

**PROPOSED RELOCATION OF  
THE BISHOP'S STORTFORD  
AND HERTS & ESSEX HIGH  
SCHOOLS TO LAND AT  
WHITTINGTON WAY,  
BISHOP'S STORTFORD,  
HERTS**

**SUPPORTING PLANNING  
STATEMENT**

RP/4663

JUNE 2008

# **VINCENT AND GORBING**

**PLANNING AND URBAN DESIGN**

STERLING COURT NORTON ROAD  
STEVENAGE HERTS SG1 2JY

T: 01438 316331 F: 01438 722035  
E: [planners@vincent-gorbing.co.uk](mailto:planners@vincent-gorbing.co.uk)

# **PROPOSED RELOCATION OF THE BISHOP'S STORTFORD AND HERTS & ESSEX HIGH SCHOOLS TO LAND AT WHITTINGTON WAY, BISHOP'S STORTFORD**

## **SUPPORTING PLANNING STATEMENT**

<b>CONTENTS</b>	<b>PAGE NO.</b>
<b>PART 1 – INTRODUCTION, PLANNING CONTEXT AND DETERMINING ISSUES</b>	
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT	3
3.0 DETERMINING ISSUES	7
<b>PART 2 – THE PLANNING AND EDUCATIONAL CASE OF VERY SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES</b>	
4.0 VERY SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES - SUMMARY	9
5.0 THE URGENT REQUIREMENT FOR ADDITIONAL SECONDARY SCHOOL CAPACITY IN BISHOP'S STORTFORD	11
6.0 OPTION 1 – THE PROVISION OF A BRAND NEW 6 FE SCHOOL	16
7.0 OPTION 2 – THE IN SITU EXPANSION OF EXISTING SCHOOLS	21
8.0 OPTION 3 – RELOCATION AND EXPANSION OF THE BSHS AND HEHS SCHOOLS	26
9.0 ABSENCE OF A SIGNIFICANTLY HARMFUL GREEN BELT IMPACT	30
<b>PART 3 – OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	
10.0 SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL	33
11.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT	39
12.0 IMPACT ON THE HIGHWAY NETWORK	57
13.0 OTHER BENEFITS OF THE PROPOSALS	62
<b>PART 4 - IMPLEMENTATION</b>	
14.0 IMPLEMENTATION	65
15.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	70

## PLANS

- Plan 1 Proposed Application sites
- Plan 2 Existing Secondary School Sites
- Plan 3 Site Search – Opportunities and Constraints

## APPENDICES

- 1 Technical studies
- 2 Go-East letters on previous Green Belt referrals
- 3 Sport and recreation – mitigation of impacts

# VINCENT AND GORBING

## PLANNING AND URBAN DESIGN

STERLING COURT NORTON ROAD  
STEVENAGE HERTS SG1 2JY  
T: 01438 316331 F: 01438 722035  
E: [planners@vincent-gorbing.co.uk](mailto:planners@vincent-gorbing.co.uk)

## **PART 1 – INTRODUCTION, PLANNING CONTEXT AND DETERMINING ISSUES**

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Supporting Planning Statement relates to an outline planning application submitted on behalf of

- The Bishop's Stortford High School.
- The Hertfordshire & Essex High School and Science College.

1.2 The application has been submitted with the full support of Hertfordshire County Council (Children, Schools & Families Service).

### **The application proposals**

1.3 In summary, the planning application proposes the relocation and expansion of the two schools from their existing sites onto a 20.12 hectares (50 acre) greenfield site located on the southern fringe of Bishop's Stortford, to the south of Whittington Way.

1.4 The application site and the application proposals are described and illustrated in detail in the accompanying Design and Access Statement.

### **Related applications**

1.5 The schools relocation application is accompanied by the following enabling applications

- An outline planning application for the residential redevelopment (up to 220 dwellings) of the existing Bishop's Stortford High School site in London Road, Bishop's Stortford.
- An outline planning application for the residential redevelopment (up to 125 dwellings) of the existing main Herts & Essex High School site in Warwick Road, Bishop's Stortford.

- An outline planning application for the residential redevelopment (up to 180 dwellings) of the existing Herts & Essex High School's detached playing field site in Beldams Lane, Bishop's Stortford.
- An outline planning application for the residential redevelopment (up to 250 dwellings) of the County Council's former secondary school reserve site in Hadham Road, Bishop's Stortford.

1.6 The location of the Whittington Way and other application sites is indicated on the accompanying **Plan 1**.

### **This statement**

1.7 In this Supporting Planning Statement, we consider the planning policy context for the schools relocation and expansion proposals and appraise the proposals in the light of prevailing planning policies and guidance.

### **Related documentation**

1.8 A number of related documents are referred to in this statement and have been submitted in support of the Whittington Way planning application, namely

- Design and Access Statement.
- Transport Assessment.
- Open Space, Sport and Recreation Assessment.
- Statement of Public Consultation.
- Environmental Statement.
- Appendices to the Environmental Statement.

1.9 The Appendices to the Environmental Statement contain a number of detailed technical studies, as itemised at **Appendix 1**.

## **2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

### **DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

2.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that

*'If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination under the planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise'.*

2.2 The development plan in this instance comprises

- The East of England Plan, published in May 2008.
- The East Hertfordshire Local Plan Second Review, adopted in April 2007.

2.3 Relevant site-specific and general policies contained within the adopted Local Plan are outlined below.

### **GREEN BELT**

2.4 In the adopted Local Plan Second Review, the whole of the application site is indicated to lie within the Metropolitan Green Belt.

2.5 Policy GBC 1 of the adopted Local Plan Second Review states

*'Within the Metropolitan Green Belt, as defined on the Proposals Map, permission will not be given for inappropriate development unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated that clearly outweigh the harm by reason of inappropriateness or any other harm'.*

2.6 It is relevant to note that the large majority of the application site was proposed for removal from the Green Belt and allocation for secondary education provision in the Re-Deposit Version of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review (November 2004).

2.7 However, the Local Plan Inspector, whose report was binding on the Council, did not confirm this allocation, concluding as follows

*‘While not taking issue with the educational reasons for locating the two schools in this area, I do not accept that it is necessary to remove land from the Green Belt to enable the secondary school needs of the town to be met. The Green Belt designation of the site should remain; the circumstances of educational need, as well as the impact on the Green Belt, could be considered in the context of a planning application. After all, there are examples of educational establishments in the District, and the Council is able to exercise the level of control necessary in such locations’.*

2.8 The accompanying planning application has been submitted in acknowledgement of the Local Plan Inspector’s comments.

#### **OTHER RELEVANT SITE-SPECIFIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES**

2.9 No other site-specific development plan policies apply to the application site.

#### **OTHER RELEVANT GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES**

2.10 A number of general planning policies contained in the adopted Local Plan Second Review are relevant to the application proposals, including

- Policy SD 1 – Making Development More Sustainable.
- Policy SD 3 – Renewable Energy.
- Policy SD 3 – Sustainable Development and Nature Conservation.
- Policy GBC 12 – Agricultural Land.
- GBC 14 – Landscape Character.
- TR 1 – Traffic Reduction in New Developments.

- TR 2 - Access to New Developments.
- TR 3 -Transport Assessments.
- TR 4 -Travel Plans.
- ENV 1 – Design and Environmental Quality.
- ENV 2 – Landscaping.
- ENV 3 – Planning Out Crime.
- ENV 4 – Access for Disabled People.
- ENV 10 – Planting New Trees.
- ENV 11 – Protection of Existing Hedgerows and Trees.
- ENV 16 – Protected Species.
- ENV 17 – Wildlife Habitats.
- ENV 21 – Surface Water Drainage.
- ENV 23 – Light Pollution and Floodlighting.
- ENV 25 – Noise Sensitive Development.
- ENV 27 – Air Quality.
- BH 1 – Archaeology and New Development.
- BH 2 – Archaeological Evaluations and Assessments.
- BH 3 - Archaeological Conditions and Agreements.
- LRC 1 – Sport and Recreation Facilities.
- LRC 2 - Joint Provision and Dual Use.

- LRC 9 – Public Rights of Way.
- LRC 11 – Retention of Community Facilities.
- BIS 7 – Reserve Secondary School Site, Hadham Road.
- IMP 1 – Planning Conditions and Obligations.

2.11 Many of these policies relate to detailed design matters and are addressed in the accompanying Design and Access Statement.

### **NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE**

2.12 The Government's policies on different aspects of planning are set out in Planning Policy Statements and Guidance notes (PPS's and PPG's) and are a material consideration in the determination of planning applications, particularly where they post-date the development plan.

2.13 In this particular instance, the following guidance notes are considered to be of particular relevance

- PPS 1 – Delivering Sustainable Development.
- PPG 2 – Green Belts.
- PPS 9 – Biodiversity and Geological Considerations.
- PPG 13 – Transport.
- PPG 16 – Archaeology and Planning.
- PPG 17 – Open Space, Sport and Recreation.
- PPG 24 – Planning and Noise
- PPS 25 – Development and Flood Risk

### **3.0 DETERMINING ISSUES**

3.1 Based on our review of the prevailing development plan and national planning policy guidance, we have identified the following key planning issue raised by the application proposals, namely

*Whether the planning and educational case for the expansion and relocation of the two schools constitutes the 'very special circumstances' required to justify the development of a Green Belt site.*

3.2 We consider this key issue in Part 2 of this statement.

3.3 In addition, the following planning issues are considered to be of material significance to the planning application proposals

- Whether the development proposals are in conformity with the principles of sustainable development.
- Whether the development proposals would have a harmful impact on the environment of the surrounding area.
- Whether the traffic that will be generated by the development proposals will have a harmful impact on the capacity and safety of the local highway network.
- Whether the application proposals will deliver any other planning benefits (in addition to the significant educational benefits) that will help outweigh any harm that they may cause.

