





Planning Statement – Dover Boys and Girls Grammar Schools

1. Purpose of this Document

- 1.1. This Planning Statement is in support of an application for Outline Planning Permission with Some Matters Reserved by Kent County Council Building Schools for the Future (BSF).

2. The Application

- 2.1. The application is for the development and operation of a new secondary school that will bring together Dover Boys Grammar School and Dover Girls Grammar School on a single site. The resulting secondary school development, Dover Boys and Girls Grammar Schools, will operate as two schools with shared facilities. The application also includes for the development and operation of two new vehicle entrance ways and two new pedestrian entrance points, all from Melbourne Avenue. The vehicle entrances will operate together as a one way system, with 'in only' and 'out only' designations for the western and eastern entrances respectively.
- 2.2. The application is for Use and Access, with Layout, Scale, Appearance and Landscaping being Reserved at this time.

3. Reason for the Application

- 3.1. Kent County Council under the Building Schools for the Future Programme, established in 2006, aims to refresh, renew or rebuild all of Kent's secondary schools over a 10 to 15 year period. Under this programme the two existing separate Dover Boys Grammar School and Dover Girls Grammar School were surveyed to determine necessary works to bring it to the standard necessary for it to achieve the education vision set out in Kent County Council's "Nurturing Autonomous and Creative Learners: the Kent Secondary Strategy" document.
- 3.2. It has been determined that for both of these schools to achieve this vision and their own specific education vision and outcomes (detailed in the submitted Design and Access Statement) it would be necessary for each school to be 100% rebuilt.

3.3. Both Dover Boys Grammar School and Dover Girls Grammar School have a history of working closely together, and have a strong desire to see this relationship develop further (see the education vision for each school outlined in the attached Design and Access Statement) to the educational benefit of their pupils.

3.4. Building Bulletin 98: Briefing Framework for Secondary School Projects (BB98), published by the Department for Education and Skills, sets a series of standards for the provision of buildings and facilities for secondary schools. The Head Teachers and the senior management teams of both schools have undertaken a series of exercises with the Kent County Council BSF team to determine the number of pupils to be accommodated in the new facility, the education vision for the new school and what that means in terms of a schedule of accommodation that meets the BB98 standards. It is the outcome of these consultation exercises that has driven the requirement for a certain minimum built area and minimum site size.

3.5. Kent County Council BSF therefore determined that it was necessary to identify a new site for the schools, where sufficient space was available to meet the required design standards.

4.0. The Development

- 4.1. The proposed site for the new Dover Boys and Girls Grammar Schools is on Melbourne Avenue in Dover, Kent. The 10.27 ha site is located immediately adjacent to the existing Archer's Court School to the east.
- 4.2. The site is currently in agricultural use, planted in winter wheat by its existing owner. Kent County Council has entered into an agreement to purchase the site, subject to a successful outcome on the planning application.
- 4.3. Dover Boys Grammar School and Girls Grammar School are both selective secondary schools with Dover Boys Grammar School being a specialist Business and Enterprise College and in the case of Dover Girls Grammar School a specialist Humanities College. Dover Boys Grammar School currently has 713 pupils and 106 staff and Dover Girls Grammar School has 702 pupils and 98 staff.

4.4. The majority of pupils attending both schools come from the wider Dover area (See Catchment Map included in Appendix D of the Transport Assessment included as part of the application), with a large concentration of pupils coming from Deal and small concentrations of pupils from outlying villages and Folkestone. It is expected that the new Schools will have broadly similar vehicle traffic movements as it does at its current school.

4.5. The new Dover Boys and Girls Grammar Schools will provide education for approximately 1350 pupils aged 11 to 18 years. The new Schools will have approximately 166 full time equivalent staff members, including teachers, education support staff and specialists, support and administration staff.

4.6. The hours of operation for the education use at the Schools will be typically 6.00am to 11.00pm Monday to Friday. The hours of most intensive use will be from 6.00am to 7pm Monday to Friday. On Saturdays the Schools will be open from 9.00am to 12.30pm.

4.7. The Schools will be accessed via an existing road, Melbourne Avenue, for all modes of transport. Vehicles and buses will access the site via a one way system; the westernmost vehicle entrance providing ingress to the site and the easternmost proposed vehicle entrance provide egress from the site.

