



REFERENCE NO: CR/2017/0341/CON

LOCATION: [NORTHGATE PRIMARY SCHOOL, GREEN LANE, NORTHGATE, CRAWLEY](#)
PROPOSAL: CONSULTATION FROM WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL (WSCC/013/17/CR) FOR THE ADDITION OF TWO AND SINGLE STOREY EXTENSIONS TO ALLOW INCREASE IN PUPIL NOS. FROM 2FE TO 3FE AND ASSOCIATED WORKS, INCLUDING INCREASE IN CAR PARKING, ZEBRA CROSSINGS AND MAKING PERMANENT THE 2 CLASSROOM NURSERY BUILDINGS, AND DEMOLITION OF THE EXISTING (CARETAKERS) HOUSE.

TARGET DECISION DATE: 10 May 2017

CASE OFFICER: Mrs K. Palmer

APPLICANTS NAME: West Sussex County Council

AGENTS NAME:

PLANS & DRAWINGS CONSIDERED

Tree Retention Protection Plan; Tree Constraints Plan, Existing Tree Schedule, Construction Phase Traffic Plan, Proposed Site Works Plan, 011 Roof Plan Rev A, 020 Proposed Elevations Rev D, 008 Existing Floor Plans Rev A, 007 Existing Site Plan Rev A, 005 Proposed Site Plan Rev H, 004 Proposed Drains Rev B, 003 Existing Elevations Rev B, 002 Existing Drains Rev B, 001 Site Location & Boundary Plan Rev C.

CONSULTEE NOTIFICATIONS & RESPONSES:-

1. CBC - Environmental Health- No objection
2. CBC Arboricultural Officer- No objection

NEIGHBOUR NOTIFICATIONS:-

Neighbours were not notified, as this committee item relates to a consultation from West Sussex County Council.

RESPONSES RECEIVED:-

Three letters of objection have been received by Crawley Borough Council from neighbouring residents raising concerns about the scheme. Issues raised include:

- There would not be sufficient parking for staff and visitors.
- There should be a pupil collection point for cars within the school grounds.
- The proposed park and stride will not be used by working parents due to time it will take.
- The Parade car-park cannot accommodate the additional vehicles as proposed.
- Concern for stress on street parking provision for residents of the surrounding area.
- The proposed zebra crossings and associated zigzag lines and unspecified drop-off area on Oak Way would result in the loss of a significant number of resident parking spaces. This would be for the entire day, although the crossings would only be used for short periods of time.

- The proposed zebra crossings would reduce the number of parked cars and this would encourage drivers to increase their speed on Hollybush Road, creating a more hazardous environment for pupils.
- Car users of driveways adjacent to the zebra crossings would have to reverse onto the zebra crossings.

These letters will be passed to West Sussex County Council, as they will be determining the application.

REASON FOR REPORTING TO COMMITTEE:-

A request was made for this consultation to be called into Planning Committee by Councillor Thomas.

THE APPLICATION SITE:-

- 1.1 The application site is Northgate Primary School, which is bounded by Barnfield Road to the south, Hollybush Lane and Green Lane to the east and Green Walk to the north. Immediately to the west of the site are properties located along Oak Way. The school site has vehicular access from Green Lane to the east. Pedestrian access is available from Green Lane, Hollybush Road and Barnfield Road.
- 1.2 The application site is located within a predominantly residential area. There are no identified site constraints. There is an existing, currently vacant, caretaker's house close to the entrance from Green Lane.

THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:-

- 2.1 The development is a consultation from West Sussex County Council (WSSCC/013/17/CR) in relation to the addition of single storey and two storey extensions to allow increase in pupil numbers from 2 forms of entry to 3 and associated works including an increase in car-parking, provision of zebra-crossings and making permanent the 2 existing classroom-nursery buildings.
- 2.2 The proposals would result in the creation of extensions to accommodate an additional 120 pupils, rising from 510 to 630. There would also be an additional 18 members of staff required.
- 2.3 A new classroom is proposed to be added to the KS1 rooms adjacent to a disused entrance. To the south of the site a two-storey extension is proposed comprising 6 classrooms, a group room and staff room.
- 2.4 The on-site nursery facility is located within a temporary building. This is proposed to be made a permanent facility.
- 2.5 With regards to parking there are currently 35 staff parking spaces and one disabled for the use of staff only. The area of hardstanding within the carpark is proposed to be extended to create an additional 27 car-parking spaces. This would be accommodated by demolishing the empty caretaker's house. A new permeable tarmac path is also proposed that would run adjacent to the carpark. The new path would require the existing school gates onto Green Lane to be slightly set back from the existing location.
- 2.6 There are currently 40 cycle stands, the existing shelter is proposed to be removed and three new, more secure shelters are proposed near to the main entrance adding 28 cycle spaces, creating a total of 68 cycle spaces.
- 2.7 An area of hardstanding is also proposed to increase the size of the playground. This would be predominantly located on the site of the existing temporary staff room, which would be removed following the extensions to the main building.
- 2.8 It is proposed to use an off-site construction process to minimise disruption to pupils.

- 2.9 Whilst not development and therefore not part of the application, two zebra crossings are proposed to the roads adjoining the site. One would be positioned adjacent to the western boundary of the site on Barnfield Road, and one near the south-eastern corner of the site on Hollybush Road.

PLANNING HISTORY:-

- 3.1 CR/2017/0015/CON- The development was a consultation from West Sussex County Council (WSSCC/001/17/CR) in relation to the addition of a single storey and a two storey extension to allow increase in pupil numbers from 2 forms of entry to 3 and associated works including an increase in hard play area and reconfiguration of the existing car park. Withdrawn. (This application did not involve the demolition of the existing caretakers house).
- 3.2 CR/2017/0199/CON- consultation from (WSSCC/008/17/CR) for the erection of a temporary staff room block, new additional hard area and new drop-off area.
- 3.3 CR/2015/0251/CON- consultation from WSSCC (WSSCC/030/15/CR) for installation of modular classroom for a temporary period of 4 years including associated hard surfacing. No objection.
- 3.4 CR/2009/0086/CON- consultation from West Sussex County Council for the erection of a children and family centre including access, car parking and external works. No objection.
- 3.5 CR/2006/0749/CON- consultation from WSSCC on an application for the removal of windows and surround overlooking playground and brick up opening. No objection.
- 3.6 CR/2005/0738/CON- consultation from WSSCC on an application for erection of 1.5m high standard bow top fencing along frontage to Barnfield Road. No objection.

PLANNING POLICY:-

National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

- 4.1 The NPPF has a golden thread running through it which seeks to ensure a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The NPPF states that there are three dimensions to sustainable development and the planning system performs an economic, social and environmental role. These roles are mutually dependent. The Framework requires applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan.

Relevant sections are:

- Paragraph 14: Presumption in favour of sustainable development. The National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking.
- Paragraph 17: Core planning principles. Always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.
- Section 4: Promoting Sustainable transport. All developments that generate significant amounts of movements should be supported by a transport statement or transport assessment. Proposals should ensure safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved (para 32). Paragraph 34 seeks to ensure developments that generate significant movement are located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised. A key tool to facilitate this will be a travel plan (para 36).
- Section 6: Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes. This requires Local Authorities to identify and bring back into residential use empty housing and buildings in line with local housing and empty homes strategies (para 51).

- Section 7: Requiring good design. The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people (para 56).
- Section 8: Promoting healthy communities. The Government attaches great importance to ensuring sufficient school spaces are available. Local authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to this. They should give great weight to the need to create and expand schools and work with schools to identify and resolve planning issues before applications are submitted (para 72).

