. There are two windows on the flank elevation, one on the ground floor and one on the first floor. The boundary is marked by a 2m high wooden fence, and only the upper part of the ground floor window is visible above the fence. The proposed new two storey building would be 15m away from this boundary at its nearest point, and 17m from the house's flank elevation. The new building would have ground floor and first floor windows facing the flank elevation, but this is a relationship which officers consider to be acceptable in terms of scale, privacy and overlooking. The nearest existing building to the School House is the demountable nursery building which is to be removed under the application proposals and replaced by part of the new car park. The School House is sufficiently close to the school site to experience some impact from the day to day activities of the school. The substitution of a classroom building by a car park is not considered to give rise to significantly greater impacts on residential amenity.
- 35 Other impacts on residential amenity arising from traffic and parking considered in paras 46 - 56 below.

Impact on Trees Runnymede Borough Local Plan Second Alteration 2001 Policy NE12 – Protection of Trees

- 36 Local Plan Policy NE12 seeks to protect significant trees, hedgerows and woodlands and make provision for new planting, through the use of development control powers.
- 37 The tree survey submitted with the application identifies and assesses existing trees within the site. There are a group of trees along the rear edge of the playground behind the school buildings and a single large walnut tree at the front, between the demountable nursery building and the front boundary. The application involves the removal of the walnut tree, which is located where the new vehicle access and parking area are proposed and reduction of the canopy of a poplar in the rear group where it would overhang the

extension to the hall.. The arboricultural survey accompanying the application identifies the walnut as a high quality tree, in good condition with a life expectancy of 20-30 years. Officers consider it contributes to the amenity of school site and is a feature of the site. As an ornamental tree, it is a continuation of the groups of ornamental trees in the church yard. However, its position makes it impossible to both retain tree and accommodate all the necessary elements of the development. If the new build is to be located in approximately the same position as the Victorian building, this is the only location available for a new vehicle access and provision of off street parking for staff. Officers consider it possible to replicate the function of this tree as a feature of the site through its replacement by a new specimen tree of appropriate ornamental species and size. The application proposes this in principle, at the front of site, between the new car park and site boundary. Provide this is done, officers consider that the aims of local plan policy, to preserve trees as features, can be achieved. The details of replacement tree planting can be secured through the imposition of suitable conditions.

- 38 The provision of a new access with appropriate sightlines also necessitates removal of the existing hedge along the site frontage. This is a mixed evergreen hedge, backed by a mix of chain link and bow top rail fencing, containing privet, yew and holly maintained at a height of approximately 1.2 – 1.5m. It is considered to have little merit in itself, but contributes to character of school site as an essentially rural school. The character and visual amenity of the site can be satisfactorily preserved through the proposed replanting of a replacement hedge behind the sightlines. This can be secured through a condition.
- 39 The arboricultural assessment submitted with the application proposes use of tree protection fencing around the trees at the rear of the works area. These safeguards are necessary to limit the risk of damage to retained trees by construction works and their implementation should be secured through condition.

Impact on Listed Building

Runnymede Borough Local Plan Second Alteration 2001

Policy BE10 – Development Affecting the Setting of Listed Buildings

- 40 Local Plan Policy BE10 resists development which would adversely affect the setting of a listed building by virtue of its design, scale, proximity or impact on significant views or aspects.
- 41 The historic buildings officer has commented that the building proposed to be demolished is not worthy of listing and there is no objection in principle on heritage grounds to its demolition. The conservation interest is limited to the setting of the adjoining listed church and lych gate. The proposed new building picks up on the general style of the existing building and the coloured elevations suggest that the intention is to use brick and stonework of a similar character to the existing. The historic buildings officer supports this approach. The building will inevitably look more domestic as the window cills will be set lower than is characteristic of a Victorian school but the overall form is sympathetic to what is being lost and to the adjoining church. The building would be larger than the existing but similar in style. It would not, however, be so large or so close to the church as to be dominant or draw attention away from the church's architectural and historic character. Officers do not consider that the proposed redevelopment nor the loss of part of the churchyard will affect the setting of the church and lychgate, and is therefore acceptable in terms of Local Plan Policy BE10.

Ecological Impacts

Runnymede Borough Local Plan Second Alteration 2001

Policy NE20 – Species Protection

- 42 Local Plan Policy NE20 states that development will only be permitted where it does not cause harm to statutorily protected species. Conditions may be used to facilitate survival of individuals of protected species, reduce disturbance to a minimum and provide adequate alternative habitat where necessary.
- 43 Planning authorities must determine whether the proposed development meets the requirements of Article 16 of the EC Habitats Directive before planning permission is granted where there is a reasonable likelihood of European Protected Species being present. Recent case law indicates that the planning authority's duty under the Regulations cannot be discharged by attaching conditions to any permission granted requiring compliance with the separate licensing procedures under the Habitats Regulations if protected species are subsequently found. Reasonable steps must be taken before permission is granted to establish the presence or otherwise of protected species.
- 44 The proposal involves demolition of buildings which might reasonably be expected to contain roosting sites for bats, which are a European Protected species. The Ecological Assessment submitted with the application included external and internal inspection of all four existing buildings on the site, and the walnut tree to assess their suitability as bat roosts and to establish whether they were in fact used. No physical evidence of actual use by bats was found. Three of the buildings, and the tree, were assessed as having negligible potential, but the Victorian building was assessed as having medium potential. As a result, emergence surveys were carried out. No bats were observed emerging from any of the buildings, but bats were recorded foraging in the area, in particular in the church yard and along its boundaries.
- 45 Since bats were recorded in the area, and one of the buildings to be demolished has the potential to provide roosting sites (under slipped tiles and in gaps around the soffit and chimney), the ecological assessment recommends that as a precaution demolition of the roof of the Victorian building be by hand under the supervision of an ecologist. If any bats are found to be present, work should cease until a Natural England licence has been obtained. Provided these recommendations are followed, planning policy in relation to protected species will have been satisfied. They can be secured through conditions.

