



MIKE SIBTHORP PLANNING
LOGAN HOUSE, LIME GROVE, GRANTHAM, NG31 9JD
TEL: 01476 569065 MOB: 07983 470950
E-MAIL: MIKES@MSPLAN.CO.UK

PLANNING PORTAL REF: PP-15106364

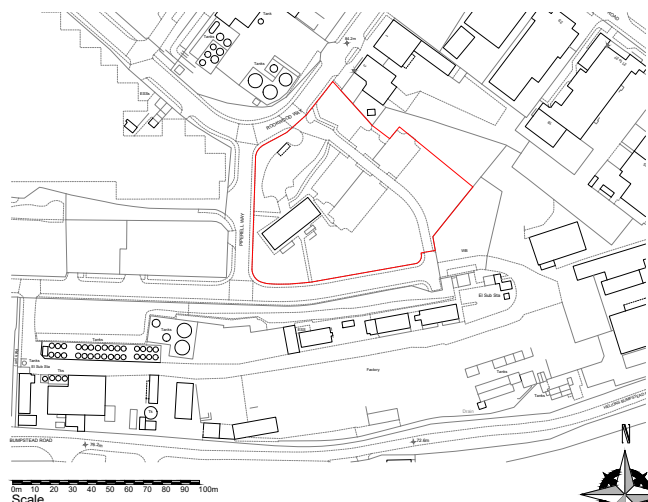
PLANNING APPLICATION FOR EXTERNAL WORKS ASSOCIATED WITH USE OF BUILDING AS
STATE FUNDED SEND SCHOOL;
LAND ON NORTH SIDE AND EAST SIDE OF PIPERELL WAY, HAVERHILL

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

Introduction

1. This statement accompanies a full planning application for a number of external works associated with the change of use of an existing office building to a state-funded SEND (special educational needs and disabilities) school at Piperell Way, Haverhill.
2. Prior approval was granted in April 2026 for the change of use of the building under the provisions of Class T of Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended); local planning authority application ref: DC/26/0330/P3TPA.

Clarification of address: The application forms describe the property as Land on North Side and East Side of Piperell Way, Haverhill. This reflects how the land is described on Land Registry documentation. Hitherto, it has been described as Office Building G1, 12 Rookwood Way, Haverhill, CB9 8PB and Building 22, 16 Piperell Way, Haverhill, Suffolk, CB9 8PH. Prior approval ref: DC/26/0330/P3TPA utilised the latter of these two addresses. The red line application site in this case is entirely consistent with that adopted for DC/26/0330/P3TPA. For consistency going forward we have adopted the Land Registry derived address, although the anticipation is that in due course the school will adopt a new name for the site.



Location Plan

Application site

3. The wording of Class T of the Order clearly anticipates that following the grant of a prior approval, it may be necessary to make a further application for planning permission for *associated operational development* related to the change of use. Conditions T.2(3) & T.2(4) indicate that where planning permission is granted for such '*associated operational development*' then development under Class T must be begun three years from the date of any grant of planning permission (rather than three years from the date of grant of the Class T). *Associated operational development* is defined as 'building or other operations in relation to the same building or land which are reasonably necessary to use the building or land for the proposed use under Class T'.
4. As we describe further below, the works proposed in this case demonstrably fall within the scope of this definition. Whilst it is not the specific intention of this application to extend the timescale within which development must be commenced, it is clear that the works in this instance are reasonable and proportionate works to enable the site to function as a school; something quite expressly contemplated as a consequence of a Class T prior approval.

The application site

5. The application site in this case comprises an office building set in extensive grounds within the Haverhill Industrial Estate. The site is located within the built-up part of the settlement (albeit outside of the Housing Settlement Boundary) and is entirely surrounded by adjoining commercial and light industrial development.
6. As illustrated below, the site, which has an area of 0.85ha is bounded on its southern and western sides by Piperell Way. The north-western boundary of the site abuts Rookwood Way. To the north-east the site is bounded by commercial premises served from Rookwood Way (beyond which are premises located on the southern side of Hollands Road). To the south are premises set along Piperell Way and Helions Bumpstead Road. To the west of the site, across Piperell Way is the Haverhill Solar Farm.
7. Located on the western side of the site, close to the point where Piperell Way forks, is a two-storey office building. This is a brick structure with a pitched roof. Set to the north and north-east of the building are car parking areas. Set around the building are grassed areas. The site generally falls from the north-west to the south-east. The site generally has open frontages to the roadside boundaries, although there is a section of post and rail fencing running laterally through the site and along part of the southern boundary. There are two access points into the site, one from Rookwood Way to the north, and one from Piperell Way to the south. The use of building is acknowledged to fall within Class E.