4.2 Crawley Borough Local Plan (2015-2030)

- Policy SD1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development). In line with the planned approach to Crawley as a new town, and the spatial patterns relating to the neighbourhood principles, when considering development proposals the council will take a positive approach to approving development which is sustainable.
- Policy CH2 (Principles of Good Urban Design). New development proposals will be required to respond to and reinforce locally distinctive patterns of development and landscape character.
- Policy CH3 (Normal Requirements of All New Development) states all proposals for development in Crawley will be required to make a positive contribution to the area, be of a high quality design, provide and retain a good standard of amenity for all nearby and future occupants of land and buildings, and be able to meet its own operational requirements necessary for the safe and proper use of the site.
- Policy H1 (Housing Provision) the Council will positively consider proposals for the provision of housing to meet local housing needs. Paragraph 6.20 of the supporting text states that empty housing should be brought back into residential use. Proposals for residential development should generally be approved where there is an identified need for additional housing provided there are no reasons why the development would be inappropriate.
- Policy ENV6 (Sustainable Design and Construction) states all new dwellings will be required to meet the strengthened on-site energy performance standards of Building Regulations, and any subsequent increased requirements.
- Policy ENV8 (Development and Flood Risk) states that development proposals must avoid areas which are exposed to an unacceptable risk from flooding and must not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. Flood risk assessments should be submitted where required and SUDS should be used to reduce run-off.
- Policy ENV9 (Tackling Water Stress) for non-residential development where technically feasible and viable development should meet BREEAM Excellent including addressing maximum water efficiencies under the mandatory water credits, or any replacement standard.
- Policy ENV11 (Development and Noise) seeks to protect people's quality of life from unacceptable noise impacts and requires noise impact assessments where relevant.
- Policy IN1 (Infrastructure Provision) states that development will be permitted where it is supported by the necessary infrastructure both on and off site and if mitigation can be provided to avoid any significant cumulative effects on the existing infrastructure services.
- Policy IN3 (Development and Requirements for Sustainable Transport) states that development should be concentrated in locations where sustainable travel patterns can be achieved. In addition, developments should meet the access needs they generate and not cause an unacceptable impact in terms of increased congestion or highway safety. Where appropriate, Transport Statements or Transport Assessments will be required.

- Policy IN4 (Car and Cycle Parking Standards) states development will be permitted where the proposals provide the appropriate amount of car and cycle parking to meet its needs when it is assessed against the borough council's car and cycle parking standards.
- Policy IN5 (Location and Provision of New Infrastructure) states that the provision of new or improved infrastructure in appropriate locations will be supported where the facilities are required to support the development or they add to the range and quality of facilities in the town. Major facilities should be located in the most sustainable locations and local community facilities should be located close to neighbourhood centres.

4.3 Supplementary Planning Guidance and Documents (SPD)

- Urban Design- Supplementary Planning Document 2016 provides further advice on principles of good urban design.
- Annex 1 in the document sets out the Borough parking standards. For schools the guidance states there is a minimum requirement 1 space per 2 staff.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:-

5.1 Crawley Borough Council has been consulted on this application as a statutory consultee by West Sussex County Council, who are the determining 'Local Planning Authority' in this regard.

5.2 The main consideration for this consultation are:

- The principle of the development, including proposed loss of the existing house
- Highway safety, access and parking
- Residential amenities
- Design and appearance
- Operational needs of the school
- Flooding
- Mobility
- Trees

The principle of the development:

5.3 The site is an existing school in the Northgate neighbourhood of Crawley and the proposal would provide additional permanent facilities. In this regard the principle of the development is acceptable at the existing school within Northgate and would accord with policies SD1 and IN5 in the Local Plan.

5.4 The current proposals include the demolition of the existing caretaker's house to provide approximately 12 additional parking spaces. The Design and Access Statement indicates that the building is empty, although there is no rationale provided for the loss of the dwellinghouse. Given that Local Plan Policy H1 requires the Council to meet housing needs and bring empty housing back into residential use where appropriate, the council would expect the application to include justification for the loss of the residential unit, covering issues such as the reasons why it is no longer needed by the school, why it cannot be self-contained and sold separately, or why the additional parking cannot be located elsewhere on the site. It is considered that further information is required from the applicant to explain and justify its loss in order for the Council to be satisfied that the scheme would not contravene the requirements of Policy H1.

