

THE COWPLAIN SCHOOL
| HART PLAIN AVENUE | COWPLAIN |
WATERLOOVILLE | HAMPSHIRE | PO8 8RY

**ERECTION OF A SCHOOL THEATRE BUILDING
AND CHANGING ROOMS TO SERVE ADJACENT
SPORTS FACILITIES, WITH ASSOCIATED
LANDSCAPING, PLANTING & ANCILLARY
WORKS.**

JULY 2025

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Prepared on behalf of the:
The Cowplain School



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1. Introduction

- I.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application submitted on behalf of The Cowplain School for the erection of a new school theatre building and changing rooms to serve the adjacent sports facilities. The development also includes associated landscaping, planting and ancillary works.
- I.2 The proposal seeks to enhance the school's educational and community offer through the delivery of high-quality, purpose-built facilities that support the curriculum, extracurricular activities, and wider community use.
- I.3 The project forms part of a wider programme of improvements to the school's Performing Arts and Sports facilities, supported through reinvestment from the disposal of surplus land.
- I.4 The theatre building is designed to provide a dedicated performing arts venue, allowing pupils to rehearse and perform in a professional-standard environment. At present, large performances and assemblies are held in the main school hall, which must also accommodate student examinations during key periods of the year. This dual use restricts the school's ability to deliver a continuous programme of performing arts. The new facility will therefore ensure that performing arts education and events can continue uninterrupted, supporting a key strand of the school's curriculum.
- I.5 The Head Teacher, Mr Ian Gates has described the project as an important step in the school's long-term vision to create

"A great facility for showcasing the talents of our Performing Arts students and providing new changing rooms for PE and for community users." The theatre will also serve as a multi-functional space, suitable for assemblies, lectures, film screenings, and community events - activities that the existing accommodation cannot easily support."
- I.6 The proposed changing rooms will improve provision for PE and community sport, complementing the recent investment in drainage works to the school's playing field, which have created grass pitches suitable for football and rugby for the first time. Together, these facilities will provide an enhanced learning and recreational environment for pupils, staff, and local residents.



Purpose of this Statement

- 1.7 This Planning Statement provides the planning justification for the proposals, demonstrating how they comply with relevant national and local planning policies. It also summarises the supporting technical reports, including:
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA)
 - Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA)
 - Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (BNG)
 - Transport Statement and Travel Plan
 - Drainage Strategy and Flood Risk Assessment (FRA)
 - Noise Impact Assessment
 - BREEAM Sustainability Rating Pre-assessment.
- 1.8 The statement demonstrates that the proposed theatre building and changing rooms will provide a high-quality, sustainable, and appropriately scaled addition to the school campus, designed to respect its setting and neighbouring uses while enhancing the functionality and appearance of the site. The scheme will deliver educational and environmental benefits, supporting the continued success of The Cowplain School and contributing positively to the wider community who access and share its facilities.

2. The Site & Surroundings

- 2.1 The Cowplain School, is a secondary school situated off Hart Plain Avenue, located within the built-up area of Waterloo. The school is a single academy trust for pupils in Years 7 to 11, aged 11 to 16. The school currently has approximately 995 pupils on the school roll and a range of teaching and support staff.
- 2.2 The surrounding area is predominantly residential, with established school and community facilities nearby. This includes Hart Plain Junior School to the west and new care home provision to the northwest, currently under construction. There are several residential properties

to the immediate north accessed from Hart Plain Avenue whose gardens and associated commercial premises back onto the northern part of the school campus. This, along with new development along the road frontage, gives the campus an irregular shape.

- 2.3 The school occupies a well-defined plot containing a mix of existing buildings, playing fields, and hard-surfaced areas. The proposed development site comprises an area of previously developed land within the school boundary, currently used as an amenity area, albeit not accessible, adjacent the existing sports pitches and recreation spaces.
- 2.4 Vehicular and pedestrian access to the school is taken from Hart Plain Avenue, with two vehicular entrances: one at the eastern corner of the site leading southwards through the campus, and a more central access serving the main car park and visitor drop-off area. Bus stop infrastructure is also located near the central access. To the west are the sports fields and Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA).
- 2.5 The application site measures approximately 0.78 hectares and comprises areas of car parking, hardstanding, and modified grassland, adjacent to existing sports courts and playing fields. Levels range from 46.40m to 47.50m AOD, and the area is well connected by pedestrian and cycle routes, bus services, and on-site vehicular access.
- 2.6 The site lies within the centre of the Waterloo-Cowplain built-up area, surrounded largely by residential development. Nearby green spaces include Park Wood (250m south) and The Queen's Inclosure woodland with the Hermitage Stream (375m east, beyond the A3). Waterloo Golf Club lies approximately 1.3km to the east. There are no ecological or heritage designations within the site or wider campus, though the site lies within the 5.6km buffer zone of the Solent SPA.
- 2.7 The school was founded in 1930 and has expanded over time, with a blend of older and modern buildings. A fire in the 1970s prompted the reconstruction of part of the campus.
- 2.8 In 2022, the school disposed of a portion of its playing fields to fund improved facilities. This enabled the construction of a care home and six residential dwellings on the northern boundary (now under construction), as well as the drainage improvement works to the playing fields to increase their year-round usability. These funds are also being used to help deliver the new theatre and changing facilities.
- 2.9 The school includes a mix of single, two and three storey academic buildings, in a range of architectural styles and materials, alongside extensive sports and community facilities, that are also available for community hire outside of school hours.