3.4 We consider these issues in Part 3 of this statement.

## **PART 2 – THE PLANNING AND EDUCATIONAL CASE OF VERY SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

## **4.0 VERY SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES - SUMMARY**

4.1 Prevailing development plan and national planning policies require the demonstration of very special circumstances in order to justify new built development in the Green Belt.

4.2 The very special circumstances considered to be applicable in respect of the current planning application proposals arise from a combination of planning and educational factors, namely

- The urgent requirement for the provision of an additional 2 FE of secondary school capacity in the Bishop's Stortford area by 2011 as a result of recent and anticipated future housing growth.
- The longer term anticipated requirement for up to 4 FE of additional secondary school capacity by 2021 and up to 6 FE by 2031.
- The educational arguments in favour of expanding existing secondary schools to meet these requirements rather than building a brand new school.
- The absence of any further scope for expanding existing secondary schools in Bishop's Stortford on their present sites.
- The educational and community benefits that will arise from relocation and expansion of the Bishop's Stortford and Herts & Essex High Schools to a side-by-side location at the application site.
- The absence of any more suitable and available non-Green Belt or Green Belt relocation sites within the Bishop's Stortford area to accommodate the expansion and relocation of the two schools, either singularly or side-by-side.
- The absence of any significantly harmful impact by the planning application proposals upon the integrity of the Green Belt.

- 4.3 These factors are considered in the following sections of this report. In combination, these factors are considered to constitute the very special circumstances required under the terms of prevailing Green Belt policy to justify the relocation of the Bishop's Stortford and Herts & Essex High Schools onto a Green Belt / greenfield site.

## **5.0 THE URGENT REQUIREMENT FOR ADDITIONAL SECONDARY SCHOOL CAPACITY IN BISHOP'S STORTFORD**

### **Existing Secondary School Provision**

5.1 There are currently five maintained (i.e. non-fee paying) secondary schools within Bishop's Stortford – see **Plan 2**.

- The Bishop's Stortford High School.
- The Hertfordshire & Essex High School.
- The Birchwood High School.
- The St Mary's Roman Catholic School.
- Hockerill Anglo-European College (which is also a part fee-paying boarding school).

5.2 Bishop's Stortford College, an independent boarding school, is also located in the town but does not accept non-fee paying pupils.

### **House building in Bishop's Stortford**

5.3 A considerable amount of new house building has taken place in Bishop's Stortford in recent years, partly as a consequence of its proximity to Stansted Airport.

5.4 Over the period 1991-2007, some 3,664 new dwellings were built in Bishop's Stortford. This represented just under 41% of the total number of new dwellings built in East Herts District over the same period.

### **The County Council's strategy**

- 5.5 As a result of this high level of housing growth, the demand for maintained secondary school places in Bishops Stortford exceeds supply.
- 5.6 In the past, this has resulted in children being offered places in schools in other towns, which was extremely unpopular with parents and is educationally undesirable in terms of journey times and the separation of these pupils from their peers and community.
- 5.7 To respond to the continuing levels of high housing and population growth in Bishops Stortford, the Local Authority responsible for education, Hertfordshire County Council, has pursued a strategy of expanding existing secondary school provision. In recent years, an additional 3.5 forms of entry (FE\* ) of capacity has been planned at schools with potential for expansion within their own sites, namely just under 1 FE at St. Mary's Roman Catholic School and just under 3 FE at Birchwood High School (due to complete later this year).

*(\* a form of entry is 30 pupils in any one year group)*

- 5.8 This strategy has partly met the growth in demand to date but it has been necessary to manage the supply of places at Birchwood High School as an interim arrangement (while the physical expansion of the school has been undertaken) to ensure that all pupils within Bishop's Stortford are offered a place within the town. This will no longer be possible in future years. The strategy of increasing the supply of secondary school places therefore needs to continue.

### **Secondary Pupil Forecasts to 2021**

- 5.9 Over the period 2006-2021, based on the district-wide requirements set out in the East of England Plan, a minimum of an additional 9,860 dwellings (660 per annum) are expected be built in East Herts District (excluding the Harlow North development). Assuming that the Bishop's

Stortford 'share' remains constant at 41%, a further 4,000 or so dwellings will be built in the town, an average of 270 dwellings per annum. A continuation of this building rate would see a further 2,700 dwellings built during the period 2021 to 2031.

5.10 Based on this anticipated level of future house building, the latest pupil projections produced by the County Council indicate a future growth in secondary pupil numbers at Bishop's Stortford's secondary schools as follows

- 2011 – 5203 pupils
- 2021 – 5552 pupils
- 2031 – 5927 pupils

**Allowance for parental choice**

5.11 The Audit Commission recommends that an excess of school capacity over pupil numbers of around 5 -10% should be made available in order to allow a reasonable measure of parental choice.

5.12 Assuming an average allowance of 7.5%, this indicates a need to provide for the following number of secondary school places in the town to 2031

- 2011 – 5593 pupils
- 2021 – 5968 pupils
- 2031 – 6372 pupils

**Current secondary school capacity**

5.13 The County Council's most recent (2007) estimate of the net capacity of the five mainstream schools in Bishop's Stortford was 4,938 pupils.

5.14 Following discussion with County Council officers, we have assumed the current capacity to be some 5305 pupils. This figure takes into account the increased capacity of Birchwood High School once the expansion works have been completed.

**Capacity requirement**

5.15 On this basis, a need for additional secondary school capacity in the Bishop's Stortford area may be calculated as follows

- 2011 : 288 pupils
- 2021 : 663 pupils
- 2031 : 1067 pupils

5.16 Whilst it is clearly difficult to be precise on matters such as pupil forecasts and school capacities, these anticipated increases indicate a need for up to 2 FE of additional secondary school accommodation by 2011, up to 4 FE by 2021 and up to 6 FE by 2031.

**Development options for providing additional school capacity**

5.17 In order to deliver the additional 2 FE of capacity by 2011, a decision is now required urgently in order to allow for the necessary procedural and construction timescales.

5.18 As discussed in the following sections, a number of options have been considered by the County Council over the past few years to meet the immediate and longer term capacity requirement namely

- The provision of a wholly new school.
- The expansion in situ of existing schools.
- The relocation and expansion of existing schools.

- 5.19 One option for meeting the pupil requirement that has been rejected at the outset is to do nothing, which would result again in the need to offer places to pupils in schools in other towns where either there is surplus secondary school capacity or the potential for expansion. This option has been rejected on both educational and sustainability grounds.

## **6.0 OPTION 1 - THE PROVISION OF A BRAND NEW SCHOOL**

6.1 The first option that has been considered to meet the capacity requirement is by the construction of a wholly new secondary school within or around the edge of Bishop's Stortford.

### **SITE SEARCH STUDY**

6.2 A Site Search Study carried out by Vincent & Goring in 2007 found that, whilst there are no 'brownfield' sites of sufficient size for a new secondary school within or on the edge of Bishop's Stortford, there are a number of 'greenfield' sites with the potential to accommodate a new school.

6.3 These sites are listed below and illustrated on **Plan 3**.

- Site 1 – Land at Whittington Way (the application site).
- Site 2 – Land at Stortford Park.
- Site 3 – Land at Hadham Road.
- Site 4 – Land at Dane O'Coy's Road.
- Site 5 – Land at Stansted Road.
- Site 6 – Land at Hallingbury Road / Beldams Lane.

6.4 The Site Search Study found that all of these sites have advantages and disadvantages in planning and access terms. Site 3 (Land at Hadham Road) is in fact owned by the County Council and was purchased originally as a secondary school reserve site. However, the site was reviewed by the County Council in 2003 and considered to be constrained and too small for a secondary school of an appropriate planned size.

## **REASONS FOR THE COUNTY COUNCIL'S REJECTION OF THE NEW SCHOOL OPTION**

6.5 Notwithstanding the presence of other potential greenfield sites around the edge of the town, the County Council has rejected the option of developing a brand new school on any site for the following reasons

- The urgency of the immediate capacity requirement.
- The problems inherent in developing a new school where demand for the full capacity would not be expected to materialise for an extended period of time (twenty years).
- The benefits involved in expanding existing schools.
- The County Council's policy in relation to the size of schools.

6.6 These reasons are elaborated below.

### **Urgency of the capacity requirement**

6.7 As described in the previous section, there is an urgent need for additional secondary school capacity in Bishop's Stortford as a result of recent and committed housing growth in the town. The County Council has estimated a need for additional capacity by 2011 and propose to provide 2 FE at that time.

6.8 The development of a new school would cost around at least £25-30 million at current day prices. Under this option, there would be no potential for enabling development on other sites to provide full or partial finance. The only way for the County Council to finance the scheme therefore would be through a Private Finance Initiative (PFI). However, this would only be possible if the Government were to provide PFI credits to cover the costs involved.

6.9 At the present time, such credits would only be available through the government's 'Building Schools for the Future' programme. This source

of funding for secondary schools is being delivered in 'waves' around the country and the wave that includes Bishop's Stortford is not currently programmed to receive funding until around 2013-15. Even if a sound business case could be made to Partnerships for Schools and HM Treasury for a brand new school, therefore, it is unlikely that it could be delivered before 2017/18, allowing for 'lead in' times.