Highway safety, access and parking;

5.5 The application site is located in a predominantly residential area where there are existing parking pressures. On-street parking occurs on all surrounding roads, and there are known issues of capacity in the locality to accommodate the existing traffic movements associated with the school at its current size. Two of the surrounding roads are narrow with cars frequently parked all along, often resulting in cars having to reverse long distances. During school collection times cars currently park along all along the yellow lines, also blocking the road and driveways for collection of pupils, causing congestion and hazards.

- 5.6 This application would involve extending the school to provide an additional form of entry and an extra 120 pupils and 18 members of staff. This is a reduction of 100 students from the previously withdrawn scheme. However, the amount of floorspace has not been proportionately reduced to reflect the reduced number of pupils and it is considered that further information is needed relating to this decrease in pupil capacity given that reduced pupil numbers are now the basis for the amended highway information in the transport statement.
- 5.7 Under this current application, a revised transport statement has been submitted. This survey identifies that around 9% of pupils travel to school by car, for teachers this is 82%. It estimates that at peak times unrestricted car-parking spaces are at 67% capacity. The data has identified that an additional 32 trips by vehicle are expected as a result of the increase in student numbers (including those using park and stride and hop-off). The report concludes that the travel survey has identified that the surrounding streets can accommodate the extra cars expected from the additional pupil numbers. The school has also proposed additional staff parking within the staff car-park (a further 27 parking spaces) and a hop-on/ hop-off facility on the single yellow lines. WSCC have agreed for the school to use the Northgate playing field car-park in Woodfield Road as a designated park and stride facility, with the use of the Northgate Neighbourhood Parade car-park proposed to be further encouraged. The playing field car-park is Crawley Borough Council property and the applicants should provide further information to demonstrate they have appropriate arrangements in place to use the car-park for this purpose. Additional cycle and scooter storage within the school grounds are proposed as well as two zebra crossings. In addition to this, several methods for promoting sustainable modes of transport have been identified, with various different school campaigns and promotions to encourage walking and cycling, using public transport, car-sharing and the park and stride facilities.
- 5.8 With regards to the mitigation measures proposed it is considered that the site could meet its operational requirements for staff parking capacity as a result of the additional parking spaces, which would also help to alleviate the parking stress on the nearby streets. However, in the absence of any justification, it is not considered that the creation of approximately 12 of those spaces justifies the loss of the caretaker's house as a residential unit.
- 5.9 In respect of parent drop-off, the park and stride facilities proposed could help to alleviate the parking problem and the proposed zebra crossings would help the safety issue of crossing the road. With regards to the sustainability measures proposed it is considered that given that the proposals are to a primary school, where nearly all of the children attending would not travel independently to and from school, it is unlikely a significant increase in cycling pupil numbers could be encouraged via school initiatives. However, most pupils will live locally and encouraging children to walk to school, cycle to school with their parents and use the park and stride facility could be an effective way to help alleviate parking pressure.
- 5.10 It is noted that there have been a high number of neighbour objections to the application itself with regards to parking problems and highway safety surrounding the school, (as on WSCC website). Some comment that the estimates on traffic impacts and car journeys appear lower than expected for primary school travel, for example the trips generated by increased vehicles (32). The validity of the applicant's information is an issue that would need to be assessed by WSCC Highways Department, who, as specialist consultees can identify whether the findings and proposals within the transport statement would satisfy their requirements.
- 5.11 At the time of preparing this report for Planning Committee, WSCC Highways Department had responded to the application consultation by requesting additional information. They have requested a design audit and a stage 1 road safety audit. Without this information they consider that there would be insufficient information to demonstrate that the proposals would not give rise to severe impacts upon the highway. Once they have received the additional information requested they will provide WSCC planning department with more detailed analysis of this issue in terms of highway safety.
- 5.12 In conclusion, overall, there is some concern that the increase in pupil numbers would exacerbate existing problems with parking capacity issues within the locality and lead to increased hazards for road users and pedestrians. However, the current submission has reduced pupil numbers by 100 from the previously withdrawn scheme and has proposed a number of mitigation measures to help alleviate parking, traffic and access pressures. Therefore it is considered that from the evidence