Traffic and Parking Impacts

Runnymede Borough Local Plan Second Alteration 2001

Policy MV4 – Access and Circulation Arrangements

Policy MV9 – Parking Standards

- 46 Local Plan Policy MV4 requires all development to comply with current highway design standards and that there are appropriate arrangements for access and circulation, having regard to the nature of development proposed, the area it is located, traffic congestion, accident potential and environmental and amenity considerations. Local Plan Policy MV9 requires compliance with the Borough Council's parking standards. However, these do not cover parking at schools.. The County Council's "Vehicular and Cycle Parking Guidance

January 2012' state that for schools, parking should be provided only to meet operational requirements, i.e. that required by staff and official visitors. NPPF para 32 states, 'All developments that generate significant amounts of movement should be supported by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment. Plans and decisions should take account of whether:

- the opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up depending on the nature and location of the site, to reduce the need for major transport infrastructure;
- safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people; and
- improvements can be undertaken within the transport network that cost effectively limit the significant impacts of the development. Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.'

- 47 Lyne and Longcross School is located in a rural area, outside of the main built up area of Lyne village. Given the location and nature of the school, the children travel some distance to school - the closest child is around a third of a mile away and the furthest is several miles. The home locations of the children currently attending the school are predominantly spread across Lyne itself, the rural area to the south west of the site, Chertsey and Addlestone. There are also smaller numbers of children travelling from the Thorpe, Virginia Water, Egham and Englefield Green areas. In the circumstances of the school's relatively isolated location pupils are heavily dependent upon access by car. According to the submitted Transport Statement, 80% of children currently come to school by car with 5% car sharing. Just 6% walked or cycled to school. This was on the basis of 62 respondents out of the total 89 children currently enrolled at the school. A parking survey undertaken by the highway consultants counted 72 cars at the maximum. The consultants have calculated that there is currently available spare parking for a maximum of 103 cars within 200m of the school (on street and in the church car park and including all users, not just those associated with the school).
- 48 Assuming an unchanged catchment and no change to the existing modal split in which 80% of pupils travel by car, the school's proposed expansion to a 1 form of entry primary school from a 1FE infants will result in 168 children travelling to school by car, against the maximum identified existing supply of 103 available parking spaces. Officers view this shortfall of 65 parking spaces as a worst case, and unrealistically pessimistic, as the creation of a primary school at the site will increase the chances of two or more siblings attending the same school compared to an infant school. Additional information has been supplied in respect of numbers of reception children who had siblings of primary age for the past three years. This fluctuated from 36% to 48%. This indicates that around 40% of reception children could have an older sibling at the expanded school. Assuming only one sibling, this would result in a 20% reduction in the number of cars visiting the school - a reduction of around 30 cars from 168 to 138. With no additional measures, no travel plan and assuming all cars arrived at the same time, there would be a shortfall of around 35 spaces (not including additional demand for teachers cars). Officers consider that the predicted level of shortfall constitutes an unmanageable parking impact. An acceptable proposal would require further mitigation measures, including managing parents behaviour, reducing the number of cars, or by making available additional parking resources.

- 49 The Travel Plan has a stated target to decrease the number of children coming to school by car from 80% in 2014/15 to 47% in 2018/19. Reference is then made to park and stride and increasing proportions of siblings as ways of achieving this. If this is the case, the target as currently expressed is incorrect. Given the constraints of the location of the school and the home locations of the existing pupils, it is difficult to see how a reduction in access by car of this order can realistically be achieved. It would require a 33% drop in children accessing the school by car over 4 years. Unless the catchment of the school contracts significantly, a similar proportion of children will continue to access the school by car. The impact is lessened by park and stride, car sharing/siblings and other travel plan measures but the proportion will remain similar. The commitment of the school to such an aspirational target is applauded and recognised but officers consider that it would be exceptional for a travel plan to achieve modal shift of this magnitude in an urban area and is completely unrealistic in this location.
- 50 The applicant has therefore been asked to demonstrate other ways of increasing the supply of available parking. The school site itself is very constrained and there is no capacity for parent parking and pick-up/drop off facilities within the curtilage of the site. However, other steps are being proposed to improve the supply of parking available to parents.
- 51 The improvements to the church car park have the support of the church authorities and would increase its capacity to about 30 spaces. Given that support, its delivery can be relied upon. However, it would not deliver enough additional spaces to fully overcome the estimated shortfall of 35 spaces as it is already used by some parents as an alternative to on street parking.
- 52 The applicant has also identified the car park at Lyne Village hall as a site from which a walking bus and/or park and stride could operate. This car park has about 50 spaces. Contact with the village hall committee initially suggested this would in principle be acceptable. However, it appears that the village hall committee do not wish to enter into any formal agreements about its use at the moment. There remains, therefore, some uncertainty about its eventual availability as an additional parking resource. Though not a public car park, the village hall car park is publicly accessible and access is not restricted. Even without its promotion by the school as a parking place with the village hall's support, it is likely to be seen as a suitable parking place by some parents. If formal agreement cannot be made before the planning decision, it would be incumbent on the school to continue its efforts to secure use of the village hall car park as an identified objective of its Travel Plan
- 53 The existing parking supply identified by the transport statement is that within a 200m radius of the school. The village hall is 700m away and its use would need to be promoted by the school. It is likely that at this distance it would be more attractive to parents of junior age children. It has the advantage of offering off road parking. If it were not available, a potential outcome would be a higher level of on street parking beyond the 200m zone, including on Lyne Lane in the direction of the village hall.
- 54 It is proposed that the vehicular access to the site is moved from the centre of the existing building to a location approximately 15m north. This will provide access to the staff car park only. It has been demonstrated that adequate visibility for the speed limit of 30mph can be provided which is an improvement over the existing situation. Some of the hedge

will need to be cut back or removed and replaced to the south of the new access in order to provide the visibility. The old vehicular access to the site will become the new main pedestrian access to the school. There is currently inadequate space within the site for service vehicles to enter the site and this situation will continue with refuse collection vehicles and delivery vehicles servicing the site from the public highway. There is some concern in respect of the quantity of staff parking associated with the proposal. There are only 8 spaces proposed for 28 staff, currently there are 6 spaces for 20 staff. Any overspill staff parking will have to be on-street or in the church car park thus reducing the available parking for parents. The management of staff travel and parking will also need to be included in the Travel Plan.