Site location



The application site viewed from the south-west at the junction of the two arms of Piperell Way.



The application site viewed from the north from Rookwood Way



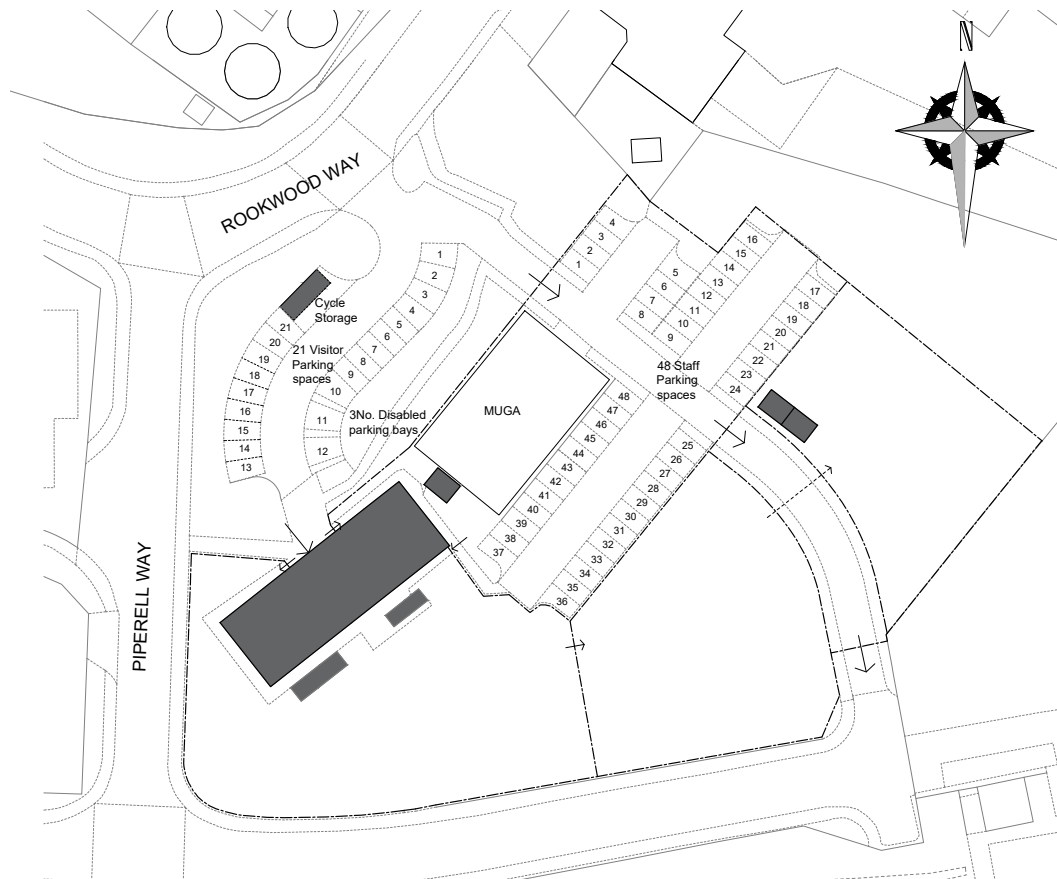
The application site viewed from the south



The office building: north-side

Prior approval ref: DC/26/0330/P3TPA

8. Under prior approval ref: **DC/26/0330/P3TPA** consent has been granted for the change of use of the building to a state funded SEND school. The relevant officer report for the application acknowledges that against the relevant prior approval considerations – transport and highways impacts, noise impacts and contamination risks – the proposals gave rise to no adverse impacts. Approval was granted in April 2026.
9. Accompanying the application were floor plans identifying how the building was to be modified internally to enable its use for educational purposes. No external alterations to the building are required in this instance.
10. Also accompanying the application was a site plan identifying the proposed treatment of the external areas of the site. These illustrate that the main car parking areas to the building are to be largely retained for use by staff and visitors. Part of the car parking area is to be utilised as a Multi-Use games Area (MUGA), with a small storage building adjoining. The existing grassed areas are shown to be retained.



Site plan accompanying prior approval submission

11. The site plan above is listed on the prior approval decision notice as one of the approved plans. It is not clear whether the consent for the change of use includes consent for the MUGA (and the adjoining storage building), although as the MUGA is being formed on what is an existing hard surfaces area it can be formed without any operational development taking place. The assumption we make is that the prior approval has consented the change of use and the building and site, and, that operational development

to accommodate the use – such as means of enclosure and ancillary structures - will be the subject of a separate planning application.

