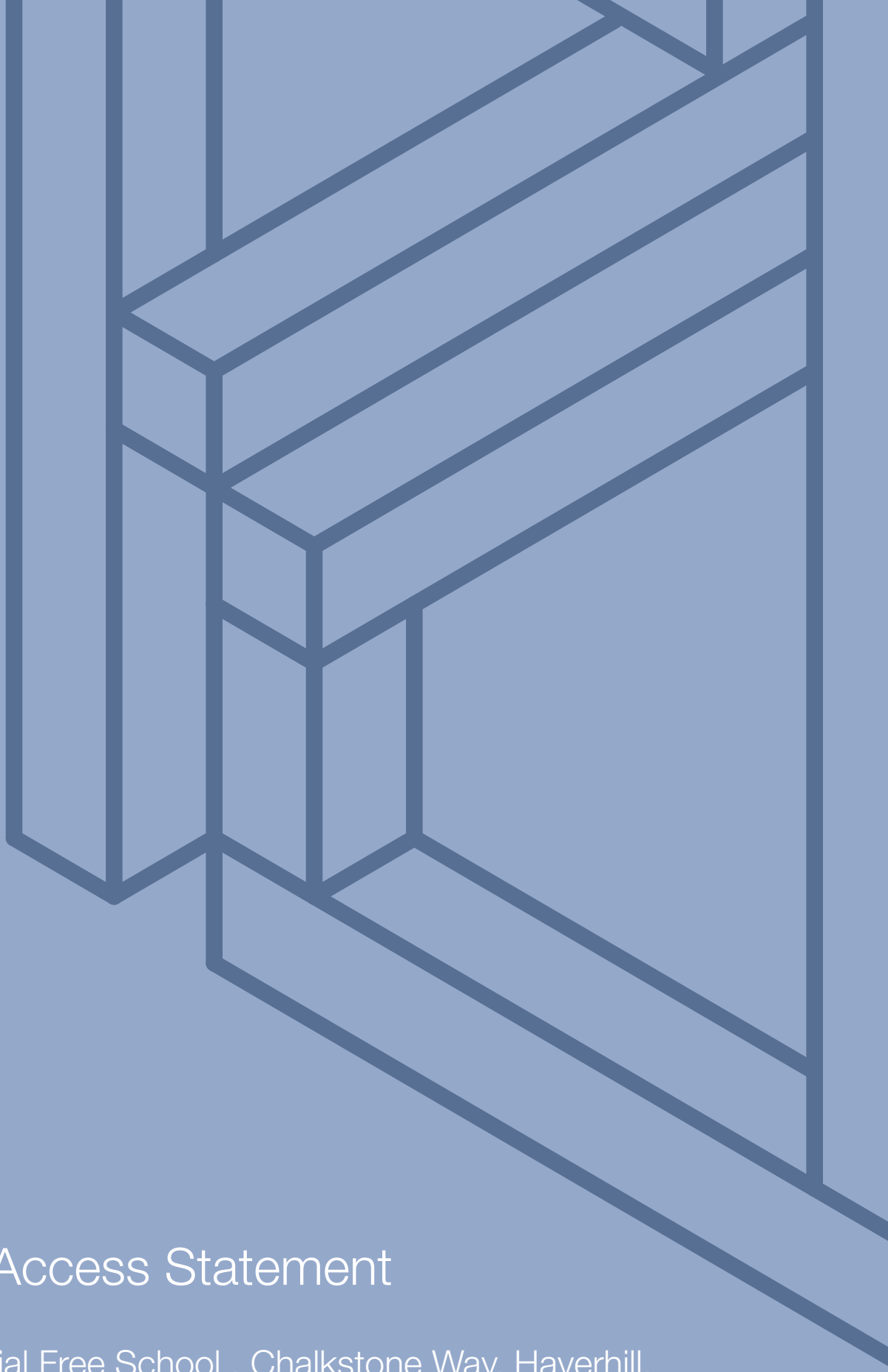


Design & Access Statement

Churchill Special Free School , Chalkstone Way, Haverhill, CB9 0LB

New MUGA

August 2026

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1.0 KEY INFORMATION

Name of Applicant:	The Churchill Special Free School
Address of Construction Site:	The Churchill Special Free School Chalkstone Way, Haverhill, CB9 0LB
Ownership of Site:	Unity Schools Partnership
Nature of Construction:	New MUGA Court
Start on Site:	Subject to Planning
Practical Completion:	Subject to Planning
Contractor:	TBC
Planning Agent:	PCH Associates Ltd. GF, 7 King's Court Willie Snaith Road Newmarket CB8 7SG Tel: 01638 667676 Email: info@pchassociates.co.uk

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the construction of three outdoor tennis courts within the grounds of Churchill Special Free School Haverhill.