### **The problems inherent in developing a new school**

- 6.9 Starting a new school with new management and curricular systems needing to be embedded during a period of uncertain and fluctuating pupil numbers would always present challenges. Starting a new school with an initial demand for one third of its total capacity and the expectation that full utilisation could take a further twenty years would create significant issues for its efficient and effective operation.
- 6.10 Should the additional demand for places not materialise at the projected rate, or at all, the school would remain either too small to be a viable entity or would compete for pupils with the other schools in the town, potentially to their detriment. Starting a new school in these particular circumstances is therefore not considered to provide a satisfactory solution or one that would provide the flexibility that could be obtained from the expansion of existing schools.

### **The benefits involved in expanding existing schools**

- 6.11 The County Council considers that there are clear and demonstrable educational benefits in expanding existing successful schools rather than opening a new co-educational school for the following reasons
- Expanding schools with proven leadership, governance, ethos, and a record of successful achievement provides a strong base of experience from which to build. It is also consistent with the Government's view that successful schools should be allowed to expand. Ofsted considered this year that Bishops Stortford High

School “ *is an outstanding...school that determinedly seeks to offer its students a ‘truly all-round education’* “ and in 2006 that The Herts and Essex High School is “*a highly effective school with many outstanding features*”.

- The historic balance of single sex and co-educational places within the town would be better maintained. The County Council’s strategy for expanding existing schools (and including the expansion of the two single sex schools) would eventually lead to a relatively consistent balance of places. The provision of a new co-educational school would disrupt that pattern significantly and create an imbalance by over 200 co-educational places. There is currently an unmet demand for single sex places within the town.

### **The County Council’s policy in relation to the size of schools**

- 6.12 The County Council’s current educational preference is for 6 - 8 FE secondary schools.
- 6.13 Schools in 21<sup>st</sup> Century are expected to deliver a much broader curriculum to their young people, including a wider range of vocational opportunities and the newly introduced diplomas. This breadth of curriculum offer, even with collaboration between local schools and colleges, places additional logistical and financial constraints on schools.
- 6.14 Schools of between 6 – 8 FE (and particularly at the higher end of the range) have economies of scale and management. Simplistically they only need one senior leadership team and one set of department managers. This means that the savings that can be accrued can be directed to focus on the learning opportunities for the students and help to sustain the delivery of a broader curriculum. At the upper end of the range 8 FE schools are felt to be small enough to be manageable yet large enough to bring economies of scale. Class sizes at 6 FE, in Key Stage 4 and especially in sixth form classes, are often small but at 8 FE are more likely to be of a sustainable economic size.

- 6.15 In Hertfordshire, there is strong evidence that larger schools have relatively higher levels of attainment. For example at A level, there is a high positive correlation between the school cohort size and the average point score per student i.e. in schools with more students, they achieve more A level passes per student at higher grades. This is likely to be due to the broader and hence more appropriate curriculum offer available to the students.
- 6.16 Secondary schools in Bishops Stortford historically have been small (4 – 5 FE). It is acknowledged that some have been and continue to be successful and popular. Nevertheless, the County Council would not promote a new secondary school of less than 6 FE and the creation of another school within the town would remove the opportunity to expand two schools to a size at which they are likely to be even more viable and successful in the future. The town would continue to have a diverse range of education provision available.

## **7.0 OPTION 2 - THE IN SITU EXPANSION OF EXISTING SCHOOLS**

7.1 In the light of the County Council's preference for expanding existing schools rather than building a brand new school to meet the assessed capacity requirement, the next option that has been considered is the expansion of one or more of the existing secondary schools in Bishop's Stortford in situ.

7.2 For the reasons elaborated below, however, none of the existing secondary schools in Bishop's Stortford are capable of being expanded to deliver the required capacity increase.

### **The Bishop's Stortford High School**

7.3 The Bishop's Stortford High School is located off London Road and is a 5 FE school with a large 6<sup>th</sup> form and a current roll of 1,085 pupils. The school building complex is separated from the school's main playing field area by the Thorley Hill Primary School, with a direct footpath link only between the two sites. The total site area of the school is some 6.8 hectares.

7.4 The school also has a detached playing area at Jobbers Wood, some 2 miles distant from the main school site. This facility is only used at the present time for formal matches and not for general curriculum purposes.

7.5 A detailed expansion feasibility study for the school was carried out by the architects, Hawkins Brown, in July 2007.

7.6 Hawkins Brown estimated a generalised site requirement for a 6 FE school (based on Building Bulletin 98) of 8.7 hectares and a generalised building requirement for a 6 FE school of almost 11,000 square metres.

7.7 The existing Bishop's Stortford High School has at its core a number of 50 year old buildings. Hawkins Brown concluded that the large majority

of these buildings would be unsuitable for retention / refurbishment and that redevelopment of the school building complex would not be possible without causing major disruption to the school. They thus put forward a school expansion proposal based upon the building of a brand new school complex on the existing school playing field area, with the existing school buildings being demolished to provide an all weather pitch and related community facilities.

7.8 The Hawkins Brown proposal was rejected by the school and County Council for the following major reasons

- The phasing / decanting strategy would be very disruptive to the continuing operation of the school.
- The school as rebuilt would be deficient in terms of the overall amount of playing field space available for curriculum purposes.
- The Hawkins Brown scheme would only deliver 1 FE of additional capacity and, overall, the scheme would represent poor value for money.
- There would clearly be no prospect of further expansion on the site.

### **The Herts & Essex High School**

7.9 The Herts & Essex High School is currently a 5 FE school with a large sixth form and a school roll of 1,017 pupils. The main school complex is in Warwick Road and has a site area of 2.8 hectares. The school's main playing field area is divorced from the school buildings, being located some 400 metres to the south in Beldams Lane.

7.10 A detailed expansion feasibility study for the school was also carried out by the architects, Hawkins Brown, in July 2007.

7.11 The main school complex in Warwick Road has at its core a number of old buildings, some dating back to the Victorian era. Hawkins Brown

concluded that, whilst a number of these buildings would be unsuitable for retention / refurbishment, others could possibly be kept. They thus put forward a school expansion proposal based on the replacement of a number of existing buildings by a new three-storey block and with temporary 'decanting' space being provided on the playing field area on the Warwick Road site.

7.12 The Hawkins Brown proposal was rejected by the school and County Council for the following major reasons

- The phasing / decanting strategy would be very disruptive to the continuing operation of the school.
- The total area of land occupied by the school would remain at around 7 hectares compared with the estimated requirement for 8.7 hectares and the school as rebuilt would still be deficient in terms of the overall amount of playing field space
- The school buildings would remain divorced from the main school playing field area, with consequent management and health and safety issues.
- The Hawkins Brown scheme would only deliver 1 FE of additional capacity and, overall, the scheme would represent poor value for money.
- There would clearly be no prospect of further expansion to 8 FE on the site.

7.13 An alternative proposal for the expansion of the Herts & Essex High School was considered by Hawkins Brown involving the construction of a new school campus on the school's detached playing field at Beldams Lane, with new playing fields being provided on the agricultural land to the south of Beldams Lane.

7.14 This option was also rejected by the school and County Council because the school would still remain on a split site. The proximity of the school and playing field to the Stansted Airport flight path was also a consideration.

### **Birchwood High School**

7.15 As mentioned previously, the Birchwood High School (which has a site area of 11.4 hectares) has recently been expanded by the County Council to 8 FE by the addition of

- A new two storey teaching block containing 16 classrooms, main entrance and library, resources centre, staff room, administrative offices and related facilities.
- A new sports hall and car park.
- New music and science extensions.
- Refurbishment of other general and specialist areas.
- An all-weather surface.

7.16 As a result of this recent expansion, the Birchwood High School site has no further scope for expansion.

### **Other schools**

7.17 The two remaining schools Bishop's Stortford (St Mary's Roman Catholic School and Hockerill Anglo-European College) are currently 4 / 5 FE in size. Both are located on restricted sites and neither has any potential for further in situ expansion.

### **Conclusion**

7.18 A consideration of the scope for delivering additional secondary school capacity through the in situ expansion of the existing secondary schools in Bishop's Stortford has concluded that no realistic scope exists to meet

the immediate and longer term requirement and other means of expanding school capacity will thus be required.

## **8.0 OPTION 3 – RELOCATION AND EXPANSION OF THE BISHOP'S STORTFORD HIGH SCHOOL AND THE HERTS & ESSEX HIGH SCHOOL**

8.1 In the light of the perceived disadvantages and inflexibility of the single new school option, and the absence of any prospect for expanding existing secondary schools in situ, the County Council's preferred option comprises the relocation and expansion of the existing Bishop's Stortford High School and The Herts & Essex High School to a new shared site at Whittington Way (the application proposal).

8.2 The County Council's preference for this option is based on the following principal considerations

- The initial expansion of both of the new schools from 5 to 6 FE is considered to be the best way of delivering the urgent capacity requirement (2 FE by 2011) in the required timescale.
- The allowance for both schools ultimately to expand up to 8 FE will meet the forecast longer term requirement (up to 6 FE by 2031).
- The option is supported by the two schools and was pursued by the two schools and the County Council (supported by the District Council) at the Local Plan Inquiry in 2006.
- It is a flexible solution to the capacity problem, enabling new capacity to be delivered in step with the requirement.
- It will enable the expansion of two successful schools that currently cannot meet their demand for places.
- It will ensure that the predominantly single-sex Bishop's Stortford and Herts & Essex High Schools remain of equal size in order not to produce an imbalance in school capacity between boys and girls (a requirement of equal opportunities legislation).