4.8. The Transport Assessment included with the application indicates that the majority of students will be brought to the Schools by dedicated bus.

4.9. Car parking will be provided for staff and visitors in broad compliance with the Kent County Council standard and that of the South East Plan -183 car park spaces, including 10 accessible car parking spaces. The car park will be located along the western edge of the site for the majority of staff and visitors, between the Archers Court School site and buildings and the proposed location of the new Dover Boys and Girls Grammar Schools buildings. This location was selected to minimise the visual impact of the car park area when viewed from Melbourne Avenue and from the wider Dover area. Furthermore, it is intended at this stage to landscape the car park area, and in parts use permeable paving blocks that allow grass to grow through, further reducing the visual impact of the car park.



4.10. The Schools propose to build approximately 13,000 sqm of buildings (gross internal floor area); this is divided into the following:

- Education buildings – 12,000 sqm
- Recreation buildings – 1,000 sqm

4.11. It is intended that the schools recreation facilities will be available for community use outside of core school hours. These facilities will be as follows:

- Gymnasium building
- Multi-use games area
- Sports fields

4.12. The education buildings will be a mix of one and two storeys in height, with the potential for some roof elements to extend to a height of three storeys in height (for example the internal recreation spaces and atria).

4.13. The proposed vehicle entrances will cross the existing public right of way that runs parallel to the southern boundary of the site, between the site and Melbourne Avenue. It is considered that this development and use will not adversely impact the ability of the public to make use of this facility.

5.0 Consultation

5.1 To date the following consultations have taken place

- Staff of Dover Boys Grammar School and Dover Girls Grammar School- a 3 month long consultation exercise and workshops has taken place with the Heads of the schools along with the senior management teams.
- Kent County Council Planning - meetings have been held with Jerry Crossley, Head of Planning, Kent County Council on 16 October 2009 and 12 November 2009 to discuss planning issues with respect to the new site
- Dover District Council – a meeting was held with Forward Planning, Development Control, Regeneration, Ecology and Landscape on 12 November 2009 to discuss issues surrounding the application on the site. Also correspondence

was had with Tim Flisher, Development Control Manager prior to the meeting and subsequent to the meeting on planning issues relating to site selection, development and education use and scale of development

- Kent County Council Education Services - a series of meetings have been held with Martyn Dole, Area Education Officer with respect to site selection

6.0 Relevant Planning Policy

The following policies are considered to be relevant to the application:

6.1.0 National Planning Policy

6.1.1 Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development 2005

It is considered that the proposed development accords with PPS1 as it will, through its use as for secondary schooling, support the communities of Dover, Deal and Folkestone and contribute to good access to education services. Furthermore as part of the Building Schools for the Future it will incorporate the highest standards of design and inclusivity and will efficiently use resources including conserving energy and water.

6.1.2 Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning for Town Centres 2005

Under the Building Schools for the Future programme schools are refurbished, refreshed or replaced. Having undertaken a stock analysis of both schools, their physical condition and educational needs it was recommended that both schools be 100% replaced (new build).

The Dover Girls Grammar School site is too small to allow the school to be rebuilt to the required standards set out in Building Bulletin 98: Briefing Framework for Secondary School Projects (BB98), published by the Department for Education and Skills. It therefore requires a new site. The Dover Boys Grammar School site is considered too topographically challenging to accommodate a 100% new build school, in order to meet the standards in BB98.

Both Dover Boys Grammar School and Dover Girls Grammar School have a history of working closely together, and have a strong desire to see this relationship develop further (see the education vision for each school outlined in the attached Design and Access Statement) to the educational benefit of their pupils. Whilst topographically challenging, the Dover Boys Grammar School site is too small to accommodate both schools in accordance with the BB98 standards, as a site of greater than 10 ha is required at a minimum.

A site search was undertaken in the early part of 2009 by Mouchel on behalf of Kent County Council BSF team. The site search could not identify any available, suitable (based on size, dimensions, access to a road with appropriate capacity and public transport provision and central to the existing catchment of pupils) site in a more central location than the application site on Melbourne Avenue.

As the application site is accessible by public transport (see the attached Transport Assessment) and given the wide catchment area of both schools (see the attached Transport Assessment) it is considered that the proposal will likely have no unacceptable impact on existing centre of Dover.