- 55 It is proposed that a 20m length of parking restrictions be introduced on the bend to the north of the school to prevent parking and to ensure that there is a passing place for vehicles. The Parking Team have not expressed any concerns in respect of this. This will also slightly reduce available on-street parking by 3 or 4 spaces but it will improve traffic flow on Lyne Lane during school pick up and drop off and officers consider it to be a desirable mitigation.
- 56 Planning and highways officers consider that notwithstanding the uncertainty over the use of the village hall car park, the above represents a package of transport mitigation measures proportionate to the anticipated potential traffic and parking impacts. The package has been improved upon in the course of their evaluation of the application. The measures can in the main be secured by the imposition of conditions. While it is likely that the village hall will play some part in the overall mitigation of impact, there remains some uncertainty about whether this can be formally agreed. It would not, therefore be appropriate at this stage to make that element the subject of a condition. Taking into account these measures, the fact that the impact is an incremental one at a site where an existing school already gives rise to a significant number of car trips, and the short duration of existing and future impacts, officers do not consider that the residual cumulative impact, equivalent to additional parking demand of less than 35 cars for two short periods each day, is so severe as to justify the refusal of permission.

Flooding and Drainage

Runnymede Borough Local Plan Second Alteration 2001

Policy SV2 – Flooding

- 57 Local Plan Policy SV2 resists development in areas liable to flood unless the development can be shown not to impede the flow of flood water, reduce the capacity of the floodplain to store water or increase the number of people and properties at risk of flooding. Para 103 of the NPPF states that when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure flood risk is not increased elsewhere, informed as necessary in flood risk areas by a Flood Risk Assessment.
- 58 The site lies within Flood Zone 1 and is at low risk of fluvial flooding. The Flood Services Manager reports that there are no recent records of past actual flooding. However the ditch running through the site constitutes an ordinary water course, and surface water from buildings and hard surfaces on the site discharge to it. Downstream of the open ditch in the school site, the watercourse is already culverted under the school field, and upstream where it runs under the road. In order that the risk of flooding is not increased elsewhere, the Flood and Water Services Manager considers that the capacity of the culvert proposed

to replace the ditch should be at least as great as the existing culverted section, with provision made for suitable access to the new section of culvert for maintenance. These details would be secured through the separate application for Land Drainage Consent which would be required. The existing culvert has been identified as 375mm diameter, while the application plans show a new section of box culvert 1000 mm x 800 mm, significantly larger than that downstream. In principle, the requirements of planning policy to avoid the creation of new flood risks have been satisfied, and the details will be secured through other legislative mechanisms.

- 59 The application involves a greater area of buildings than at present, but these are located in the main in areas where there are existing hard surfaces, limiting any potential increases in surface water run off. The applicants propose that new play areas and car parks proposed be finished in porous tarmac, and that the proposed hall extension would discharge to a soakaway. Residual increases in volume of surface water to be disposed of would be attenuated by the storage capacity created by the large size of the box culvert.

**Harm to the Green Belt and Consideration of Very Special Circumstances
Runnymede Borough Local Plan Second Alteration 2001
Policy GB1 – Development Within the Green Belt
National Planning Policy Framework 2012 – paras 87 and 88**

- 60 Local Plan Policy GB1 states that there will be a strong presumption against development in the Green Belt which would conflict with the purpose of the green belt or adversely affect its open character. NPPF para 87 states that development which is inappropriate should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Para 88 states that very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
- 61 The Schools Commissioning Officer has set out what he consider to be very special circumstances for the expansion of this school in the Green Belt, in a supporting statement setting out the educational need for the proposal. The suggested VSCs can be summarised as follows;
- the County Council projects demand for school places in reception (YR) and year 3(YR3) based on data on birth rates, migration and demand arising from new housing data supplied by the Borough Council
 - this shows demand for YR places in Runnymede as a whole rising from 807 in school year 2011/12 to 912 in 2024/25. Equivalent figures for Y3 places are 722 rising to 916
 - The County Council has increased the number of places at Darley Dene Infant School (Addlestone), Trumps Green Infant School (Virginia Water), St Ann's Heath Junior School and Thorpe C of E Infant School)
 - Further expansions are being promoted at The Hythe Primary School,(Egham), Sayes Court Primary School (Addlestone) and Lyne and Longcross.
 - If all expansions in both the above categories are implemented, supply of places of 910 at YR and 900 at Y3 would be achieved by 2019/20. They are all therefore required to meet the forecast demand for places and avoid the risk of the authority being unable to fulfil its statutory duties to ensure the provision of sufficient places
 - Comparison of forecast demand for places in 2013 and actual numbers on roll suggest the figures may underestimate demand.
 - The borough is divided into 5 planning areas for school place planning purposes. Although Lyne and Longcross is located in the Virginia Water and Englefield Green

planning area, in practice it has a dispersed catchment, with the majority of pupils being drawn from the Chertsey and Addlestone and Ottershaw planning areas. However, most of its pupils at Y3 move on to St Ann's Heath Junior School in Virginia Water

- In addition to contributing to the overall supply of places, this proposal would produce a better balance between community and church school places, with an all through Cof E primary on the application, freeing up Y3 places at the St Anns Heath Community Junior School for pupils at Meadowcroft Community Infant School who currently do not have a clear route to a junior place.
- The proposal is therefore an integral part of a package of proposals to increase the number of places available across the borough.
- It also meets SCC policy that where capital is to be invested to meet basic education need, opportunities should be taken to create all through primary provision
- There are educational, financial and parental choice advantages to all through primary schools; they offer a seamless transition from Key Stage 1 (infant) to Key stage 2 (junior), avoiding a performance dip resulting from changing schools, and improving progress tracking and assessment of individual pupils; it is expected that small single form of entry infant schools will find it harder to be financially viable as funding arrangements more closely reflect numbers on roll; and all through primaries are popular with parents as they reduce the risk of siblings attending different schools and when applying at YR they give certainty of a place through to Year 6.
- There are major housing proposals for the former DERA site at Longcross comprising a planning application for 200 houses at the north site. The longer term proposal for a further 1300 houses on the DERA south site would be large enough for a new school to form part of the proposals, but appropriate provision needs to be made at schools local to the DERA site (including Lyne and Longcross) to address the impact of the north site proposals in the meantime.
- Nevertheless, reflecting the school's existing catchment, other options for delivering an equivalent number of places at other sites in the Chertsey and Addlestone and Ottershaw planning areas have been considered;
 - Creation of 1 FE primary on existing Meadowcroft Infant site: Meadowcroft is too small a site at 0.48 ha to provide suitable play space for junior age pupils. Lyne and Longcross is also small, but at 0.75ha is significantly larger than Meadowcroft.
 - Additional Junior intake at Ottershaw Junior School: This site is also in Green Belt, but on the edge of the urban area where harm to green belt might be considered less than on the Lyne and Longcross site. However, Ottershaw is a church school and not a county owned site, and proposals to expand it were rejected by the diocese. In those circumstances the County Council is unable to compel the school to expand
 - Pycroft Grange Primary: Provide additional junior places. Providing additional expansion here would not reflect parental preference. Having different PANs at YR (Key Stage 1) and Y3 (Key Stage 2) within a single primary school is not educationally coherent. The site is large enough and in an urban area, but in a high flood risk zone.
 - Stepgates Primary; add junior places to existing 1FE primary. The site is undersized for its existing 1FE and size constraints would be exacerbated. As with Pycroft Grange, disadvantages of split PAN at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

The Schools Commissioning officer's statement is reproduced in full as an ANNEXE to this report.