The proposal is intended to provide improved sports and recreational facilities for the school and will be used principally by pupils and staff as part of the school's existing educational and sporting activities.

The courts will not operate as a public or commercial tennis facility. No public membership, commercial court hire or separate spectator facility is proposed.

The proposal comprises three outdoor tennis courts, associated fencing, access gates, court surfacing and associated drainage and landscape works.

No floodlighting or other external sports lighting is proposed.

The site is not located within a Conservation Area and no trees are proposed to be removed or adversely affected by the development.

The proposal will incorporate sustainable drainage measures, including a swale and associated surface-water drainage infrastructure, with controlled discharge towards the existing watercourse at/adjacent to the site boundary, subject to the necessary drainage and watercourse approvals.

3.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE & PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Site Location

Churchill Special Free School is located on Chalkstone Way in the market town of Haverhill.

The Shared Campus: The school occupies the southern portion of a large, combined educational site on Chalkstone Way, directly adjacent to Samuel Ward Academy.

It is bordered by suburban housing along Chalkstone Way to the west and Mansfield Springs to the south. Open recreational fields stretch immediately to the north and east of the school buildings, separating the campus from the edge of the town.

Main vehicular and pedestrian access is serviced directly off Chalkstone Way, which acts as the primary loop road connecting this northeastern residential zone to the rest of Haverhill.



Fig. 1 Aerial Site Location - Google Maps

i. The proposed courts are located within an established educational environment and are therefore closely related to the existing school use.
ii. The proposal does not involve the development of an isolated new leisure facility unrelated to its surroundings. Instead, it represents an enhancement of the school's existing educational and sporting infrastructure.
iii. The site is not within a Conservation Area and no trees are proposed to be removed.

4.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development comprises of :

4.1

- Three outdoor tennis courts, with associated tennis court surfacing in permeable tarmac.
- Perimeter fencing and gates.
- Pedestrian access to the courts; which links to the existing school playground.
- Associated sub-base and drainage infrastructure;
- Sustainable drainage measures, including a swale;
- Landscape and biodiversity enhancements; and
- Associated earthworks required to construct the courts and drainage system.

The courts will be used by the school's pupils and staff during normal school activities.No floodlighting is proposed and therefore the courts will not be used as an illuminated evening sports facility.There is no proposal for a clubhouse, commercial reception, spectator stand, amplified sound system or other commercial leisure infrastructure.

4.2 RATIONALE FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The principle of providing additional sports facilities within the grounds of an existing school is supported by the West Suffolk Local Plan 2024–2041.

Policy LP33, Open Space, Sport, Play and Recreation Facilities, supports proposals for the provision, enhancement and expansion of sport and recreation facilities where they are well related to the local community and meet identified needs.

The proposal provides additional sporting infrastructure directly associated with an existing educational establishment and will enable pupils to participate in tennis and outdoor physical activity.

The proposal therefore represents an appropriate enhancement of existing school facilities and accords with the general objectives of Policy LP33.

The development will also support wider objectives relating to health, wellbeing and access to sport by providing pupils with improved opportunities for physical activity.

4.3 Educational and Community Benefits

The principal purpose of the development is to improve the school's sporting provision.

The three courts will provide additional capacity for tennis and netball within the school curriculum and extracurricular activities.

The courts will enable:

- Curriculum-based physical education;
- Tennis & Netball coaching;
- Extracurricular sporting activity;
- Inter-school sporting activity where appropriate; and
- Increased opportunities for pupils to participate in outdoor physical exercise.

The proposal is therefore directly related to the educational function of the site and will provide a tangible health and wellbeing benefit.

Because the facility is intended for school use rather than unrestricted public or commercial use, the scale and intensity of activity will remain appropriate to the existing educational use of the site.

4.4 Design and Appearance

The courts have been positioned to make efficient use of the existing school grounds while minimising their visual and physical impact.

The courts will comprise conventional MUGA court construction with appropriate sports surfacing and perimeter fencing.