6.2.0 Regional Planning Policy

6.2.1 South East Plan 2009

- Policy CC1: Sustainable Development - The development of the new Dover Boys and Girls Grammar Schools will contribute to Sustainable Development in Kent by providing education services with a view to developing a healthy, just society.
- Policy CC2: Climate Change - To mitigate Climate Change it is intended that the buildings will be built with a high standard of energy efficiency. It is intended that the buildings that comprise the Schools meet the BREEAM 'Very Good' rating.
- Policy CC4: Sustainable Construction - The construction of all new buildings on the Dover Boys and Girls Grammar Schools site will adopt and incorporate sustainable construction standards and techniques. In particular the design of the buildings will seek to achieve high standards



of energy and water efficiency, increase the use of natural lighting, heat and ventilation and provide for the flexible use and adaptation of the buildings to reflect changing education needs. During the construction process it is intended that the recycling of construction and demolition waste and procurement of low-impact materials will occur.

- Policy CC5: Infrastructure and Implementation - It is considered that the necessary infrastructure required to serve the new Dover Boys and Girls Grammar Schools is available or is able to be provided as part of the development.
- Policy CC8a: Urban Focus and Urban Renaissance - The site is located outside of the urban area of Dover, but sits on its edge. It is located adjacent to an existing school – Archers School (which is to become an Academy) – and near to Melbourne Community Primary School, the Duke of York's Royal Military School and Guston Church of England Primary School. Together these form a future 'arc of education provision', a corridor of development devoted to education and a valuable community asset for Dover, Whitfield and the wider area. Indeed the programme of redevelopment of Archers School and Dover Boys and Girls Grammar Schools have been co-ordinated to ensure that no unnecessary duplication of facilities will occur.

Furthermore the two proposed extensions to Whitfield, that will generate some 6,000 additional homes will be able to be served by the new Dover Boys and Girls Grammar Schools, accessed in the future by a potential pedestrian link through the Whitecliffs Business Park. It should be noted that the extensions to Whitfield do not contain provision for a secondary school.

- Policy CC12: Character of the Environment and Quality Of Life - The proposed Schools will, by grouping the buildings together and placing them in the lowest part of the site and adjacent to Melbourne Avenue maintain the open character of the surrounding landscape. The Schools' playing fields will then be located to the north and eastern parts of the site, maintaining a landscape gap between the proposed new development and the Whitecliffs Business Park.

It is the intention of the Schools and the Building Schools for the Future team that the emphasis during the more detailed design phases be placed on creating a high quality

environment for learning, based on good design, innovation in education practice and building technology and sustainability.

- Policy NRM1: Sustainable Water Resources, Groundwater And River Water Quality Management - It is considered that the amount, type and location of the proposed development will not lead to unacceptable deterioration of water quality and is in step with current and planned provision of adequate water supply, sewerage and waste water treatment infrastructure capacity. Furthermore it is considered that the proposed school does not present a risk for pollution.
- Policy NRM4: Conservation And Improvement Of Biodiversity - A report assessing the impact of the proposal on biodiversity is included in the application.
- Policy EN1: Development Design For Energy Efficiency And Renewable Energy - It is intended that the buildings that will comprise the new Dover Boys and Girls Grammar Schools will reach high standards of energy efficiency. It is intended that the buildings that comprise the schools meet the BREEAM 'Very Good' rating. It is not intended to provide renewable energy supply on the site through the use of wind turbines.
- Policy C3: Landscape And Countryside Management - The proposed development, in locating the buildings closest to Melbourne Avenue and placing the playing fields to the north and west, will maintain the open landscape of the surrounding area.
- Policy BE1: Management For An Urban Renaissance - It is the intention of the Building Schools for the Future team to use design solutions that are relevant to Dover and open landscape context and which will build upon local character and distinctiveness and sense of place. Furthermore it is recognised that the site is visually prominent within Dover and it is therefore intended that the design of the buildings and the landscape will be sympathetic in materiality, form and composition to this fact. It is intended that the buildings will blend in with the landscape, whilst being of a very high standard of design and appearance.
- Policy S2: Full Life Costing Of Public Service Facilities - In considering the future of Dover Boys and Girls Grammar Schools under the Building Schools for the

Future programme the whole life costs of proposed works (including acquisition, operating and disposal costs), were considered and incorporated in the evaluation of the site location and in design options for the new Schools.