provided there is no significant concern with the current transport proposals in planning terms and the scheme's ability to meet the requirements of LP policy IN3. Officers do not consider they could object on parking or highway grounds, subject to WSCC Highways department obtaining the clarification they have sought with the findings of the survey, and being satisfied that the impact of the increased vehicle movements and the cumulative impact on the existing highway infrastructure have been adequately addressed and mitigated for within the proposal as submitted.

- 5.13 Should the application be permitted by WSCC, it is suggested that conditions be added to the permission to ensure implementation of proposed cycle parking facility, the zebra crossings and the proposals outlined within the Travel Plan and Transport Assessment. Also that the parking spaces proposed are kept available for vehicles and used for no other purpose and provided prior to occupation.

Impact on neighbours' amenity;

- 5.14 The proposed single storey classroom building would be no closer to surrounding properties than the existing south facing windows within the building. The openings within the proposed two storey building would largely face onto the existing west wing of the school. Both extensions would be sufficiently located away from the surrounding residential properties, with the nearest dwelling being approximately 40 metres away, meaning the proposed development would not result in a detrimental impact on neighbours. The proposed play area extension would be sufficiently screened from neighbours and its impact on neighbours would not be harmful. The application was consulted with the Environmental Health Division that reviewed the provided details and have stated that they do not wish to object. Overall it is considered that the proposed development would not result in a detrimental impact on neighbours in terms of overlooking and overbearing impact and would therefore accord with LP policy CH3 in this regard.

Design & appearance of the proposal & Impact on the street scene

- 5.15 In terms of appearance, the proposed extensions are considered acceptable and in keeping with the existing building. They would be of appropriate massing and design style. The proposal would accord with LP policy CH3 in this regard. Should the application be permitted by WSCC it is suggested that a condition be added to the permission to use matching materials for the extension to ensure a satisfactory external appearance for the development.

Impact on the operation of the school;

- 5.16 The proposal would result in alterations to the school building, but ultimately would result in a school facility fit for its intended purpose. The proposed school expansion is required to meet an identified need for school places in the area. The proposal would also be sited to have minimal impact on the playing field provision on the site and would mitigate any losses through the provision of a new area of playground. The proposal would accord with LP policies in this regard.

Whether the proposal will result in increased risk from flooding;

- 5.17 The school site is not at risk from flooding and the proposed development would not result in risk to the school or surrounding area. The proposal therefore conforms with LP policy ENV8.

Whether the proposal will meet the needs of people with disabilities and mobility problems.

- 5.18 The internal configuration and proposed routes between the new and existing school buildings are considered sufficient to provide suitable access to those with disabilities or restricted mobility. The site is predominately flat, aiding access around the site. The proposal accords with LP policies in this regard.

Trees

- 5.19 The application was consulted with the Council's arboricultural officer who considers the proposals to be acceptable in this regard. There are no protected trees on the site and the works would not affect any trees of real amenity importance. It should be noted that WSCC have its own arboricultural

officers who are consultees. Should the application be permitted by WSCC, it is suggested that a condition be added to the permission to request a tree protection plan be submitted to include measures to safeguard trees during construction.