- It will ultimately provide, together with the recently-expanded Birchwood School, three 8 FE non-denominational schools in Bishop's Stortford and will enable an increase in single-sex education capacity to provide a better balance of places available following the increase in co-education capacity at Birchwood High and St Mary's Schools.
- The location of the Whittington Way site in the south-east quadrant the Bishop's Stortford will provide a geographical balance to the location of Birchwood High School in the north-east quadrant and St Mary's School on the northern side of the town.
- As stated previously, the County Council considers that there are clear educational advantages in expanding existing schools rather than starting a new school on an incremental basis and over a long period of time.
- As also stated previously, the County Council's preference is for 6 – 8 FE secondary schools since they are considered to be more cost effective, more able to sustain 6th forms of a sufficient size to enable a broad range of options, and provide more flexibility in meeting changes to the curriculum, including the forthcoming diplomas for 14-19 year olds.
- The option will additionally free the Bishop's Stortford and Hertfordshire & Essex High Schools of the restrictions imposed by their current ageing and inadequate sites and buildings and provide them with new 'state-of-the-art' buildings that better incorporate the principles of sustainable design.
- The new buildings will also offer greater potential for community use in conformity with the Government's 'extended schools' agenda.

### **Benefits of a shared site**

- 8.3 It is recognised that the above benefits could also have been achieved by the relocation and expansion of the Bishop's Stortford High School and The Herts & Essex High School to separate sites listed in paragraph 6.3 above (in whichever combination).
- 8.4 Ultimately, however, the Whittington Way site was chosen by the County Council and school governors as the preferred relocation site in recognition of its advantages in terms of proximity to the existing catchment areas of the two schools and the potential benefits that would accrue from a side-by-side location.
- 8.5 These benefits include
- The opportunity to maintain the individuality and ethos of the two schools whilst exploiting the educational opportunities to work closely together to the benefit of the students.
  - Cost sharing and flexibility of use in the provision of 'core' facilities such as school halls, sixth form facilities, learning resource facilities, power generation and sports facilities.
  - The provision of shared sporting facilities such as a swimming pool, 8-court sports hall, floodlit games areas and squash courts that would not normally be justified by a single school.
  - Green travel provision such as shared school buses and new commercial services.
- 8.6 Of the potential alternative sites illustrated on Plan 3, only Site 4 (Land at Dane O'Coy's Road) could realistically offer the same potential for a side-by-side location. However, this site has access limitations and is peripheral to the school's existing catchment areas. Of the other sites, Site 3 (Hadham Road) would be too small whilst all the other sites are located in the Green Belt and thus would offer no planning benefit.

### **Conclusion**

- 8.7 The County Council's preferred option of providing for the required increase in secondary school capacity through the relocation and expansion of The Bishop's Stortford High School and The Herts & Essex High School to a new shared site at Whittington Way is considered to offer clear educational and planning advantages over all the other options that have been considered.

## **9.0 ABSENCE OF A SIGNIFICANTLY HARMFUL GREEN BELT IMPACT**

9.1 The broad area of land to the south of Whittington Way within which the schools will be relocated is a relatively detached area of Green Belt, the recent construction of the A1184 St James Way having severed the area from the wider area of open agricultural land to the south of the road.

9.2 By locating the main built-up areas of the two schools adjacent to the existing urban edge, it is considered that the impact on the Green Belt will be minimised. The school playing fields to the south of the building complex will assist by providing an area of transition between the complex and the retained agricultural area beyond.

9.3 Whilst, inevitably, there will be some urban encroachment and consequent loss of openness, we believe that any harm will be more than off-set by the wider benefits of the application proposals.

### **Other examples of secondary schools in the Green Belt**

9.4 Upon completion, we can see no reason why the schools site should not remain in the Green Belt if the Local Planning Authority deems that this is the best way of retaining control over future development.

9.5 As reflected in the Local Plan Inspector's comments, there are many examples of secondary schools and other educational establishments in the Metropolitan Green Belt.

9.6 Locally, these include

- The Leventhorpe School in Sawbridgeworth.
- Simon Balle School in Hertford.
- The Broxbourne School.
- St Mary's High School in Cheshunt.

9.7 An urgent educational need for a new or expanded school that cannot be met on a non-Green Belt site has been accepted elsewhere by Local Planning Authorities to represent the type of very special circumstances required under Green Belt policy. Cases with which Vincent & Gorbing has been directly involved include

- St Mary's High School in Cheshunt.
- Gateway Academy in Tilbury, Essex.
- Beacon Hill and Treetops Special Schools in Grays, Essex.

9.8 In all of these cases, upon referral, the Government Office for the East of England chose not to intervene (**Appendix 2**).

## **PART 3 – OTHER MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

## 10.0 SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT

10.1 Policy SD1 of the adopted East Herts Local Plan Second Review (Making Development More Sustainable) states

*'All proposals for development of 15 dwellings or more ...or for commercial development (including changes of use) of 250 square metres or more, will be expected to be accompanied by a Sustainability Statement which explains how the proposed development will:*

- *Create healthy, socially integrated communities;*
- *Encourage sustainable movement patterns through design and transport infrastructures;*
- *Achieve the sustainable use of resources such as land, water, energy, materials and waste;*
- *Be physically well integrated and respond to local character and distinctiveness;*
- *Protect and enhance the natural and built environment;*
- *Create a flourishing and healthy local economy.'*

10.2 The District Council's website contains a workbook aimed at assisting in determining the overall sustainability of a specific site. It does so by calculating the percentage of sustainability indicators that are achieved or surpassed, nearly met or missed significantly.

10.3 In our view, however, this workbook is mainly of assistance in assessing residential development proposals and is of limited assistance for the current application proposals.

10.4 Instead, therefore, we set out below a Sustainability Appraisal of the application proposals based upon the criteria set out in Policy SD1 above.

**Healthy, socially integrated communities**

10.5 The planning application proposals will help to create a healthy, socially integrated community in Bishop's Stortford by enabling the secondary educational requirements of its indigenous population to be met in situ and thus avoid the need to bus pupils out to adjoining towns.

10.6 The proposals will meet the demand in the town for single-sex education and will enable a greater parental choice in secondary school selection. By expanding two successful schools with high standards of educational attainment, the overall educational performance of the town's children should be enhanced.

**Accessibility by sustainable development modes**

10.7 The Transport Assessment prepared by Messrs Mayer Brown describes the measures proposed to ensure that access to the relocated and expanded schools by sustainable transport modes (cycle, walk, bus) is maximised.

10.8 A large number of the schools' existing pupils live within walk / cycle distance of the new schools site and this locational distribution is expected to continue for the foreseeable future. New walk / cycle facilities will be provided in the area of the new schools site, including a toucan crossing facility over Whittington Way, in order to encourage walk / cycle trips. Adequate and safe cycle storage facilities will be provided within the schools site.

10.9 Existing school buses from the wider schools catchment area will be diverted so as to serve the new site, with safe dropping off and boarding facilities provided within the confines of the site.

10.10 Whittington Way / London Road is currently served by bus services 333 and 510 and these services will be complemented by new / additional commercial bus services aimed at maximising the accessibility of the new schools site from existing and proposed residential areas.

10.11 In order to ensure that the maximum use is made of the above sustainable transport facilities, each school will produce, implement and monitor a School Travel Plan.

### **Sustainable use of resources**

10.12 Although the planning application proposals involve the development of 'greenfield' land, the sequential site search set out at Appendix 3 has indicated that there are no 'brownfield' or more preferable greenfield sites in Bishop's Stortford on which the urgent educational need can be met.

10.13 Given the consequent requirement to use greenfield land, the relocation and expansion of the two schools onto adjacent sites, enabling the sharing of facilities, is considered to be in accordance with sustainable development objectives for making the best use of land.

10.14 Both the Bishop's Stortford High School and the Herts & Essex High School are fully committed to the principles of sustainable design in respect of the new school buildings and site. The buildings will be built so as to achieve a BREEAM 'very good' rating.

10.15 Pending the detailed design process, it is clearly not possible to be specific about all the individual elements but these are expected to include

- Use of low and zero carbon technologies.
- Building design and orientation to allow for the maximum use of natural daylight and solar gain.

- Solar shading to key elevations to avoid mechanical cooling requirements.
- Use of renewable energy sources such as solar water heating systems, wind turbines, biomass boilers and ground source heat pumps.
- High standards of heat and noise insulation for all buildings including (where appropriate) green roofs.
- Use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) including soakaways, swales, permeable pavements and balancing ponds.
- Rain water recycling and water conservation e.g. low flush WCs.
- Design of building and playing field levels so as to minimise the amount of imported and exported fill material.
- Use of locally sourced, environmentally friendly, low embodied energy materials including recycled materials.
- Use of low maintenance construction components.
- On-site central refuse recycling.

### **Integration and response to local character**

- 10.16 Again, at this outline planning stage, it is not possible to be specific about the design detail of the proposed schools development. Given the Green Belt / urban fringe / gateway location of the Whittington Way site, however, it is acknowledged by the schools that a high standard of design will be required.
- 10.17 The relocated and expanded schools will both contain a range of extended school facilities which will be available for use by the local community out-of-school hours, thereby assisting in the integration of the schools into the local community.

### **Environmental protection and enhancement**

- 10.18 The environmental characteristics and assets of the Whittington Way site and the way that they have been reflected in the design of the proposals for the Whittington Way site are described in detail in the accompanying Design and Access Statement.
- 10.19 The impact of the development proposals upon the existing environment of the site and surrounding area is described in detail in the accompanying Environmental Statement and summarised in the following section of this statement.
- 10.20 In summary, whilst the existing natural environment of the Whittington Way site is considered to be of limited value, its existing characteristics and assets have been incorporated into the proposed site layout wherever possible and the opportunity has been taken to enhance the overall biodiversity of the site.