- 62 The applicant considers that parental preferences are factor which should be given great weight in putting together a package of proposals to address the forecast need. The petition received in support of the proposal also sets store by qualitative benefits of the

proposal. In the circumstances, giving weight to these considerations where another site physically capable of taking the required expansion is justified under para 72 of the NPPF.

- 63 The development is contained within the part of the existing site which is already substantially developed. Buildings do not encroach onto the undeveloped part of the school site containing its playing field. The extensions to the existing school hall and 'Homelodge' buildings are relatively minor and add only marginally to the impact these buildings have on the openness of the Green Belt. On their own, these elements would not be considered inappropriate development under para 89 of the NPPF.
- 64 However, the new building would have a footprint approximately 93% than the existing main building and 62% larger than the aggregate of the two buildings to be demolished. The harm to the Green Belt should, however, be considered in the context of the hall / kitchen building to the rear of the existing Victorian building. The hall is a substantial building, with a larger footprint than the original Victorian building. The overall net increase in the footprint of all buildings on the site as a result of the development would be 53%. The percentage increase in floorspace would be greater than this given the two storey nature of the main element, the new classroom building. It would be higher, wider and deeper than the building it directly replaces. Officers therefore consider that the development would be more prominent and have a substantial impact on the openness of the Green Belt, but only in its immediate context. This aspect of harm is therefore given only moderate weight. The building would be contained within the developed part of the school's existing curtilage, and it is not considered to add to sprawl or the coalescence of settlements. The primary impression of the site, that of a long-established developed site embedded within the Green Belt, to which substantial new buildings have been added in recent years, is not altered to any significant degree and overall harm to the Green Belt is limited.
- 65 Officers consider that the need to provide additional school places in the area and the role which Lyne and Longcross would play as part of the package of proposals which addresses not only the number of places required but also the balance between infant and junior places and issues of choice and preference which would not be address by expansion at other schools in the area (as set out in para 61 above) constitute very special circumstances of sufficient weight to outweigh the harm due to inappropriateness and other harm.
- 66 The development involves in total approximately 930m² gross new floorspace. It does not therefore fall within the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009, which requires development which is inappropriate development in the Green Belt and involves new buildings of more than 1000m² to be referred to the Secretary of State .

HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

- 67 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.
- 68 In this case, the Officer's view is that while potential impacts on amenity caused by traffic 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

69 The development constitutes inappropriate development in the Green Belt which causes harm to openness but does not affect the visual amenity of the Green Belt or the purposes of including land in Green Belts. Very special circumstances are considered to exist in the form of the contribution made by the proposal to a package of school development proposals addressing numerical, structural and choice aspects of the need for additional school places in Runnymede borough. These are considered to outweigh harm due to inappropriateness and other harm to the Green Belt. Other harm, in terms of the amenity impacts of traffic and parking and on trees and hedges can be reduced to acceptable levels by mitigation measures proposed and secured through appropriate conditions. Relevant planning policy consideration have been addressed and the development can therefore be permitted.

RECOMMENDATION

That, pursuant to Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992, application no. RU2014/0464 be PERMITTED subject to the following conditions;

Conditions:

1. The development to which this permission relates shall be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.
2. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in all respects strictly in accordance with the following plans/drawings:

5067 E-01 rev. A	Existing Site and Location Plans, dated 14/03/14
E-02	Topo and Services Surveys, dated September 2013
E-03	Existing Plans, undated.
E-04	Existing Elevations to be retained, undated
E-05	Existing Elevations to be demolished, undated.
P-01 rev. A	Proposed Site and Construction Plans, dated 14/03/14
P-02	Demolition Plan, undated.
P-04	Proposed Culvert Plan and sections, undated
P-10	Proposed Ground Floor Plan, undated
P-11	Proposed First Floor plan, undated.
P-12	Proposed Roof Plan, undated
P-13	Proposed Hall Extension Plan, undated.
P-14	Proposed Hall Roof Plan, undated.
P-15	Proposed Nursery Extension Plan, undated.
P-20 rev. A	Proposed West and South Elevations, dated 14/03/14.

P-21 rev. A	Proposed East and North Elevations, dated 14/03/14.
P-22	Proposed Hall extension Elevations, undated.
P-23	Proposed Nursey Extension elevations, undated.
P-30	Proposed Ground and First Floor Plans, undated
2000 rev W-4	Proposed external Works and drainage Plan, dated 22/07/14.

3. The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until the proposed vehicular access to Lyne Lane has been constructed and provided with visibility zones in accordance with the details shown on drawing number 5067/2000 revision W-4 and thereafter the visibility zones shall be kept permanently clear of any obstruction over 1.05m high.

4. The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied unless and until space has been laid out within the site in accordance with the details contained in drawing number 5067/2000/W-4 for staff vehicles to be parked. Thereafter the parking area shall be retained and maintained free from any impediment to its designated purpose.

5. The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until a Construction Transport Management Plan, to include details of:
 - a) parking of vehicles for site personnel, operatives and visitors;
 - b) loading and unloading of plant and materials;
 - c) storage of plant and materials;
 - d) programme of works;
 - e) measures to prevent the deposit of materials on the highway;
 - f) vehicle routing;
 - g) on-site turning for construction vehicles;
 - h) traffic management
 has been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. Only the approved details shall be implemented during the construction of the development.

6. In carrying out the development hereby permitted, between the hours of 8.30 and 9.15 am and 3.15 and 4.00 pm there shall be no vehicle movements to or from the application site in connection with construction work being carried out on the site, nor shall the contractor permit any vehicles associated with the development at the site to be laid up, waiting, in Lyne Lane or Longcross Road during these times.

7. The School Travel Plan Version 3 dated July 2014 shall be updated prior to and implemented on the first occupation of the development hereby permitted. The updated plan shall include provisions for the plan to be maintained, monitored and developed in accordance with details for its review which have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority.