This includes:

- Floodlit 3G All Weather Pitch (AWP)
- Grass field with athletics track
- Outdoor Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) with hockey pitch, netball and tennis courts
- Indoor Sports Hall with climbing wall, football pitch, badminton, basketball and netball courts
- Gymnasium with equipment
- Dance Studio with mirrors and barres
- Large hall
- Small meeting room with projector

2.10 Given the relatively compact campus and following recent development including a new single-storey music classroom, options for locating the proposed theatre were limited.

2.11 The chosen location is south-west of the main car park and west of the Schilling Building, on a grassed area containing two large trees. To the west is the MUGA and associated lighting. The land gently slopes southeast and is enclosed by fencing to restrict pupil access.

2.12 An area to the north is kept clear to allow maintenance vehicles to access the grass sports field and access track. The long-jump was relocated as part of the drainage works undertaken to improve the sports field and its facilities.



Figure I – Aerial photograph showing The Cowplain School (2025)

2.13 A cluster of aspen trees line the northern boundary, adjacent the residential properties no.43, 41 and 41a Hart Plain Avenue, and a coniferous hedge lies just off-site to the northwest. None of the trees within the school grounds are subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO).

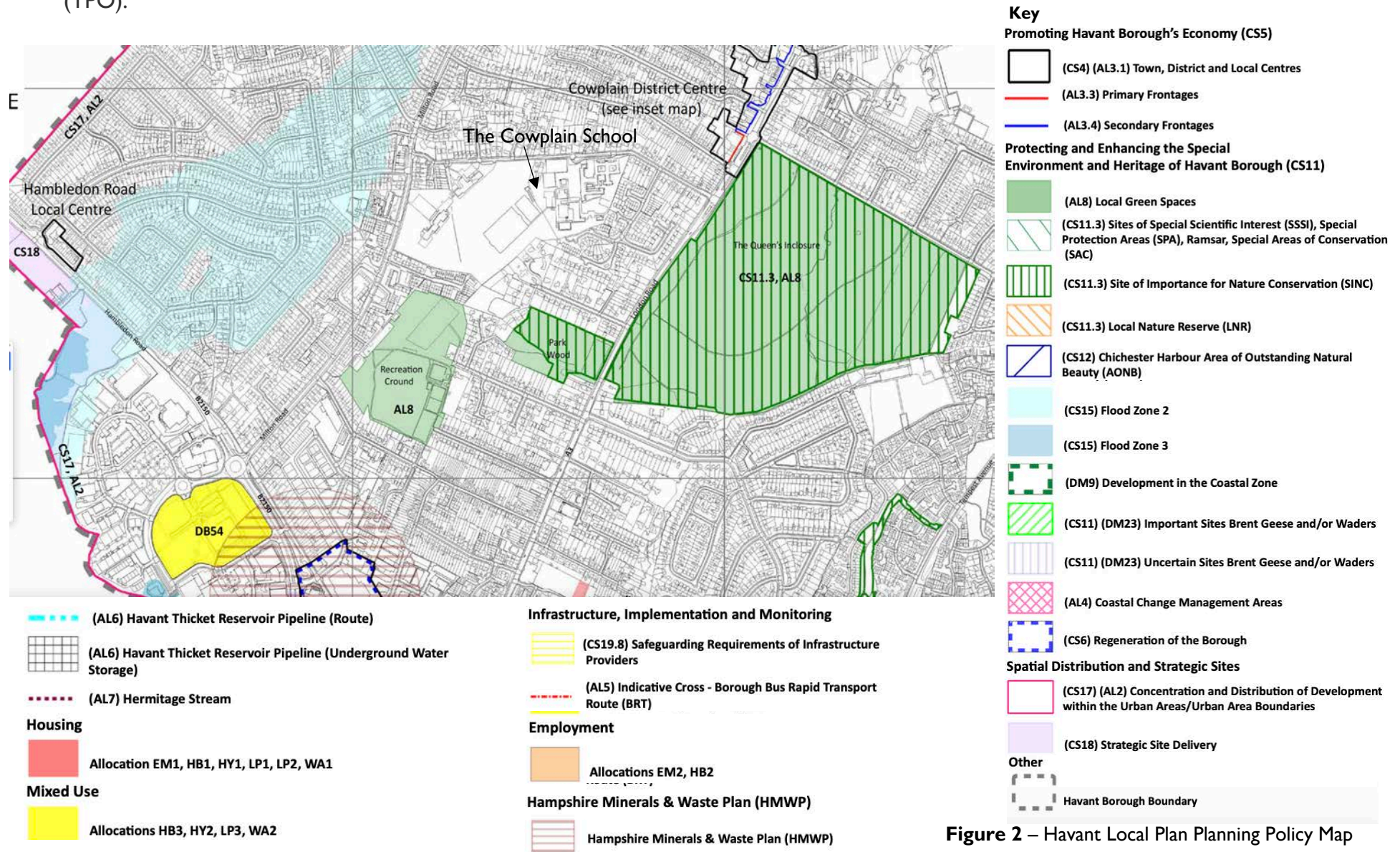


Figure 2 – Havant Local Plan Planning Policy Map



Figure 3 – Site photographs – November 2024



Figure 4 – Site photographs – November 2024

3. Planning History & Background to Site Search

3.1 There is a notable recent planning history associated with The Cowplain School campus, primarily relating to the modernisation and improvement of its educational and sports facilities. These include the construction of new teaching spaces and major works to enhance the school's outdoor sporting provision. The following recent planning applications are considered most relevant:

Planning Application	Description of Development	Decision	Date
10/62148/005	Sports hall recladding.	Approved	08/04/2010
APP/16/00987	New facade overlaid system with a mix of insulated brick slip cladding and insulated render cladding. New replacement PPC aluminium frame windows and doors and PPC aluminium frame curtain walling glazing & solid panels.	Approved	31/10/2016
APP/17/00241	Replacement of existing Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) with new 3G artificial grass pitch surface together with installation of six new goal storage areas adjoining the North Western and south Eastern longitudinal AGP perimeter (three storage areas per side of the pitch). Installation of new 1.20m high pitch perimeter	Approved	19/06/2017