### **Flourishing and healthy economy**

- 10.21 The planning application proposals are education driven and are aimed at providing 21<sup>st</sup> century secondary school educational facilities for the children of Bishop's Stortford.
- 10.22 High standards of educational achievement are essential to the creation of a flourishing and healthy economy and the planning application proposals will greatly assist in the provision a high quality, well educated local workforce.

### **Summary**

- 10.23 In summary, therefore, the planning application proposals are considered to be fully compliant with the principles of sustainable development and with the criteria set out in Policy SD1.

## **11.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

- 11.1 A request for an Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Opinion was made to East Hertfordshire District Council in May 2007. By letter dated 11<sup>th</sup> June 2007 the Council advised that an Environmental Statement would be required.
- 11.2 An Environmental Statement has thus been prepared in respect of the development proposals for the site and the final planning application proposals reflect a number of iterations that have resulted from the EIA process.
- 11.3 The main findings of the specialist consultants involved in the preparation of the Environmental Statement are set out below.

### **LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT**

#### **Landscape impact**

- 11.4 David Jarvis Associates (DJA) concluded that the proposed development would strengthen the association of the site with the town of Bishop's Stortford and weaken its current general association with the Thorley Uplands landscape character area, particularly in the short term. In the long term, when new planting has become established and begun to mature, they concluded that the site would provide a transitional area between the more rural landscape of the area and the urban area of Bishop's Stortford.
- 11.5 In the short term, they assessed the potential effect on landscape character to be of moderate significance and adverse in nature. In the long term the potential effect on landscape character was assessed to be of moderate significance and neutral in nature.
- 11.6 DJA concluded that the proposed development would have a significant effect on the visual amenity value of views from Hertfordshire Way as it passes through the site given that the proposed new school buildings will

screen some existing views to the south from Hertfordshire Way. However, they concluded that effects on other existing footpaths or designated sites of special interest were unlikely to be of significance. Therefore the overall effect on landscape value was assessed to be of moderate significance and adverse in nature.

### **Visual impact**

11.7 DJA considered 19 sensitive receptor viewpoints and all, except one, were found to have some degree of adverse visual impact. The significance of effects ranged from substantial to moderate / slight.

11.8 Eleven viewpoints (mainly to the south of the site) were found to have potential substantial / moderate or higher visual effects at completion. In the long term, as planting begins to mature and screen the development, eight receptors were found still to have potential substantial / moderate or higher visual effects.

### **Artificial lighting**

11.9 DJA found that, although there is currently no artificial lighting within the proposed main site, there are well used, well lit, roads adjacent to or close to the site including Whittington Way. In addition there are well lit roundabouts at the junctions of the A1184 St James Way with Thorley Street to the south east, and with Obrey Way to the south west, and at the junction of Obrey Way with Whittington Way, close to the site to the west.

11.10 They concluded that

- The proposals would result in some loss of screening, potentially opening up views of the site from the houses to the north to artificial lighting on Whittington Way and the proposed roundabouts.

- Lighting associated with the development proposals would extend the lit edge of Bishop's Stortford.
- To the south of the proposed buildings, the multi-use games area along with interior and exterior lighting of the proposed buildings, would be a significant source of artificial light when viewed from the south.
- However, apart from views from public footpaths and roads, views of the site from the south and south west are limited and light would be seen in the context of existing street lighting. The orientation of houses to the east of the main site would make any significant effects from the lighting unlikely.

### **Effects on landscape related policies**

- 11.11 DJA concluded that the proposals would be consistent with the grain of development in this fringe area of Bishop's Stortford as the site lies within the ring road and has existing developed areas on three sides. The proposals were found to comply with other planning policies related to landscape issues.

### **Impacts during the construction period**

- 11.12 The DJA assessment generally considered the impacts of the completed development and of completion plus 15 years. However, during the construction period, they concluded that these effects may be increased, as there would be more activity on site, ongoing earthworks, incomplete buildings and the proposed planting would not have taken place. Impacts would therefore be slightly higher but would be apparent for a relatively short period only.

## **ECOLOGY AND NATURE CONSERVATION**

- 11.13 Green Environmental Consultants (GEC) concluded that the site is generally poor for wildlife and that its replacement with buildings and associated infrastructure would have a negligible effect on existing wildlife.
- 11.14 GEC identified the main potential receptors on the site as follows
- Bats - not resident but some minimal use of flight lines / foraging areas;
  - Badgers - a sporadically used outlier in a stand of trees adjacent to Whittington Way;
  - Breeding birds - a low local interest for breeding birds and low numbers of breeding Red List species within the area;
  - Boundary trees and internal hedgerows - low diversity but possible corridor functions.
- 11.15 Beyond the site boundary, GEC noted the presence of two County Wildlife Sites, part of one of these is also a Site of Scientific Interest (SSSI), approximately 400m from the site. The CWS / SSSI is located along the River Stort, and connected to the site via the drainage ditch to the south of the site which feeds into the River Stort.
- 11.16 GEC noted that the development proposals included landscaping belts of about 20m width to the west and east of the parking / access / area; a hedgerow / landscaped area of native species around the western and southern boundaries of the site; and a deeper landscaping / habitat area adjacent to the eastern boundary including balancing ponds which will provide wetland habitats.
- 11.17 They concluded that this planting would provide considerably more woody habitat than exists at present and would provide enhanced

opportunities for bird nesting and feeding, and bat flight lines. The eastern landscaping / habitat area and balancing pond area in particular was considered to provide the potential for an increased variety of habitats.

11.18 GEC advised that existing and proposed features on the site could be further enhanced and improved as follows.

- The existing poor quality hedgerow along the northern side of Hertfordshire Way, which is to be retained, apart from access points, could be enhanced by additional planting of native species.
- Planting of another native species hedgerow on the southern side of the footpath would create a better green corridor than currently exists.
- Provision of bird boxes and bat boxes could be provided in selected locations until the landscaping matures.
- Where necessary, lighting should be directed away from green areas, and designed so as to minimise diffuse lighting.

## **TREES**

11.19 Tree Fabrik concluded that

- Whilst a number of trees will be need to be removed to facilitate the development, particularly the Whittington Way highway improvements, significant provision is being made for landscape mitigation, including tree planting.
- Although there will be a small loss, in the context of the site, the replacement trees will result in a net public gain, enhancing the street scene and maintaining future tree cover.
- The existing trees which are identified for retention can be adequately protected during the ground works and construction

phase of development in accordance with British Standards 5837 (2005) 'Trees in relation to construction'.

11.20 The assessment advised that adequate tree protection and special precautions would be required to limit potential root disturbance and that this could be achieved in accordance with current good arboricultural practice through an Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan. Detailed mitigation measures in respect of works in the vicinity of the two oak trees on either side of Pynchbek are recommended in the assessment.

### **GEOLOGY, MINERALS AND GROUND CONDITIONS**

11.21 Based on a detailed Geoenvironmental Investigation that included both a desk-based study and intrusive testing, Faber Maunsell concluded that

- The underlying cohesive Glacial Till is not suitable as a drainage medium (e.g. for soakaways etc).
- Shallow spread foundations within the Glacial Till are likely to be suitable for the proposed development, unless the depth of existing or potential desiccation in the clay makes shallow / deepened trench fill / pads uneconomical in which case piles may be required.
- The site does not contain any minerals of economic interest in adequate volume and quality that would make commercial extraction viable.
- There is no significant contamination present on the site that would pose a risk to future site users or pose a risk to plants and trees.
- There is no significant geotechnical and geo-environmental risk present at the site that would suggest that the site is not suitable for the proposed school development.

- 11.22 A Construction Environmental Management Plan is recommended by Faber Maunsell in order to provide a system for managing environmental protection.

### **FLOOD RISK / DRAINAGE**

- 11.23 Faber Maunsell's Flood Risk Assessment identified that the site is not located in an area that is liable to river or sea flooding and is therefore classified as Zone 1 Low Probability within which PPS25 (Development and Flood Risk) advises that all uses of land are appropriate.

- 11.24 A number of Sustainable Urban Drainage's System techniques are recommended in the assessment as part of the proposed drainage strategy in order to assist with surface water run off from the site and help to ensure that the site and development will not be at increased risk of flooding or increase the risk of flooding to neighbouring properties. These include storage ponds and swales, 'green' roofs, permeable paving and the conservation of water using water butts.

- 11.25 The assessment also concludes that, subject to appropriate mitigation the proposals would not have any implications for groundwater vulnerability, groundwater source protection or water abstraction.

### **AGRICULTURE**

- 11.26 Vincent and Gorbing concluded that the proposal will have little impact on the farming operations of the existing farms which farm the site.

- 11.27 The proposal would result in the loss of approximately 3.8ha of the total farmed area of the Thorley Hall Farm, which represents approximately 1% of the overall farmholding.

- 11.28 The proposal would result in the loss of approximately 16.2ha of the total farmed area of Harps Farm / Beggar's Hall Farm, which represents approximately 1.8% of the overall farmholding.

11.29 The proposal would result in the loss of approximately 20 hectares (50.0 acres) of Grade 2 best and most versatile farmland to development. However, approximately half of this would comprise grass playing fields and so could in theory revert back to farmland, if necessary.

### **SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACTS**

11.30 Vincent and Gorbing defined 3 main socio-economic impacts of the proposed development as follows

- Impact on other secondary schools.
- Impact on other employment facilities.
- Impact on other community sport and leisure facilities.