8. The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied unless and until the parking restrictions as generally shown on drawing number TSP/DHP/P2550/14 (Appendix F of the revised Transportation Statement dated July 2014) have been designed and fully implemented.

9. The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied unless and until the improvements to the Church Car Park as shown generally on drawing number TSP/DHP/P2550/11 revision

B (Appendix E to the revised transportation statement dated July 2014) have been subject to detailed design and fully implemented

10. The applicant shall ensure the operation of a walking bus to and from the car park of the adjoining church at all morning and afternoon school drop off and pick up times.
11. The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied unless and until details of,
 - a.) a replacement for the walnut tree at the front of the school site to be felled as part of the development proposals and
 - b.) a replacement hedge along the site's frontage to Lyne Lanehave been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The submitted details shall include planting plans; written specifications for operations associated with tree or shrub planting, schedules of trees shrubs and plants noting species, sizes positions and proposed numbers / densities and an implementation programme.
12. Replacement tree and hedge planting in accordance with the details approved pursuant to condition 11 above 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 the programme approved under that condition, whichever is the later. Thereafter those features 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 County 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.
13. The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced unless and until details and samples of the proposed materials to be used on the external surfaces of the buildings proposed have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. Only the approved details shall be implemented.
14.
 - a.) Before any equipment, machinery or materials are brought onto the site for the purposes of carrying out the development hereby permitted, protective fencing in accordance with the details contained in Appendices C and E of the Arboricultural Method Statement dated 03/02/14 submitted with the application shall be installed and shall thereafter be maintained until all equipment, machinery and surplus materials have been removed from the site. For the duration of works on the site no materials, plant or equipment shall be placed or stored within the protected area.
 - b.) The development shall be carried out in all respects in full accordance with all other measures to protect trees during construction set out in Appendix F of the Arboricultural Method Statement dated 03/02/14 submitted with the application.
15. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the precautionary measures to avoid harm to bats set out in para 5.8 of the Ecological assessment dated October 2013 submitted with the application

Reasons:

1. To comply with Section 91 (1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 (1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.
3. In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users pursuant to Policy MV4 of the Runnymede Borough Local Plan Second Alteration 2001.
4. In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users pursuant to Policies MV4 and MV9 of the Runnymede Borough Local Plan Second Alteration 2001.
5. In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users, and in the interests of the residential amenities of the area pursuant to Policy MV4 of the Runnymede Borough Local Plan Second Alteration 2001.
6. In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users, and in the interests of the residential amenities of the area pursuant to Policy MV4 of the Runnymede Borough Local Plan Second Alteration 2001.
7. to ensure mitigation of the transport impacts of the proposal in order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users, and in the interests of the residential amenities of the area pursuant to Policy MV4 of the Runnymede Borough Local Plan Second Alteration 2001.
- 8.
9. To ensure mitigation of the transport impacts of the proposal in order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users, and in the interests of the residential amenities of the area pursuant to Policy MV4 of the Runnymede Borough Local Plan Second Alteration 2001.
10. to ensure mitigation of the transport impacts of the proposal in order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users, and in the interests of the residential amenities of the area pursuant to Policy MV4 of the Runnymede Borough Local Plan Second Alteration 2001.
11. In the interests of the visual amenities of the site and area pursuant to Policy NE12 of the Runnymede Borough Local Plan Second Alteration 2001.
12. In the interests of the visual amenities of the site and area pursuant to Policy NE12 of the Runnymede Borough Local Plan Second Alteration 2001.
13. In the interests of the character and appearance of the site and area and to secure a high quality of design pursuant to paras 17 and 58 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.
14. In the interests of the visual amenities of the site and area pursuant to Policy NE12 of the Runnymede Borough Local Plan Second Alteration 2001.

15. To minimise the risk of harm to European Protected Species, pursuant to Policy NE20 of the Runnymede Borough Local Plan Second Alteration 2001.

Informatives:

1. The attention of the applicant is drawn to the requirements of Sections 7 and 8 of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 and to Building Bulletin 102 'Designing for disabled children and children with Special Educational Needs' published in 2008 on behalf of the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, or any prescribed document replacing that note.
2. This approval relates only to the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and must not be taken to imply or be construed as an approval under the Building Regulations 2000 or for the purposes of any other statutory provision whatsoever.
3. The County Planning Authority confirms that in assessing this planning application it has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive way, in line with the requirements of paragraph 186-187 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.
4. The applicant is reminded that, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended (Section 1), it is an offence to remove, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or is being built. Planning consent for a development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this Act.

Trees and scrub are likely to contain nesting birds between 1st March and 31st August inclusive. Trees and scrub are present on the application site and are assumed to contain nesting birds between the above dates, unless a recent survey has been undertaken by a competent ecologist to assess the nesting bird activity during this period and shown it is absolutely certain that nesting birds are not present

5. Details of the highway requirements necessary for inclusion in any application seeking approval of reserved matters may be obtained from the Transportation Development Control Division of Surrey County Council.
6. The permission hereby granted shall not be construed as authority to carry out any works on the highway. The applicant is advised that prior approval must be obtained from the Highway Authority before any works are carried out on any footway, footpath, carriageway, or verge to form a vehicle crossover or to install dropped kerbs. Please see www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/road-permits-and-licences/vehicle-crossovers-or-dropped-kerbs.
7. 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).
8. 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.

9. Section 59 of the Highways Act permits the Highway Authority to charge developers for damage caused by excessive weight and movements of vehicles to and from a site. The Highway Authority will pass on the cost of any excess repairs compared to normal maintenance costs to the applicant/organisation responsible for the damage.
10. The applicant is advised that the County Planning Authority and County Highway Authority consider that the applicant should seek to secure a formal agreement to secure the use of the village car park by parents and as a base for walking bus and/or park and stride arrangements promoted through the school's travel plan.
11. The applicant's attention is drawn to the fact the proposed culverting of the ditch running through the site requires the separate grant of Land Drainage Consent, which should be sought from the County Council through the Flood and Water Services Manager, Merrow Depot, Merrow Lane, Guildford GU4 7BQ

CONTACT

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020 8541 9438

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The deposited application documents and plans, including those amending or clarifying the proposal, responses to consultations and representations received as referred to in the report and included in the application file and the following:

Government Guidance: National Planning Policy Framework 2012

The Development Plan: Runnymede Borough Local Plan Second Alteration 2001

Supporting Statement

Proposed expansion of Lyne and Longcross to become a 1 form entry Primary School from September 2015

8

The Proposal

1. Surrey County Council, in partnership with the Diocese of Guildford and the Governors of Lyne and Longcross Primary School, are proposing to expand the school from a 1 form entry infant school (capacity of 90 pupils) to a 1 form entry primary school (capacity 210 pupils) from September 2015.