12. The present application relates to this operational development.

The proposed development

13. The application proposals in this case comprise a range of operational development works within the grounds of the property, to enable the site to satisfactorily and safely function as a school. The works proposed are generally consistent with the works identified on the site plan accompanying the application. In summary, the works are as follows;

- ❖ 2.4m high green weld-mesh fencing to the site boundaries fronting on to the adjoining roads. Gates at existing site entrances/ exits
- ❖ 3.0m high green weld-mesh fencing to surround the multi-use games area
- ❖ 1.8m close boarded timber fencing to site boundaries abutting adjacent commercial premises, and separating the car parking area from the land to the south (to be utilised as playing fields).
- ❖ 1.2m high picket type fencing set internal to the site, separating playing fields areas.
- ❖ The siting of a 6m x 2.4m x 2.55m high storage container adjacent the MUGA to be utilised for the storage of sports equipment, the container to be clad externally with vertical cedar boarding. (Floorspace 14.4 sq.m). Reference to the existing site plan identifies that this storage container is part-located on an existing hard-surfaced area – meaning that the loss of priority habitat for BNG purposes is substantially less than the footprint of the container.
- ❖ The construction of a 5.6m long x 1.8m deep x 1.8m high bin enclosure. This is of timber construction and is to be sited adjacent to the northern entrance to the site off Rookwood Way.
- ❖ Part of the site (to the east of the internal access road) is proposed to be used as a forest teaching area. New tree planting is proposed in this area to accommodate this future usage

14. These works are identified on the plans accompanying the application.

15. The proposed works are BNG exempt, as the *de minimis* threshold is not exceeded. The MUGA is located on an existing hard surfaced area and results in no loss of priority habitat. The fencing will not result in any habitat loss. The storage container and the bin enclosure collectively have a floorspace of less than 25 sq.m and as noted above the storage container is part located on an existing hard surfaced area. As a result the loss of priority habitat is less than 25 sq.m and the *de minimis* threshold is not exceeded on this case.

Commentary

16. The proposals in this case comprise reasonable and proportionate external works necessary to enable the premises to function as a SEND school. In their relevant context – a larger and diverse industrial estate area, the works are considered appropriate and will not give rise to any adverse impacts that would justify the withholding of consent.

17. The main element of the proposals is the installation of perimeter fencing. This is set around the roadside boundaries and is necessary from a safety perspective. The weld-mesh design enables clear visibility through the fencing to the grass areas beyond, ensuring that the open character of the site is maintained and visible. Set around the site, the adjoining commercial and light industrial sites incorporate a variety of fencing typical of an industrial estate area, including galvanised palisade type fencing and chain-link fencing set between cranked concrete posts topped with barbed wire. In this particular context, the fencing proposed in this case is considered appropriate and will not detract from the character or visual qualities of the industrial estate area.
18. Similarly, the internal fencing to the site is appropriately designed in its context and of a suitable scale. The fencing is necessary to ensure pupil safety, separating play areas and the MUGA from car parking areas. This fencing will not detract from the visual qualities of the locale.
19. The proposed buildings in this case; the storage container and the bin store enclosure are appropriately scaled and sited. The storage container is located adjacent the building and will be screened by the building from the west and south-west. It is sited on land previously consented for the siting of temporary modular office buildings (SE/06/1601 & SE/09/0574). These were of a substantially greater size and extent (12m X 22.8m) and considered acceptable on their particular merits. A substantially smaller structure in this location, will have no adverse visual impacts upon the wider area.
20. Similarly, the design and siting of the proposed bin-store area, is considered appropriate and will not detract from the character and visual qualities of the locale.
21. The principle of the MUGA appears to have been considered at the prior approval stage and the current details are consistent with the earlier submitted details. The delegated officer report for the prior approval application DC/26/0330/P3TPA references that the local highway authority was aware that the MUGA would result in a reduction in parking provision but 'are satisfied that parking capacity would be adequate for the proposed use'. The existing covered cycle parking shelter is to be retained.
22. We can identify no development plan conflicts in this instance. The principle of development has been established by prior approval application DC/26/0330/P3TPA. The details now proposed are considered to be appropriate and proportionate and will not detract from the appearance or character of the locale. No amenity issues arise in this instance. The proposals are considered to be in line with Policies SP4(Design) and LP9 (Well-designed places).
23. Accordingly, there is considered to be no barrier to a grant of planning permission in this case.

Mike Sibthorp
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