11.31 It was concluded that the increase in educational capacity at the two schools would be unlikely to affect the viability of the other existing secondary schools in the area because

- All schools are currently at or near capacity and the proposed capacity increase is required to accommodate the increase in pupil numbers expected to arise from recent and committed housing developments.
- The existing catchment areas of the two schools will only change marginally.
- School admission policies will ensure that the schools do not recruit from further afield than at present.

11.32 It was concluded that the increase in employment levels at the two schools would be unlikely to adversely affect other existing employers in the area since

- The build-up of employment will be gradual and recruitment will take place within a relatively wide area (nationally for many teaching staff).
- The increase in job opportunities and demand will be partly off-set by the increased number of economically active persons in the area as a result of the proposed housing developments in the town, including (ultimately) those on the existing school sites and the Hadham Road site.

11.33 Finally, it was concluded that the community facilities proposed on the site would be unlikely to adversely affect the viability of other existing sports and leisure facilities in the Bishop's Stortford area because, as a result of recent housing and population growth in the area, there is an acknowledged need for additional facilities of this nature. The proposed housing developments in the town including those on the existing school sites and the Hadham Road site would also generate an additional demand for indoor and outdoor sports and leisure facilities in the area.

## **CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ARCHAEOLOGY**

11.34 CgMs Consulting considered the impact of the development proposals on the cultural heritage of the area. They defined the main impacts as being upon the listed buildings in the Thorley Street area and upon the archaeological remains discovered within the site's boundaries.

### **Listed buildings**

11.35 The following listed buildings in the Thorley Street area, alongside the site's eastern boundary, were considered by CgMs to be those likely to be most affected by the proposals

- Thorley House
- Sparrows Nest
- Moorlands and Glen View

- Elm Trees
- Thorley Wash Cottage

11.36 The CgMs assessment took into account proposed mitigation measures as follows

- Locating habitat areas alongside the site's eastern boundary.
- Locating the schools' buildings and parking areas away from the site's eastern boundary.
- Retaining and protecting existing vegetation alongside the site's eastern boundary.
- Incorporating a substantial 20m deep landscaped belt adjacent to the eastern boundary with Thorley House.
- Reinforcing the southern boundary of the site with new tree and hedge planting.

11.37 With this mitigation in place, CgMs concluded that the proposals would not significantly affect the listed buildings or their setting.

### **ARCHAEOLOGY**

11.38 CgMs concluded that the development proposals would have no implications for any Scheduled Ancient Monuments or locally designated Areas of Archaeological Significance.

11.39 However, based on their archaeological desk-based assessment and subsequent geophysical survey and evaluation trenching, they established that the site contains Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman remains of regional importance. These remains extend across most of the site.

- 11.40 CgMs concluded that the magnitude of impact would be extensive and that as the remains are considered to be of moderate sensitivity and the impact will be extensive, the impact of the proposed development will be of major significance.
- 11.41 CgMs considered the case for preservation in-situ of the remains. However, due to the design and construction needs of the buildings, car parks and playing fields (i.e. terracing) and the very shallow depth of the archaeological remains, they concluded that preservation in-situ would not be feasible.
- 11.42 However, they considered that there would be a positive benefit delivered by the opportunity to study the Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman complex in full. This would further the local understanding of the prehistoric and Roman landscape of Bishop's Stortford and Hertfordshire and also the wider academic study of the archaeology of the Roman period and in particular the growth of viticulture and other agricultural practices within possible Roman estate villages.
- 11.43 They thus recommended that, prior to development
- The site be fully excavated and recorded in accordance with a written scheme of investigation submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval.
  - The results of the excavation be published following completion of the post-excavation analysis and the archives and artefacts deposited with the local museum.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### **Potential impacts**

11.44 Mayer Brown Limited considered the environmental impact of the traffic generated by the proposed development, both during the construction phase and during the operational phase.

### **Construction phase**

11.45 In considering the impact during the construction phase, they took into account that any significant effects during construction will be for a temporary period and will be mitigated by a Construction Code of Conduct, which will set out, amongst other matters:

- Routes to be used by vehicles accessing the proposed development.
- Times when vehicle movements and deliveries will be allowed.
- Proposals to minimise the number of vehicle trips by employees during construction.
- Facilities for loading and unloading.
- Facilities for parking cars and other vehicles.

11.46 With these measures in place, it was concluded that the impact of the construction traffic would not be harmful to the amenities of nearby residential properties.

### **Operational phase**

11.47 In considering the impact of traffic during the operational phase, Mayer Brown took into account the following mitigation measures

- The introduction of Highways Management Measures along Whittington Way.

- The introduction of the SCOOT Traffic Control System along London Road to improve the operation of London Road.
- The provision of pedestrian and cycle links and toucan crossing along Whittington Way.
- The provision of new scheduled bus services to the site.
- The introduction of dedicated school bus services to the site.
- The introduction of comprehensive School Travel Plans.
- The introduction of a Traffic and Car Parking Management Plan for the schools.

11.48 With these measures in place, it was concluded that the impact of the schools traffic would not be harmful to the amenities of nearby residential properties.

### **Rights of way**

11.49 Vincent and Gorbing considered the impact of the development proposals upon rights of way in the vicinity of the site.

11.50 It was concluded that the proposals would have a direct impact on footpath 4/34 (Hertfordshire Way) which crosses the main body of the site. The character of the path will inevitably change from one of a path running through arable fields to one passing through a school site and which is crossed in a number of locations.

11.51 However, with the following mitigation measures in place, it was considered that the impact on the Hertfordshire Way would be minimised

- Retaining the footpath on its current alignment, for its existing width and generally at its existing levels.

- Creating a 6m to 10m wide corridor passing through the site along the route of the Hertfordshire Way (wider than the existing path).
- Retaining the majority of the existing hedge, trees and drainage ditch which run along side the path (except where the path needs to be crossed and at the entrances to the buildings).
- Creating new sections of hedge and trees alongside the corridor to create a country lane character comprising a path with trees and hedges on both sides (except where the path needs to be crossed).
- Generally setting back school buildings at least 10m from the edge of the corridor, with a minimum distance of 5m.

11.52 It was recognised that the proposals would also have a direct and indirect impacts on Footpath 3 that runs to the south of the site. However, with the following mitigation measures in place, it was considered that the impact on Footpath 3 would be minimised

- Placing the drainage ditch containing surface water run off from the site in a pipe where it crosses the footpath.
- Locating the school buildings and multi-use games area away from the footpath.
- Incorporating a hedgerow and trees on the southern boundary of the main part of the site.

11.53 A number of positive impacts of the development proposals were also recognised, including the provision of a new permissive footpath link from Whittington Way to Hertfordshire Way through the eastern part of the schools site.

## **NOISE AND VIBRATION**

11.54 The Sharps Redmore Partnership considered the impacts of the proposed development in terms of

- The impact of construction noise and vibration on existing residential properties.
- The impact of operational noise from the schools on existing residential properties.
- The impact of environmental noise on the proposed schools.

### **Effect of construction noise and vibration on existing properties**

11.55 Sharps Redmore recommended a number of good site practices (for inclusion in a Construction Code of Conduct) to reduce the potential noise and vibration impacts on residential properties in close proximity to the site.

11.56 With these practices in operation, they concluded that the construction impacts of the proposals should not be harmful.

### **Effect of operational noise on existing properties**

11.57 Sharps Redmore concluded that, during operation, the schools would offer the potential to impact upon the local noise climate via the following elements

- Road traffic noise.
- School noise.
- Car park noise
- Noise from mechanical service plant.

11.58 In terms of the first three elements, Sharps Redmore's assessments demonstrated that such predicted noise levels would have a negligible impact on neighbouring residents, and on local amenities.

11.59 In terms of the fourth element, Sharps Redmore suggested that planning conditions be imposed (in accordance with BS4142) to ensure that noise emissions from mechanical service plant do not adversely affect neighbouring residents or harm local amenities.

### **Effect of noise on proposed schools**

11.60 Sharps Redmore's investigation demonstrated that current levels of ambient noise at the site comply with external guideline noise levels recommended in Building Bulletin 93 for playing fields, with noise levels low enough towards the middle of the site to enable outdoor teaching, when aircraft are landing.

11.61 Their investigation also considered the impact of the Generation 1 planning proposals for an increase in air traffic from Stansted Airport. They concluded that the predicted increase in noise levels across the site would not be detrimental to school children during outdoor teaching activities.

### **AIR QUALITY**

11.62 AMEC Limited considered the impact of the development proposals on air quality during both the construction phase and the operational phase.

#### **Construction phase**

11.63 AMEC's Air Quality Impact Assessment identified a range of mitigation measures (for inclusion in a Construction Code of Conduct) in order to minimise dust during the construction phase. These include

- Use of surfaced haul routes where practicable;
- Limiting vehicle speeds;

- Wheel cleaning to minimise transfer of mud onto surrounding roads;
- Where possible, minimising internal plant/vehicle movements and other dust-generating activities, especially near site perimeters adjacent to residential areas (i.e., north western, northern and north eastern perimeters);
- Dampening un-surfaced haul routes and dusty surfaces when necessary;
- Sweeping surfaced haul routes and hard-standing areas, when necessary;
- Providing dust screens/enclosures around active construction areas; and
- Retention of existing trees and hedgerows (providing additional dust screens), including those on northern and eastern perimeters adjacent to residential receptors.