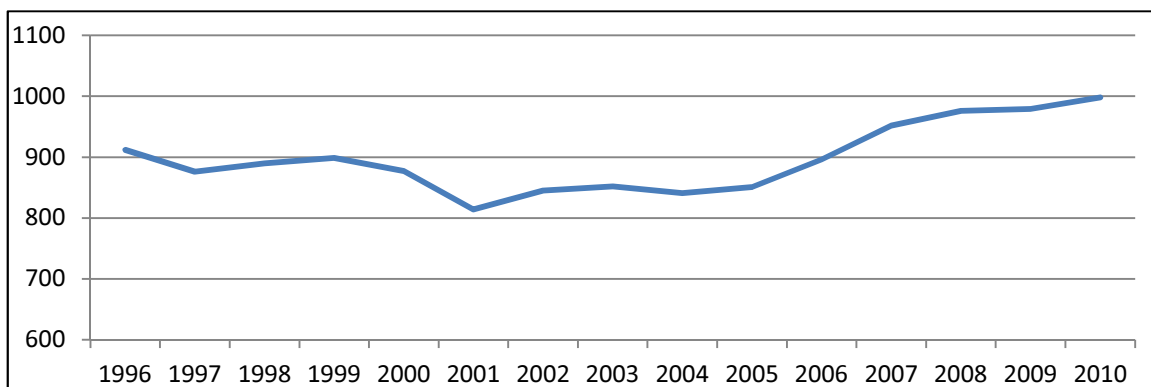
Planned / recent expansions

2. The Local Authority has a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places in Surrey. Demand for school places has increased significantly in Runnymede in recent years. Expansions have been recently commissioned at a number of primary schools in Runnymede including Darley Dene Infant School, Trumps Green Infant School, St Ann's Heath Junior School and Thorpe Church of England Infant School. Even with these additional reception and junior places, most primary schools in Runnymede were full in 2013 with additional demand expected in the future.
3. Further expansions are being consulted upon and are at various stages of the planning process:
 - a. The Hythe Primary School – 1 to 2 forms of entry
 - b. Sayes Court Primary School – 1 to 2 forms of entry
 - c. Lyne and Longcross – proposal to expand from 1fe infant to 1fe primary school

Need for additional school places – Overview of Runnymede

4. There are a number of different factors that can affect the demand for school places in an area. The most important is the birth and fertility rates in an area. Based on figures provided by the Office for National Statistics, births in Runnymede dipped from 1996 to a low point in 2001. Births then rose a little before flattening out until 2005. Births have risen since 2006 to just under a 1000. It should be noted that the recent increases in applications are unlikely to be the result of the number of births alone. There are other factors such as additional pupils from housing growth, inward and outward migration, parental preferences and the changing percentage of parents applying for independent or private provision - all of which can affect the number of applications in any given year making application yields difficult to model.

Chart 1 – Births in Runnymede (ONS)



- Table 1 below shows the demand profile the Local Authority is working to in Runnymede. It identifies the total number of available primary places in Reception in Runnymede (the PAN) and assumes that all of the expansions identified in paragraphs 2 and 3 are delivered (hence the increasing number of reception and junior places identified in the table). The table compares the projected pupils in reception year and Year 3 (the intake years being planned for) against the additional places being planned for. This provides an indication of whether these expansions will provide sufficient places (a negative figure in the spare column identifies a shortage of places). The projections include the estimated pupil yield from additional housing in the Borough based on the housing trajectories provided by Runnymede Borough Council.
- It should be noted that the projected number in 2013 for reception places of 849 proved to be an underestimate with about 890 children on roll at a Runnymede school in this academic year based on the 2013 Annual School Census. Consequently, the projection of year 3 places in 2016 is likely to be an underestimate as well. Despite natural fluctuations in numbers, the Local Authority is of the view that the expansion projects identified in paragraphs 2 and 3 above are required in order to meet the demand for school places in the longer term (to 2020). These plans are expected to allow for a few unfilled places which will be needed for in year applications and any potential inward migration. Should any of the projects not deliver then it is likely that there will be a pressure on school places threatening the Local Authority's ability to fulfill its statutory duties. Although 2014 numbers on roll data is not available at this stage (school census data is collected in October), it would appear from early admissions data that the projections for year R and Year 3 places as set out in the table below is broadly in line with that projected.

Table 1 - 2012 Primary Projection for Runnymede

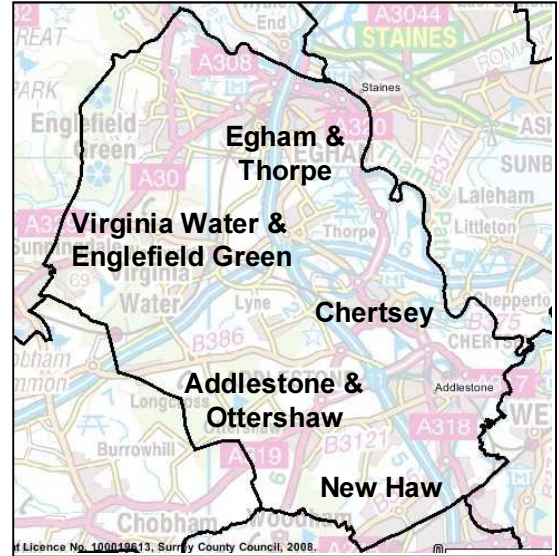
	PAN	Spare	YR	Y1	Y2	I	JunPl	JSpare	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	J
2011/2012	818	11	807	790	731	2328	716	-6	722	738	670	683	2813
2012/2013	848	15	833	825	785	2443	716	-7	723	717	732	666	2838
2013/2014	910	61	849	848	819	2516	782	7	775	717	709	726	2927
2014/2015	880	26	854	865	841	2560	810	1	809	767	709	703	2988
2015/2016	880	16	864	873	861	2598	840	8	832	804	760	705	3101
2016/2017	910	32	878	889	876	2643	900	43	857	833	803	760	3253
2017/2018	910	18	892	904	891	2687	870	0	870	857	831	802	3360
2018/2019	910	14	896	914	902	2712	870	-11	881	867	852	826	3426
2019/2020	910	-5	915	916	910	2741	900	11	889	876	859	845	3469
2020/2021	910	-20	930	934	910	2774	900	3	897	883	867	852	3499
2021/2022	910	-8	918	949	928	2795	900	4	896	891	874	860	3521
2022/2023	910	-5	915	937	943	2795	900	-14	914	890	882	867	3553

2023/2024	910	-4	914	934	931	2779	900	-28	928	908	881	875	3592
2024/2025	910	-2	912	933	928	2773	900	-16	916	922	899	874	3611

Need for additional school places in the Local Area

8

7. The need for places is not uniform across the Borough. The Local Authority projects the need for school places based on planning areas. Lyne and Longcross is in the Virginia Water and Englefield Green Planning Area but in practice serves a relatively dispersed catchment including pupils living in Addlestone, Ottershaw and Chertsey (see Appendix A for a map of primary schools in Runnymede and Appendix B for a map of the schools existing catchment).