The fencing will be of an appropriate height and appearance for a MUGA facility and will be finished in a colour/material selected to reduce visual prominence within the school grounds.

The proposed development is functional in nature and its design is appropriate to its use.

The courts will be read as ancillary sports infrastructure associated with the existing school rather than as a separate built development.

The proposal does not involve a significant increase in built form and will retain the overall open character of the school's sports grounds.

4.5 **BNG**

Scope and Target: The project achieves a 10.35% net gain in area habitat biodiversity.

Key Habitat Uplifts:

MUGA court surface to be permeable SUDs

Existing Native Hedgerow Enhanced to 'Good'

Existing Gassland enhanced to 'Good'.

3 No. Newly created trees planted.

4.6 **Residential Amenity and Noise**

The proposed tennis courts will be used as part of the existing school operation. The courts are not intended to operate as a commercial tennis facility and will not be available for unrestricted public use.The principal period of use will therefore be during the school's normal operating day.

No floodlighting is proposed and consequently there will be no requirement for evening or night-time use associated with artificial sports lighting.

The proposal will also not include:

- Amplified music;
- Public-address equipment;
- Commercial events;
- Spectator stand
- Separate entertainment use.

Tennis activity will inevitably generate a degree of recreational noise through ball and racket impacts and player activity. However, the nature and scale of this activity must be considered in the context of the existing school environment and the proposed hours and intensity of use. The site boundary is located a significant distance from the MUGA itself and any nearby residential areas.

The proposal comprises three courts used by pupils as part of normal school activity rather than a commercial tennis centre operating throughout the day and evening.

On this basis, and subject to the site's actual relationship with neighbouring residential properties, significant adverse effects on residential amenity are not anticipated.

A standalone acoustic impact assessment is therefore not considered proportionate at this stage. The applicant has instead assessed the likely noise implications within this Planning Statement and Design and Access Statement.

If considered necessary, appropriate operating-hour restrictions can be secured by planning description.

4.7 Lighting

No floodlighting or external sports lighting is proposed. The courts will therefore operate using available daylight and will not create additional artificial light spill towards neighbouring properties or the wider landscape.

No lighting assessment is therefore considered necessary in relation to the proposed tennis courts.

4.8 Transport and Highway Considerations

The proposal is for a school-based sports facility and is not a public or commercial leisure development.

The tennis courts will be used principally by existing pupils and staff who already attend the school.

The proposal will therefore not generate a new pattern of public arrivals and departures associated with a commercial tennis facility.

In particular, the proposal does not involve:

- Public court hire
- Public membership
- New commercial leisure business
- Clubhouse
- Spectator facility
- Regular external tournament/event use.

The development will utilise the existing school access arrangements.

No material alteration to the public highway is proposed.

Pedestrian movement between the school buildings and the proposed courts will take place within the existing school site.

Existing school parking provision will continue to serve the site and the proposal is not expected to create a material additional parking demand because the courts will primarily be used by pupils and staff already attending the school.

Secure cycle parking and existing sustainable transport opportunities will continue to be available to school users where applicable.

West Suffolk Local Plan Policy LP44 requires appropriately designed and sited parking and secure cycle storage, with provision considered against the adopted Suffolk parking standards.

Given the scale and nature of the proposal, a standalone Transport Assessment is not considered necessary. The transport implications are appropriately addressed within this Planning Statement and the Design and Access Statement.

4.9 **Surface Water Drainage and SUDs**

A Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy has been prepared by G.H. Bullard & Associates LLP to assess flood risk and surface water management associated with the proposed Tennis MUGA.

The site is located within Flood Zone 1, representing a low probability of fluvial and tidal flooding. The assessment identifies a low risk of groundwater flooding, with surface water flood risk primarily associated with the existing school access and car park. The proposed MUGA is not identified as being at risk during the 1 in 30-year or 1 in 100-year events, including climate change allowances.

The drainage strategy incorporates permeable tennis court surfacing, sub-surface attenuation, an under-drain system, flow control and a shallow swale-like conveyance feature. Surface water will be attenuated within the granular sub-base beneath the courts and discharged at a restricted rate to the existing watercourse to the south-east.

Infiltration to ground was considered but is not considered viable due to the underlying ground conditions and limited soakage potential.