11.64 AMEC's assessment also identified a range of mitigation measures (for inclusion in a Construction Code of Conduct) in order to minimise the impact of vehicle and plant exhaust emissions on air quality during the construction phase. These include:

- Restricting construction vehicle routes from using the Hockerill Junction;
- Switching engines off when not in use;
- Using well maintained construction plant; and
- Where possible, minimising internal plant/vehicle activities, especially near site perimeters adjacent to residential areas (i.e., north western, northern and north eastern perimeters).

### **Operational phase**

- 11.65 AMEC concluded that predicted NO<sub>2</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> concentrations would be well below Air Quality Objectives for users of the relocated schools.
- 11.66 They considered that potential impacts during the operational phase would be limited to those associated with changes in traffic flows on local roads. As described previously, the proposed development scheme for the Whittington Way site incorporates measures to minimise reliance on car journeys and encourage the use of more sustainable modes of travel by users of the development.
- 11.67 In addition, the development scheme provides for significant areas of tree and hedgerow planting, and where possible, the retention of existing trees and hedgerows, including those on northern and eastern perimeters adjacent to residential receptors. These may, to a limited extent, contribute to improving local air quality.

### **Infrastructure services**

- 11.68 Faber Maunsell considered the impact of the development proposals upon infrastructure services, including foul drainage, gas, electricity, water, telecom and cable TV.
- 11.69 They concluded that the site was capable of being drained and serviced without any harmful impact on the environment subject to the hand digging of trenches where they pass close to established trees within and around the site.

### **Use of natural resources and waste**

- 11.70 The proposed development will be typical of its type in terms of the natural resources it requires. No abnormal amounts of materials or unusual materials are likely to be required. There is a natural tendency to minimise the amounts of such resources consistent with efficiency and cost minimisation.

11.71 In terms of waste, the development proposals assume a balance of cut and fill material arising from the regarding and levelling operations across the site. Based on this assumption, Vincent and Gorbing concluded that there would therefore be no abnormal amount of waste arising from the construction phase.

**Overall conclusion**

11.72 The planning application proposals will clearly have a major impact (at both the construction and operational phases) on the existing environment of both the adjoining urban area to the north and the rural area to the south.

11.73 The extensive technical studies that have been carried out as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment have defined a range of mitigation measures that, if successfully implemented through the operation of planning conditions and obligations, will limit the extent of the impact on the environment of the area. These include a Construction Code of Conduct and a Construction Environmental Management Plan to control the impact of the construction phase.

11.74 Whilst a number of important residual impacts will undoubtedly remain in the long-term, including the landscape and visual impact of the proposals, we do not consider these impacts to be significantly harmful. In our considered view, they will be more than outweighed by the wider educational and community benefits of the application proposals.

## **12.0 IMPACT ON THE HIGHWAY NETWORK**

12.1 The submitted Transport Assessment prepared by Mayer Brown has considered the impact of the planning application proposals on the local and wider highway network both individually and cumulatively, taking into account the related development proposals on the existing school sites and the former school reserve site at Hadham Road.

### **Traffic model**

12.2 As described in the assessment, a number of scenarios have been tested using an updated version of the local highway authority's Bishop's Stortford traffic model. The proposed school roundabout junctions on Whittington Way have been included and tested in the model runs, together with other junctions and links in the Bishop's Stortford area.

12.3 The traffic modelling exercise has been predicated on the assumption that the proportion of car trips by pupils to the two schools, which currently stand at around 33% of all trips, can be constrained to the same level.

12.4 The model results show generally an increase in traffic flows around the Bishop's Stortford northern and western ring road system as a result of the application proposals, with some decrease in traffic on local roads. Only two junctions are predicted to result in a worsening of conditions as a result of the schools' relocation proposals, the London Road / Whittington Way junction and the London Road / Thorley Hill junction. In both cases, more detailed modelling has indicated that this predicted worsening can be off-set by the introduction of a SCOOT Traffic Control System along London Road, including the junction of London Road / Whittington Way.

## **Proposals**

- 12.5 In order to ensure that the proportion of car trips to the schools is limited to 33% or less, the Transport Assessment proposes
- The provision of pedestrian and cycle links and toucan crossing along Whittington Way.
  - Improved scheduled bus services to serve the site.
  - The diversion of dedicated School Bus Services to serve the site.
  - The introduction of comprehensive School Travel Plans aimed at persuading pupils and staff to utilise the above facilities and other sustainable modes such as car sharing.
  - The provision of a Car parking and Management Plan for the new school site.
- 12.6 These are all measures that can be secured by planning condition or planning obligation.

## **Congestion on Whittington Way**

- 12.7 Whilst the traffic model indicates that the schools can be accommodated on the application site without any significant traffic queues at key junctions including Whittington Way / London Road, this view was queried by a number of local residents at a public exhibition of the development proposals. Empirical evidence was cited of existing long traffic queues on Whittington Way in the morning peak hour caused by delays at the London Road traffic lights.
- 12.8 Subsequent analysis by Mayer Brown has indicated that such queues are infrequent and the result of traffic delays on London Road, including the dropping off of pupils at the existing Bishop's Stortford High School entrance. A series of measures have been proposed in the Transport Assessment to improve traffic flows along London Road.

### **Pynchbek roundabout**

- 12.9 A number of local residents at the public exhibition objected to the roundabout proposed at the Whittington Way / Pynchbek junction on the basis that it would result in the loss of two oak trees covered by Tree Preservation Order and would bring traffic closer to existing residential properties.
- 12.10 As a result, the access proposals submitted with the outline planning application have been amended and now show the Whittington Way / Pynchbek roundabout located further to the south, allowing the retention of the two oak trees and a greater separation from the houses in Pynchbek.

### **School buses and coaches**

- 12.11 A number of local residents at the public exhibition expressed the view that the northern section of Obrey Way between Thorley Lane and the Whittington Way / Villiers-sur-Marne roundabout was too narrow for school buses and coaches.
- 12.12 The possibility of widening this section of road has subsequently been given careful consideration by Mayer Brown. However, any widening proposals would inevitably require the removal of several trees on the eastern side of the road which are covered by a Tree Preservation Order. Such a road improvement is not favoured, therefore, and forms no part of the planning application proposals.
- 12.13 Whilst the concern of residents in this respect is not necessarily accepted as requiring a change to the application proposals, it is pertinent to note that alternative access routes for school buses and coaches to the schools site are available via Villiers-sur-Marne Avenue and London Road. If considered appropriate by the planning and highway authorities, the proposed School Travel Plans could incorporate

a requirement for school buses and coaches to avoid the use of Obrey Way.

### **Construction access**

- 12.14 The submitted planning application and accompanying Environmental Statement has been prepared assuming that construction access to the schools site would be from Whittington Way.
- 12.15 However, a number of local residents at the exhibition queried the impact of construction traffic on Whittington Way from both a highway capacity and highway safety point of view, particularly citing the narrow northern section of Obrey Way between Thorley Lane and the Whittington Way / Villiers-sur-Marne roundabout.
- 12.16 Again, this concern is not necessarily accepted as requiring a change to the application proposals. However, if considered appropriate by the highway authority, the proposed Construction Code of Conduct could require that all construction traffic arrives or departs via the Whittington Way / London Road junction.
- 12.17 Alternatively, an alternative solution would be to construct a temporary construction access road from the southern, wider, section of Obrey Way and require in the Construction Code of Conduct that all construction traffic arrives and departments via this access road and St James Way.
- 12.18 The land over which this construction access road would need to pass is owned by one of the same farming families that own the main school site. The family has confirmed that they would be willing to make the land available on a temporary basis for the construction access road.
- 12.19 If this alternative solution is considered acceptable to the planning and highway authorities, it is acknowledged that a separate planning application would be required for the construction access road. An obligation to submit such a planning application for approval could be incorporated into a Section 106 Agreement.

### **Summary**

- 12.20 Subject to the imposition of appropriate planning conditions and obligations to deliver the aforementioned transport improvements, it is concluded that the planning application proposals will not have a significantly harmful impact on the safety and capacity of Bishop's Stortford highway network.

## **13.0 OTHER BENEFITS OF THE PROPOSALS**

- 13.1 In addition to the educational benefits that will flow directly from the implementation of the planning application proposals, there will also be a further major community benefit in terms of the availability of the new school facilities out-of-school hours use.
- 13.2 The new schools will be extended schools containing a range of facilities with potential for dual use. As described in the accompanying Open Space, Sport and Recreation assessment, only a limited community use is currently made of the facilities on the existing school sites. The main facilities that are used are the swimming pool at the Herts & Essex School and the school hall and the 5-court sports hall at the Bishop's Stortford High School.
- 13.3 In contrast, the school governors have agreed to the community use of the following facilities at the new site
- School halls.
  - Floodlit all-weather pitch.
  - Floodlit games courts.
  - Swimming pool.
  - 8-court sports hall.
  - Squash courts.
  - Health and fitness suite.
  - Dance and drama studios.
  - Grass playing pitches.
  - Changing facilities.

13.4 Other facilities at the two schools could also potentially be made available for community use. The governors of the Bishop's Stortford High School have also agreed to the community use of the high quality sports facilities at the Jobbers Wood detached site, subject to the lifting of a restrictive planning obligation.

**Summary**

13.5 Given the accessibility of the site and the availability of on-site parking, the potential for community use of the school sites is enormous and represents a major potential benefit for the local community.