8. It is not unusual for schools to serve areas that are outside of their immediate planning areas, particularly those schools located on the periphery of a number of different town locations as in the case of Lyne and Longcross. Whilst, the number of pupils accessing the school will increase if the proposal proceeds (120 more pupils), it is unlikely that such a proposal would significantly affect the nature of the catchment area that the school currently serves as it will simply mean that parents continue at the school into KS2 provision.
9. As well as the location of pupils, there are a number of other factors that the Local Authority needs to consider when developing school organisation proposals. These are summarised below:

SCC Policy on Primary Provision

10. Whenever there is a case to invest capital into school to meet basic need, the Local Authority will always consider opportunities to create primary provision in line with SCC policy. Primary Schools (rather than separate infant and junior provision) is the Local Authority's preferred model for education. Given the need for additional junior places there is an opportunity to create primary provision at Lyne and Longcross. The school is rated by Ofsted as a 'good' infant school but the Local Authority believes that it can continue on to become 'outstanding' as a primary school for the following reasons:

- a. Seamless transition from Key Stage 1 (infant) to Key Stage 2 (Junior)
- b. Improved pupil tracking and pupil assessment
- c. Greater opportunities for curriculum development through greater resources
- d. Better opportunities for staff CPD – better recruitment and retention of quality staff
- e. Financially more viable as a bigger school – this is a key issue as small one form entry infant schools will find it increasingly difficult to operate in the future as funding changes more closely follow numbers on roll in the future.

Existing pattern of school provision

11. The majority of pupils at Lyne and Longcross infant school currently ‘feed’ St Ann’s Heath Junior School. This proposal means that they would continue into Year 3 places at Lyne and Longcross freeing up about 30 year 3 places at St Ann’s Heath. The places created at St Ann’s Heath Junior School will provide junior school places for pupils currently attending Meadowcroft Infant School (identified on the map in Appendix A) who currently have no route through to Year 3 provision. In addition to the benefits to Lyne and Longcross, this proposal provides some certainty in progression routes to Year 3 provision for Meadowcroft Infant School, which will help to stabilise what is also a very small infant school. It will also link community schools together (Meadowcroft and St Ann’s Heath Junior) whilst at the same time meeting the Local Authority’s duty to ensure that additional Church of England school places are also provided as part of the response to basic need pressures. On this basis, the proposal is coherent within the existing pattern of schools in the area.

Parental Preferences

12. These proposals are in line with what parents want. A public consultation based on the educational merits of the proposal (as distinct from planning issues) was undertaken on this proposal in November 2013. 76% of respondents agreed that more junior places are needed in the area and 91% agreed that an expansion of Lyne and Longcross is the preferable solution.

Additional demand from Housing

13. The Borough Council has identified the former DERA site as a new settlement. The North site application includes proposals for up to 200 dwellings. The longer term proposal is to develop the South site as well with a further 1300 dwellings being planned. Should the south site application be approved new primary school provision will be needed to serve this new settlement but this provision is not likely to come forward for some time. In the mean time the North site development will progress (subject to the current referral to the Government Office South East) creating pressure on school places in the area in advance of the wider development. Providing additional places at Lyne and Longcross and converting the school to a primary school will help mitigate the risk of insufficient school places in the area resulting from the early delivery of the North site in relation to the south site (when new primary provision will be provided).

Travel and Transport

14. With the school increasing its capacity from 90 to 210 (phased over 4 years) there will be additional traffic generated by the proposal. However, some of the additional journeys will be mitigated by the number of families that will no longer have to pick up and drop off at separate infant and junior school provision.

15. Cohorts of pupils joining Lyne and Longcross in 2011, 2012 and 2013 have been assessed to understand how many children in the infant school have older siblings. This gives an indication of how many pupils would have a sibling in another junior school and hence how many journeys would be saved assuming that parents would choose to have both siblings at Lyne and Longcross rather than picking up from separate infant and junior school provision. The true number of journeys saved by becoming a primary school will change year on year but based on a three year average, for each reception class joining the school, 11.3 pupils will have older siblings that have either left or would be leaving that would otherwise remain at the school as a primary school. On this basis and with 3 cohorts of pupils in Lyne and Longcross in Key Stage 1 (years R-2) this means that up to 34 journeys to and from infant and junior provision would be saved each day should the school become a primary school in the future.
16. This will mitigate the potential impact of the school expanding with additional measures to reduce the traffic and parking burden on local residents as set out in the School's Travel Plan. This includes proposals to share parking facilities with the local Church and to set up a walking bus to reduce the number of parents having to park near the school.