	barrier with associated gated entrances adjoining the North Eastern AGP perimeter to segregate the pitch playing area from adjoining new pedestrian area. Installation of new hard standing area adjoining the North Eastern AGP perimeter complete with associated porous asphalt surfacing for pedestrian access, goals storage, spectator viewing space and vehicular maintenance access. Installation of a new paved mowing margin and vegetation barrier sized 600mm wide around the external AGP perimeter.		
APP/19/00915	Alteration to existing school road layout to include resurfacing and hard standing adaptations; installation of secure boundary fencing, vehicle and pedestrian gates; replacement of 2No. external doors on north elevation of main school building.	Approved	12/11/2019
APP/21/00317	Erection of 2No. dining/multi-use canopies.	Approved	11/05/2021
APP/21/00863	Replacement of existing timber frame doors to plant areas and metal frame doors and windows to rest of the building, for new replacement security aluminium frame entrance doors and windows. New render coat directly applied to existing brickwork at first floor level in off-white colour. Same off-white colour to be applied to the existing render panels. New aluminium brise soleil to the south and west elevations. New Marshalls deterrent paving to north and west elevations to provide pedestrian collision protection when windows in the open position.	Approved	22/09/2021
APP/22/00692 (amended by APP/23/00582)	Installation of a 18m x 8.4m modular building for use as a classroom, 2 practice rooms, store room and teacher office	Approved	12/10/2022 (06/10/2023)
APP/22/00838	Drainage works to improve drainage of school playing fields	Approved	23/03/2023
APP/22/00893	Proposed works to include erection/replacement to critical areas of perimeter security boundary comprising open-welded mesh fencing & associated vehicular/pedestrian entrance gates (including access control)	Approved	23/03/2023

Table of Recent Planning History (Source: Havant Borough Council Online Planning Register)

- 3.2 There are also two relevant applications on the northern boundary, which previously formed part of the school grounds and were subsequently sold for redevelopment. This enabled the 'Erection of a 64-bedroom care home (within Use Class C2) and 6 No. dwellings (within Use Class C3) with associated works including access, parking and landscaping' (planning reference is APP/22/00837, approved in January 2024). This consent is in the process of being amended by a Non-Material amendment (NMA) application, reference APP/25/00672 which remains undetermined at the time of writing.