CONCLUSIONS:-

- 6.1 It is considered that while the expansion of the school is supported and accepted in principle as it would create a permanent education facility within a sustainable location, the applicant has failed to demonstrate that the loss of the caretaker's house as a residential unit would be acceptable in this case. It is considered that additional information should be sought which justifies the loss of the caretaker's house and that further consultation with Crawley Borough Council should then be carried out prior to determination of the application.
- 6.2 There are also concerns about the scale of the development and its impact on the surrounding area. The key concerns relate to the impact on traffic congestion and parking pressures on the area. Without the benefit of reviewing the final comments from WSCC Highways Department, the Council cannot be satisfied that the impact upon the road network would be effectively managed to ensure disruption is kept to a minimum. CBC would need to be satisfied that the highway concerns raised can be satisfactorily overcome and that local highway impacts can be appropriately addressed.
- 6.3 There is also further information needed on the assumptions made in the application submission in relation to the decrease in pupil numbers and parking arrangements off-site.

RECOMMENDATION RE: CR/2017/0341/CON

NO OBJECTION – subject to further information

It is recommended that CBC raise **NO OBJECTION** to the principle of the development subject to the following:-

1. Receipt of further satisfactory information to address the loss of the residential unit.
2. Confirmation that WSCC Highways Department is satisfied that the proposals have adequately addressed and mitigated the potential impact upon the highway and,
3. Formal re-consultation with Crawley Borough Council on any additional information received to address the issues raised within this report including reduced pupil capacity, arrangements for use at Northgate Playing Field Car Park and any further information supplied to mitigate the local highway impacts.

If WSCC are minded to grant permission it is recommended that the following conditions are imposed (suggested wording as set out below):-

1. The materials and finishes of the external walls and roofs of the buildings hereby permitted shall match in colour and texture those of the existing building.
REASON: In the interests of amenity in accordance with Policy CH3 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030.
2. The development shall not be implemented until a School Travel Plan, covering the measures to be put in place during the construction works and post completion has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Travel Plan shall be based on a maximum school capacity of 630 pupils and shall be implemented in full unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Travel Plan shall thereafter be maintained and operated as specified in the approved document.
REASON: To encourage sustainable transport modes in accordance with policies IN3 and IN4 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030.

3. No part of the development shall be first occupied until the car parking has been constructed in accordance with the approved site plan. These spaces shall thereafter be retained at all times for their designated purpose.
REASON: To provide car parking spaces for the use in accordance with Policies CH3 and IN4 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030 and the parking standards set out in the Urban Design SPD 2016.
4. No part of the development shall be first occupied until the covered and secure cycle parking spaces shown on the approved drawings have been fully provided and made available for use by intended users.
REASON: To encourage sustainable travel options and in accordance with policies IN3 and IN4 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015 – 2030.
5. No part of the new school accommodation shall be occupied until the 2 zebra crossings have been constructed in accordance with details which have been first submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These shall thereafter be retained at all times for their designated purpose.
REASON: To provide the site with safe pedestrian access in accordance with Policies IN1 and IN3 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030.
6. No development, including site works of any description, shall take place on the site unless and until all the existing trees/bushes/hedges to be retained on the site have been protected by a fence to be approved by the Local Planning Authority erected around each tree or group of vegetation at a radius from the bole or boles of 5 metres or such distance as may be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Within the areas so fenced off the existing ground level shall be neither raised nor lowered and no materials, temporary buildings, plant machinery or surplus soil shall be placed or stored thereon without the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority. If any trenches for services are required in the fenced off areas they shall be excavated and backfilled by hand and any tree roots encountered with a diameter of 25 mm or more shall be left unsevered.
REASON: To ensure the retention and maintenance of trees and vegetation which is an important feature of the area in accordance with policy CH7 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015 - 2030.
7. The applicant shall, during the next planting season following the felling of any trees, subject of this application, plant replacement trees of a species and maturity and in positions approved by the Local Planning Authority and under its supervision and in the event that any such trees die within five years following such planting, shall replace them with similar trees in similar positions during the next planting season.
REASON: To ensure the retention and maintenance of trees and vegetation which is an important feature of the area in accordance with policy CH7 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015 - 2030.