6.2.2 Kent Design Guide 2006

The design team intend to use the Kent Design Guide to provide advice and direction on the eventual layout and appearance of the proposed Schools and its supporting buildings and landscape.

6.3.0 Local Planning Policy

6.3.1 Dover District Local Plan 2002 (Saved Policies)

The application site is not identified for a specific purpose in the Dover District Local Plan (saved policies) and it sits outside of the settlement boundary of Dover. It is located in a Green Wedge and the Ground Water Protection Zone 1. Melbourne Avenue is identified as a Local Urban Route

- TR1 Whilst the site is located outside of, but adjacent to, the settlement boundary of Dover it will be served by a range of sustainable transport options – including the existing public bus network and specifically provided buses. The existing schools currently draw pupils from a very wide catchment area and the new location will not alter transport patterns significantly (please see the Transport Assessment attached to the application).
- TR2 The site is located on Melbourne Avenue, designated a Local Urban Route. The Transport Assessment has determined that this will have sufficient capacity to accommodate the new development.
- TR9 The proposed development will not prejudice any existing cycle routes. It will incorporate some 280 cycle parking spaces, and it is intended that facilities for cyclists will be provided on site (lockers, changing facilities). There will be a dedicated route for cyclists accessing the Schools to avoid conflicts with pedestrians and vehicles.
- CO1 The proposed development will result in the loss of agricultural land. The development of the site will provide the adjacent urban community and the surrounding rural community with a valuable community recreation and



leisure asset, thereby supporting the sustainability of the rural economy.

- CO8 The site has two continuous mixed species hedgerows on the north and west boundaries. They have been assessed as part of a habitat survey (please see the Habitat Survey and Assessment attached to the application) as having value as green corridors for the movement of animals and as a source of food and nesting sites for birds. As such it is proposed that they be retained as part of future development of the site. The areas of tall ruderal vegetation and scrub along the Melbourne Avenue boundary were found to have limited value, except for offering foraging habitats. A portion of this area will be required to be removed to provide the two new vehicle entrances to the site. It is intended to provide native habitat areas on the site as part of the landscape scheme, both as a replacement for the areas removed and as an educational tool (please see the Design and Access Statement attached to the application).
- WE1 The proposed development will not be providing septic tanks, storage tanks containing hydrocarbons or any chemicals, or underground storage tanks; activities which would pose a high risk of contamination; the manufacture and use of organic chemicals, particularly chlorinated solvents; oil pipelines; storm water overflows or; activities which involve the disposal of liquid waste to land. Any new foul or combined sewerage systems will provide adequate safeguards to protect ground water.
- DD1 It is intended that high quality and inclusive design be used as a principal aim for the eventual detailed design of the Schools and its buildings.

The scale of buildings is one to two storeys with the potential for some roof elements to extend to a height of three storeys in height (for example the internal recreation spaces and atria). It is intended to work with the contours of the site to reduce the apparent height of the building – for example building two storeys on the low part of the site and a single storey on the higher part of the site. This is consistent with the surrounding residential development and Whitecliffs Business Park adjacent to the site.

The indicative layout of the buildings is well away from existing residential development ensuring that it is very unlikely that an unacceptable loss of amenity

through overlooking, noise or vibration, light pollution, overshadowing, loss of natural light, or sense of enclosure will occur. Furthermore the indicative layout places the buildings at the lowest part of the site topographically and towards the existing Archers Court School, giving continuity to the built environment, whilst minimising the developments impact on the surrounding open landscape.

The architectural style and materials of the development are not yet known, however then intention is, given the visually prominent nature of the site, to ensure they are appropriate to the landscape in which the development sits, and are of sufficient high quality.

It is intended that the site be landscaped, with a view to fully integrating the landscaping into the educational aims of the school. Further details are given in the attached Design and Access Statement. Furthermore it is intended that the landscape plan for the new Schools support the open landscape amenity of the surrounding area, where possible.