- 3.3 Some of the capital receipts raised from this land disposal are being reinvested directly into the school's facilities, including the delivery of this Performing Arts and Sports project.
- 3.4 As indicated earlier, there were limited options within the existing campus for accommodating the proposed theatre building. The school initially considered a location within the playground, opposite the existing hall and main building. However this option was discounted due to concerns regarding overshadowing, poor outlook to adjacent classrooms, and potential conflicts with key pupil circulation routeways. Following initial concept design work, this location was deemed unsuitable (please see figure 6 for initial design concepts).
- 3.5 The school undertook communication with local residents and the wider school community (including parents, carers and pupils) both during the land disposal process and when developing designs for the new theatre. Updates were provided through school newsletters, including a summer newsletter circulated in May 2025, which outlined the evolving design and location for the new building. This ensured that the school community and nearby residents were kept informed of progress and made aware of the school's intentions to enhance its facilities.



Figure 5 – Site Disposal Consultation Imagery

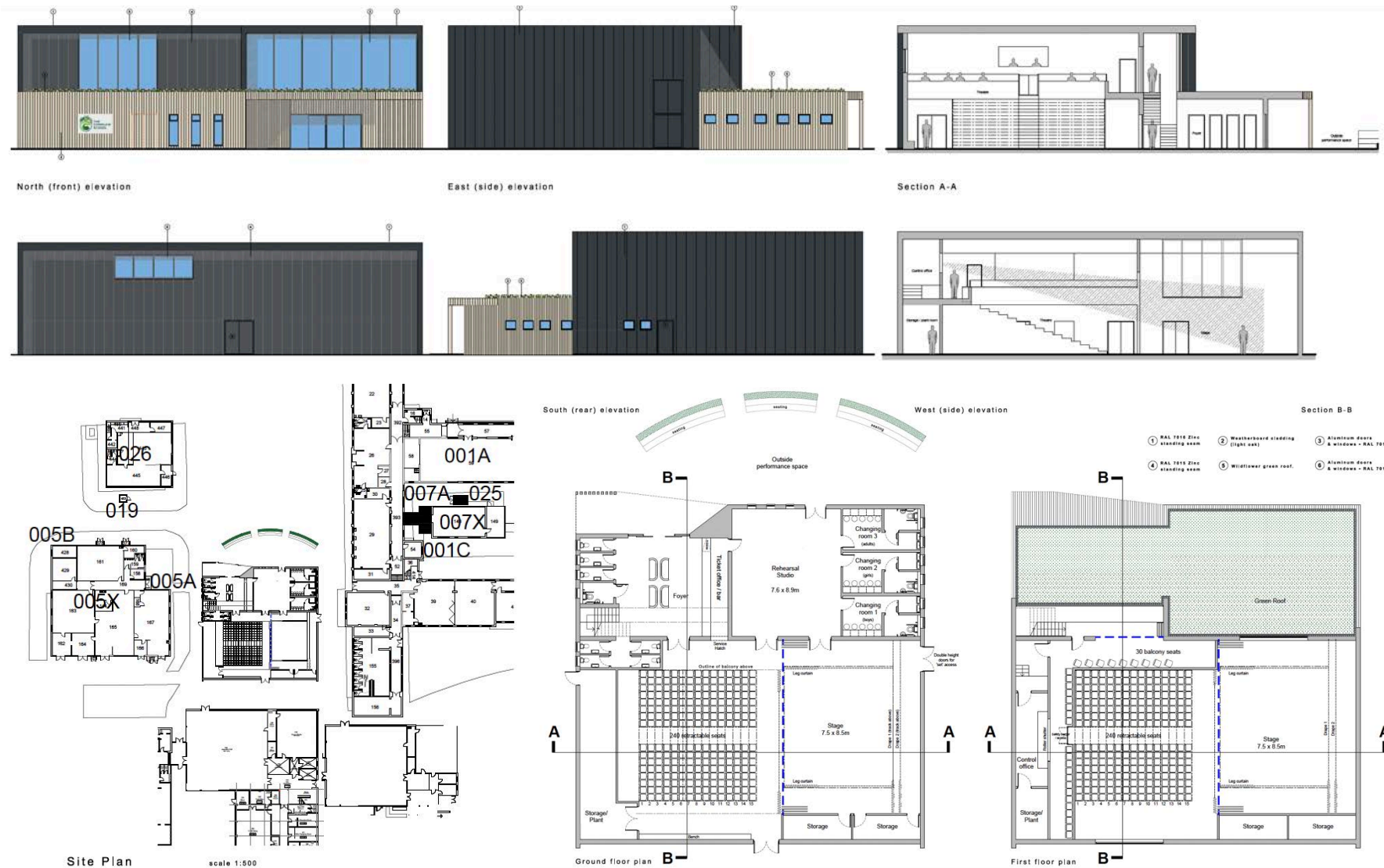


Figure 6 – Earlier design concepts in the playground location December 2024 but later discounted as not suitable