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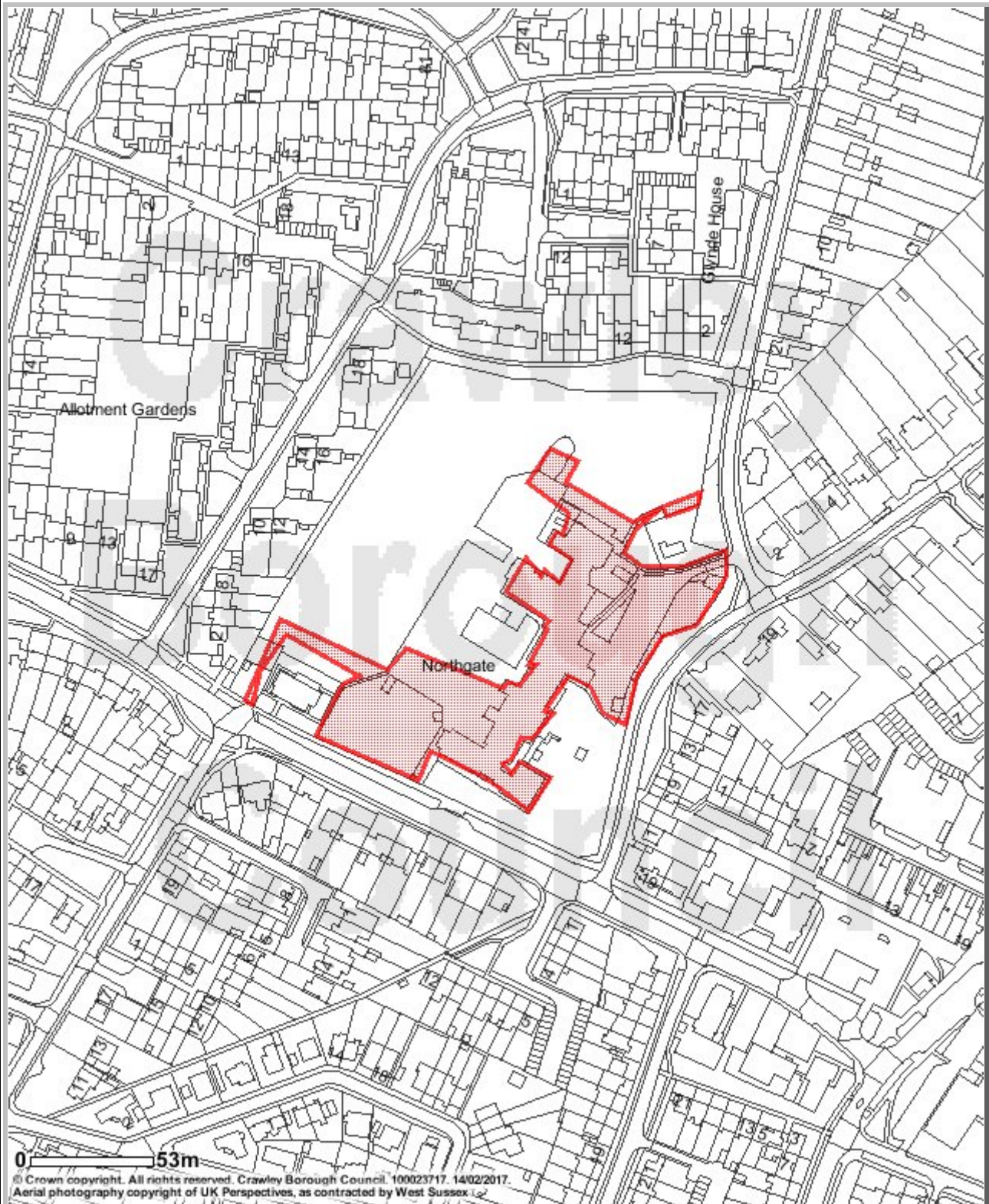
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CR/2017/0341/CON

Date 13 June 2017

Approx. Scale 1:1,250

**NORTHGATE PRIMARY SCHOOL, GREEN LANE,
NORTHGATE, CRAWLEY**



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