- OS4 The site is identified as being in the Green Wedge. The proposed development intends to protect the function and characteristic of the Green Wedge by a number of means:
 - Turning a privately owned site into a publicly available, outdoor recreation and leisure community asset through the provision of playing fields, multi-use games areas and other landscaped amenities such as habitat areas
 - Locating the buildings proposed on the south western side of the site to maintain the open character and separation between the Whitecliffs Business Park and the settlement of Dover
 - Scaling the proposed buildings by utilising the natural topography of the site to contain building bulk so as to maintain the open character and separation between the Whitecliffs Business Park and the settlement of Dover
- OS6 As part of the proposed Schools development a new gymnasium will be provided. This will be available for community use outside of core school hours. Whilst the site is not within the urban settlement confines of Dover the site is accessible by public transport and will serve the residential area to the south of the site. Furthermore, the gymnasium's primary function will be to serve the pupils of

Dover Boys and Girls Grammar Schools.

- OS7 It is intended that the sports fields and hard surface play spaces and courts will be available for public use, outside of core school hours. Whilst the site is not within the urban settlement confines of Dover the site is accessible by public transport and will serve the residential area to the south of the site. Furthermore, the facilities primary function will be to serve the pupils of Dover Boys and Girls Grammar Schools. The location of the outdoor recreation and sports facilities, away from existing residential development, on the north east part of the site means that they will not cause harm to residential amenity through noise or illumination.

6.3.2. Dover District Core Strategy 2009

The Core Strategy, with the changes submitted to the Planning Inspectorate, in considering the structural spatial issues for Dover identifies in Figure 3.3 the application site as a 'potential location for secondary school relocation'. It is identified for the same in the Key Diagram in Figure 3.6.

- CP5 It is intended that the buildings that comprise the Schools meet the BREEAM 'Very Good' rating.
- CP6 The proposed development accords with this policy as it provides new secondary school facilities serving Dover and Deal that will modernise and improve the standard of secondary school provision and support enhanced learning and attainment.
- DM1 Whilst the site is outside the settlement boundary of Dover, it is identified in the proposed changes to the Core Strategy submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for a new secondary school. Furthermore the proposed development of the site will provide the adjacent urban community and the surrounding rural community with a valuable community recreation and leisure asset, thereby supporting the sustainability of the rural economy.
- DM11 Whilst the site is located outside of, but adjacent to, the settlement boundary of Dover the new school will be served by a range of sustainable transport options – including the existing public bus network and specifically provided buses. The existing schools currently draw pupils from a very wide catchment area and the new location will



not alter transport demand patterns significantly (please see the Transport Assessment attached to the application).

- DM12 The proposal will result in the construction of two new vehicle accesses onto the road network, however Melbourne Avenue is not a primary or trunk road. The proposal will not likely result in an increase in traffic accidents or delays (please see the Transport Assessment attached to the application).
- DM13 The proposal will result in the provision of 183 car parking spaces. Their location on the western edge of the site and the intention to landscape the parking area will ensure that their appearance is appropriate for the open, green characteristics of the site. The amount of car parking and cycle parking accords with regional policy.
- DM15 The proposed development will result in the loss agricultural land. The proposed development of the site will provide the adjacent urban community and the surrounding rural community with a valuable community recreation and leisure asset, thereby supporting the sustainability of the rural economy.

A Habitat Survey and Assessment has been undertaken for the site. It identifies two hedgerows as having value as green corridors for the movement of animals and as a source of food and nesting sites for birds. As such it is proposed that they be retained as part of future development of the site. It identified an area of tall ruderal vegetation and scrub along the Melbourne Avenue boundary and found they had limited value, except for offering foraging habitats. As portion of this area will be required to be removed to provide the two new vehicle entrances to the site, it is intended to provide native habitat areas on the site as part of the landscape scheme, both as a replacement for the areas removed and as an educational tool (please see the Design and Access Statement attached to the application).

- DM17 The proposed development will not be providing septic tanks, storage tanks containing hydrocarbons or any chemicals, or underground storage tanks; activities which would pose a high risk of contamination; the manufacture and use of organic chemicals, particularly chlorinated solvents; oil pipelines; storm water overflows or; activities which involve the disposal of liquid waste to land. Any new foul or combined sewerage systems will provide adequate

safeguards to protect ground water.

- DM25 The proposed changes to the Core Strategy submitted to the Planning Inspectorate identify the application site as an education site. Any loss of green space for development on the site is for education purposes. The site is currently in private ownership and is not available as green space for use by the public. The proposed development will enable this transfer from private benefit to public benefit to occur.

6.0 Conclusion

It is considered that the application is consistent with the necessary relevant National, Regional and Local planning policies.

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