Site Location

17. Lyne and Longcross is located in the Green Belt. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) contains a general presumption against inappropriate development within the Green Belt. NPPF guidance is that such development should not be approved, except in very special circumstances. What would constitute very special circumstances is not specified by the NPPF as this is clearly related to the use of any development being proposed. The Local Authority has considered a number of different proposals to provide additional places at other schools in the local area. A summary of why these proposals are not possible / desirable is set out in the table below:

School / Site	Option	Commentary
Meadowcroft Infant School	Provide additional junior places by expanding to 1fe Primary School on existing site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At 4,800m², the existing school site is considered too small for additional development in terms of playing field provision for junior age pupils. Although also small, Lyne and Longcross' site at 7,500m² is considered to be more viable for primary school provision.
Meadowcroft Infant School	Expand school by creating a 0.5fe primary school on existing site. This would change the capacity of the school from a 90 place infant school to a 105 place primary school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site would still be constrained Would reduce available reception places at a time when more places are needed. Would not attract basic need funding because it is providing minimal additional places. (e.g. it would only provide net 15 additional places because the capacity of the school
Ottershaw Junior School	Provide additional junior places by creating additional junior intake on existing school site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ottershaw Infant and Junior school lies in the Green Belt so any harm to the Green Belt would not be avoided through this proposal. However, given that it is more closely

		<p>located to the urban area and more likely to be acceptable in planning terms, proposals for additional places were considered but rejected by the Diocese of Guildford and the Governing Body of the school in June 2013.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As the school land is not owned by SCC it cannot force such proposals through. • A 'split year expansion' where there are more KS2 places than KS1 places is educationally less coherent.
<p>Pyncroft Grange Primary School</p>	<p>Provide additional junior places by creating additional junior intake on existing school site.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing additional junior places at this school would not be in line with parental preferences in the area. • A 'split year expansion' where there are more KS2 places than KS1 places is educationally less coherent. • Pyncroft Grange lies in Flood Zone 3. Where possible development should be avoided. • The site is large enough for additional primary provision. The Local Authority would wish to retain this site for additional KS1 and KS2 provision in the medium to longer term should it be required as a result of Local Borough's emerging Local Plan.
<p>Stepgates Primary School</p>	<p>Provide additional junior places by creating additional junior intake on existing school site.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At 8,852m² the school is already undersize for a 1fe primary. Any further development of KS2 provision would be difficult to deliver on a constrained site. • A 'split year expansion' where there are more KS2 places than KS1 places is educationally less coherent.

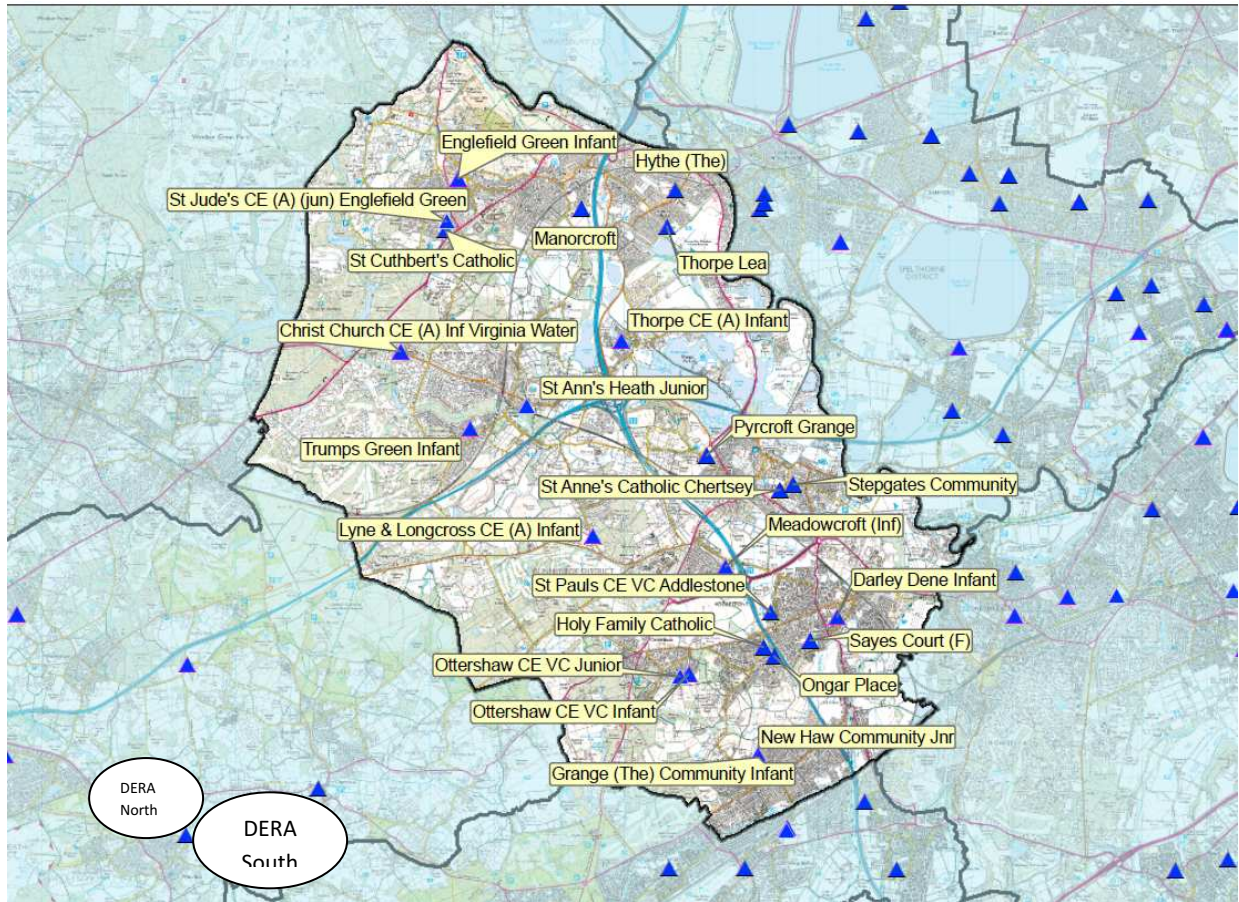
Conclusion

18. Officers are of the view that the additional junior places are necessary in order for the Local Authority to meet its statutory duties to provide sufficient school places. The proposal to create primary provision from a basic need case is based on school organisation principles set out in the School Organisation Plan (2012) and although the school is located in a rural area, this proposal is unlikely to change the existing catchment of the school. By creating primary provision pupils will be able to stay on at the school to access Key Stage 2 provision which will help to mitigate the additional journeys resulting from the school growing in size.

19. The proposal makes good strategic sense, is in line with parental preferences, coherent in terms of the pattern of provision elsewhere in the Borough and will strengthen and safeguard the ongoing sustainability of what is currently a very vulnerable and small infant school.

20. Whilst the school is located in the Green Belt, alternative options to meeting the additional demand have been carefully considered and are not possible/preferable for the reasons given above. Officers are of the view that the proposals are necessary and demonstrate very special circumstances outweighing the potential harm to the Green Belt.

Appendix A – Primary Schools in Runnymede



Note: For the purposes of producing the projection, Meadowcroft Infant School is treated as being in the Addlestone/Ottershaw Planning area

Appendix B – School 'catchment' for Lyne and Longcross Primary School