## **PART 4 - IMPLEMENTATION**

## **14.0 IMPLEMENTATION**

### **DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

- 14.1 Following the satisfactory grant of outline planning permission, landowner and other legal agreements that are dependent upon the planning approval will be completed and a full design team will be appointed to progress the outline proposals for the Whittington Way site to the detailed design and contract stages.
- 14.2 Once the necessary reserved matters, Building Regulations and other detailed approvals have been obtained, and the schools and County Council have certainty that they have an affordable project, the contract will be tendered and let.
- 14.3 It is currently intended that the development will take place in two phases
- Phase 1 will comprise the access works, the site modelling and external works and the shared facilities building, plus classroom provision sufficient for each school to accommodate a 6 FE annual intake (180 pupils). Appropriate car parking will be provided to support these facilities (approximately 400 spaces)
  - Phase 2 will comprise the provision of further classrooms and related facilities to enable each of the schools to increase its annual intake to 8 FE (240 pupils). A further 100 car parking spaces will be provided at this stage. The timing of the second phase will be dependent upon a variety of factors, including updated pupil forecasts.
- 14.4 The Phase 1 building works are expected to take some 18 months to complete. In order for the schools to open in September 2011, the works will thus need to commence in early 2009 at the latest.

## **PLANNING CONDITIONS**

14.5 It is acknowledged that a large and complex development proposal such as this will need to be carefully regulated by planning condition in order to ensure that the community and environmental impacts are successfully mitigated and that the overall educational and community benefits of the proposals are fully realised.

14.6 Planning conditions are anticipated dealing with the following matters

- The submission of reserved matters within 3 years and the commencement of development within 5 years.
- Implementation of landscaping proposals within the first available planting season.
- Development to be in accordance with approved plans and drawings.
- Submission and approval of drawings of all highway works, access roads and parking areas.
- Implementation of approved highway works prior to occupation.
- Submission and approval of a strategy for the discharge of foul and surface water.
- Submission and approval of a programme of archaeological works.
- Submission and approval of a biodiversity plan / ecological management plan.
- Submission and approval of a lighting scheme, including the floodlighting of the play areas.

- Submission and approval of a scheme for the attenuation of noise from mechanical service plant.
- Submission and approval of a Construction Code of Conduct / Environmental Management Plan.

### **SECTION 106 AGREEMENT**

- 14.7 It is also acknowledged that there will be a wide range of matters that may be considered to fall outside the normal scope of planning conditions and will thus need to be the subject of an agreement prepared under the terms of Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).
- 14.8 The main heads currently anticipated for such an agreement are set out below.

#### **Sustainable development**

- 14.9 In order to ensure that the schools are built to the highest standards of sustainable design, an obligation upon the schools' development to achieve (at least) the Building Research Establishment's BREEAM 'very good' standard is anticipated.

#### **Development implementation and phasing**

- 14.10 In order to ensure that the initial development phase of two 6 FE schools is accompanied by the necessary infrastructure and mitigation measures, an obligation upon the schools' to submit for approval a scheme of development phasing is anticipated.

#### **Community Use Agreement**

- 14.11 In order to ensure that the proposed extensive community use of the schools' sporting and other facilities is delivered, an obligation upon the schools to enter into a formal Community Use Agreement is anticipated, along the lines recommended by Sport England.

- 14.12 As indicated at **Appendix 3**, the Community Use Agreement will also serve to mitigate against a number of Open Space, Sport and Recreation impacts arising from the new schools development and the redevelopment of the existing school sites and the County Council's Hadham Road site.

### **Management of Community Facilities**

- 14.13 In order to ensure that the community facilities are managed to the mutual benefit of both curricular and extra-curricular activities, an obligation upon the schools to enter into a formal Management Agreement is anticipated, to be agreed with Sport England.

### **Public transport contribution**

- 14.14 In order to ensure that the proposed public transport enhancements are delivered in order to reduce dependence upon car travel, an obligation upon the schools to provide an appropriate financial sum to the County Council's Passenger Transport Unit is anticipated.

### **School Travel Plan**

- 14.15 In order to ensure that pupils, staff and parents are actively encouraged to use sustainable transport modes, an obligation upon the schools to prepare, implement and actively monitor a School Transport Plan(s) is anticipated, in discussion with the County Council's School Travel Advisory Service.

### **Car parking and traffic management plan**

- 14.16 In order to ensure that the impact of the schools upon the local highway network is minimised, an obligation upon the schools to prepare, implement and monitor a Car Parking and Traffic Management Plan for the schools' site is anticipated.

### **Off-site highway improvements**

- 14.17 In order to ensure that the impact of the schools upon the local highway network is minimised, an obligation upon the schools to fund a number of improvements to off-site highway junctions is anticipated, including the introduction of a SCOOT Traffic Control System along London Road, including the junction of London Road / Whittington Way.

### **Construction access road**

- 14.18 In order to ensure that the impact of the schools upon the local highway network is minimised, an obligation upon the schools to submit for approval – and implement prior to development of the schools site, if permitted - a construction access road from Obrey Way.

### **Traffic regulation orders**

- 14.19 In order to ensure that the impact of the schools upon the local highway network is minimised, an obligation upon the schools to fund the preparation of Traffic Regulation Orders in Whittington Way and adjacent roads is anticipated.

### **OTHER LEGAL AGREEMENTS**

- 14.20 It is also recognised that a number of other legal agreements will need to be in place before the development can commence.
- 14.21 These will include an agreement under Sections 38 and 278 of the Highways Act in respect of the site access proposals along Whittington Way.

## **15.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 15.1 The planning application proposal is for the relocation and expansion of the Bishop's Stortford High School and the Herts & Essex High School to a new shared site to the south of Whittington Way, Bishop's Stortford.
- 15.2 The proposal is education-driven, the expansion of the two schools being required to address the urgent need for additional secondary school capacity in the Bishop's Stortford area that has arisen as a result of recent and committed housing growth.
- 15.3 The selection of the application site followed a detailed site search. No suitable sites (previously-developed or open) were found in the urban area, necessitating the extension of the search to Green Belt sites.
- 15.4 The application site is considered to be the best available Green Belt site to meet the educational requirement, being well located relative to the existing urban area. With the package of on- and off-site improvements that is proposed, it will be highly accessible by sustainable modes of transport. The scheme of proposals will also ensure that the impact on the local environment is minimised and that the impact upon the openness of the Green Belt is limited.
- 15.5 Green Belt policy allows new build development in very special circumstances. It is considered that such circumstances apply in this instance and that the development proposal is otherwise acceptable in planning policy terms.
- 15.6 The application is thus commended for approval.

## APPENDIX 1

## PROPOSED RELOCATION OF THE HERTS & ESSEX AND BISHOP'S STORTFORD HIGH SCHOOLS TO LAND AT WHITTINGTON WAY, BISHOP'S STORTFORD

### TECHNICAL STUDIES

<b>REF.</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>AUTHOR</b>
1	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment	David Jarvis Associates
2	Ecology Report	Green Environmental
3	Environmental Noise Assessment	Sharps Redmore Partnership
4	Environmental Noise Impact Assessments	Sharps Redmore Partnership
5	Air Quality Impact Assessment	AMEC
6	Arboricultural Survey	Fabrik
7	Arboricultural Impact Assessment	Fabrik
8	Flood Risk Assessment	Faber Maunsell
9	Drainage Strategy	Faber Maunsell
10	Utilities Master Plan	Faber Maunsell
11	Geoenvironmental Desk Study Report	Faber Maunsell
12	Geoenvironmental Interpretative Report	Faber Maunsell
13	Archaeological Desk Based Assessment	CgMs
14	Geophysical Survey Report	Stratascan
15	Archaeological Watching Brief	John Moore Heritage Services
16	Archaeological Evaluation Report	John Moore Heritage Services

## APPENDIX 2

## APPENDIX 3

**SPORT AND RECREATION – MITIGATION OF IMPACTS**

	<b>SITE</b>	<b>IMPACT</b>	<b>MITIGATION</b>
<b>1</b>	Herts & Essex High School	Loss of existing community use of the school's 22.9 x 6.9 metre (4 lane) swimming pool.	Community use agreement in respect of the proposed replacement 25 x 13 metre (6 lane) swimming pool at the Whittington Way site.
<b>2</b>	Bishop's Stortford High School	Loss of existing community use of the school's 5-court sports hall	Community use agreement in respect of the proposed replacement 8-court sports hall at the Whittington Way site.
<b>3</b>	Residential development sites (775 units)	Additional demand for indoor sports facilities arising from the new housing	<p>Community use agreement in respect of new facilities at the Whittington Way site</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swimming pool</li> <li>• Sports hall</li> <li>• Squash courts</li> <li>• Health and fitness suite</li> <li>• Dance and drama studios</li> <li>• Changing facilities</li> <li>• Community office</li> </ul> <p>In lieu of financial contributions</p>
<b>4</b>	Residential development sites (775 units)	Additional demand for outdoor sports facilities arising from the new housing	<p>Community use agreement in respect of new facilities at the Whittington Way site</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Floodlit AWP</li> <li>• Floodlit games courts</li> <li>• Grass playing pitches</li> <li>• Changing facilities</li> </ul> <p>In lieu of financial contributions</p>

	<b>SITE</b>	<b>IMPACT</b>	<b>MITIGATION</b>
<b>5</b>	Residential development sites (775 units)	Additional demands for parks and public gardens and amenity green space arising from the new housing	On-site provision plus community use agreement in respect of the woodland area on the Hadham Road site  In lieu of financial contributions
<b>6</b>	Residential development sites (775 units)	Additional demands for children's play space arising from the new housing	Provision to be made on site or financial contribution towards the enhancement of off-site facilities
<b>7</b>	Hadham Road	Loss of playing field at Hadham Road  Note – unsecured use (only 1 year licence agreement)	Community use agreement in respect of Jobbers Wood subject to lifting of planning obligation