A filter trench is also proposed to the west of the courts to intercept and redirect overland flows from the adjoining grassland. Exceedance flows will be directed away from the MUGA and towards the existing watercourse, following the proposed drainage route.

The proposed SuDS measures will provide surface water treatment prior to discharge and offer opportunities for landscape and biodiversity enhancement. The drainage system will be subject to appropriate inspection and maintenance to ensure its continued performance.

Overall, the Flood Risk Assessment concludes that, subject to implementation and maintenance of the proposed drainage measures, the development will not result in an unacceptable flood risk to the site or elsewhere. The proposal therefore provides a sustainable approach to surface water management appropriate to the scale and nature of the development.

4.10 Ecology and Biology

The proposal does not involve the removal of trees.The ecological effects of the development will nevertheless be assessed through the biodiversity baseline and statutory Biodiversity Metric.

The development has been designed to minimise unnecessary habitat loss and to incorporate opportunities for ecological enhancement through landscaping and the SuDS/swale system.
The proposed biodiversity measures will be proportionate to the scale and nature of the development.

4.11 Heritage and Conservation

The site is not located within a Conservation Area.
The proposal does not affect any identified heritage asset and does not involve works to a listed building.
No significant heritage impacts are therefore anticipated.

4.12 Accessibility and Inclusive Use

The tennis courts will form part of the school's sports provision and will be accessible to pupils in accordance with the school's existing arrangements for inclusive participation in physical education and sporting activity. The access link has been carefully designed to deal with an accessible transition in levels between the existing playground and new MUGA court.

The detailed layout will provide appropriate pedestrian access between the existing school facilities and the courts. The proposal will improve opportunities for participation in outdoor sport and physical activity and therefore contributes positively to health and wellbeing.

4.13 Justification Summary

The proposal provides three new tennis courts within the established grounds of an existing school.
The development:

- provides additional educational and sporting infrastructure;
- supports physical activity and pupil wellbeing;
- makes efficient use of an existing school site;
- does not involve the loss of trees;
- is outside a Conservation Area;
- does not require floodlighting;
- does not introduce a public/commercial leisure use;
- is not expected to create significant additional highway activity;

5.0 CONCLUSION

The proposed three-court tennis facility is an appropriate form of development within the existing school grounds.

The proposal is directly related to the educational use of the site and will provide significant benefits in terms of sport, physical activity, health and pupil wellbeing.

The development is of an appropriate scale, does not require floodlighting, does not affect trees or designated heritage areas and will be designed to minimise effects on neighbouring amenity.

Transport impacts are expected to be limited because the facility will be used principally by existing pupils and staff rather than the general public.

Surface water will be managed through a suds approach incorporating a swale and controlled discharge, subject to the necessary technical and regulatory approvals.

The proposal will also deliver the statutory biodiversity net gain requirements through a combination of appropriate habitat retention, creation and enhancement.

Overall, the development accords with the objectives of the west suffolk local plan 2024–2041, including policy LP33 relating to open space, sport, play and recreation facilities, and represents an appropriate enhancement to the school's existing educational and sporting provision.

Planning permission is therefore respectfully requested.

6.0 APPENDICES

6.1 DRAWINGS/PLANS

6.1.1	341-2_PL-001_R00	EXISTING-LOCATION-PLAN
6.1.2	341-2_PL-002_R00	EXISTING BLOCK-PLAN
6.1.3	341-2_PL-003_R00	PROPOSED-LOCATION-PLAN
6.1.4	341-2_PL-004_R00	PROPOSED-BLOCK-PLAN
6.1.5	341-2_PL-005_R00	EXISTING-GA-PLAN
6.1.6	341-2 PL-006_R00	PROPOSED-GA-PLAN
6.1.7	341-2_PL-007_R00	EXISTING-ELEVATION
6.1.8	341-2_PL-008_R00	PROPOSED-ELEVATIONS
6.1.9	341-2_PL-009_R00	PROPOSED-ACCOMODATION LAYOUT

6.2 BNG ASSESSMENT (Uploaded under separate cover)

Churchill Special Free School MUGA Courts_SSM_2bd2_map
Churchill Special Free School MUGA Courts_SSM_2bd2_report
Churchill Special Free School MUGA Courts_SSM_2bd2
(Via Joe's Blooms Ltd)

6.3 SUDS STRATEGY (Uploaded under separate cover)

220_2026_FRADS01comp
(Prepared by GH Bullard)



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