4. Planning Policy

- 4.1 Applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for the site comprises:
- Havant Borough Local Plan (Core Strategy) March 2011,
 - Havant Borough Local Plan (Allocations) July 2014, and;
 - The Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan 2013.
- 4.2 There is no Neighbourhood Development Plan covering this area of Havant Borough.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 4.3 The following sections of the NPPF are particularly relevant to the determination of the application. Namely the NPPF's objectives to:
- Promote high-quality, well-designed places (Section 12);
 - Building a strong, competitive economy (Section 6);
 - Support strong, vibrant and healthy communities through the provision of education and cultural facilities (Paragraphs 96-102);
 - Meet the needs of the education sector, recognising the importance of new and improved school buildings.
- 4.4 The NPPF promotes the presumption in favour of sustainable development and encouraging the effective use of previously developed land where development can deliver economic, social and environmental benefits. This includes making sufficient provision for community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure) in paragraph 20c).
- 4.5 The NPPF is therefore fully supportive of the principles which this development pursues by re-using land more effectively, especially as this area of the school campus is underutilised.
- 4.6 Paragraph 110 of the NPPF highlights the importance of social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs. The NPPF states that Local Planning Authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting the need for school places, and give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools when making decisions on applications. The NPPF also indicates

that LPAs work closely with delivery partners and statutory bodies to identify and resolve any key planning issues. It goes on to say that to ensure faster delivery of other public service infrastructure, significant weight should be placed on the importance of new, expanded or upgraded public service infrastructure when considering proposals for development.

- 4.7 Clearly the proposal will provide tangible social and economic benefits for both those attending the school and the wider community using the adjacent sports facilities through the improved education and cultural facility, which should be given significant weight in favour of the development.

Havant Borough Local Plan (Core Strategy) March 2011

- 4.8 The most relevant planning policies have been listed below from the Core Strategy:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CS3 - Health and Well-being (Supporting infrastructure delivery, including education facilities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• DM2 - Protection of existing community facilities and shops
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CS3 - Skills and employability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy CS7 - Community Support and Inclusion (Provision of education and training facilities)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CS11 - Protecting and Enhancing the Special Environment and Heritage of Havant Borough)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CS20 - Transport and Access Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CS14 - Efficient Use of Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy DM14 - Car and Cycle Parking on Development (excluding residential)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CS15 - Flood and Coastal Erosion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy DM23 - Design and integration of development into the surroundings
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CS16 - High Quality Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy DM24 - Conservation and enhancement of biodiversity.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CS17 - Concentration and Distribution of Development within the Urban Areas	

- 4.9 The site is situated within a defined urban settlement boundary, where Policy CS17 (Concentration and Distribution of Development within the Urban Areas) support development that is compatible with its surroundings and contributes positively to the character and function of the area.

- 4.10 The proposal accords with these policies by providing improved educational infrastructure within an existing school site, promoting sustainable design and community benefit in accordance with Policies CS3, CS7 and CS16. The scheme represents investment in the local education environment, strengthening the role of the school as a community focus for learning and recreation.
- 4.11 The proposals are also seeking to accord with Policy CS14 by achieving a 'very good' BREEAM sustainability rating and achieves ecological enhancements.

Havant Borough Local Plan (Allocations) July 2014

- 4.12 The following policies are considered most relevant from the Allocations Plan:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• AL1 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• AL2 – Urban Area Boundaries and Undeveloped Gaps between Settlements
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• DMI7 Contaminated Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• DMI8 Protecting New Development from Pollution

- 4.13 The proposals accord with these policies by locating the development within the defined urban boundary, making effective use of land, and ensuring potential effects on contamination, noise and amenity are mitigated through appropriate design and supporting assessments.

Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance (SPD's and SPG's) and interim planning guidance

- 4.14 Other material considerations include a range of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and adopted guidance, which provide further detail on how planning policies should be interpreted and applied. The following are of particular relevance to the proposed development:
- Havant Borough Council Borough Design Guide SPD December 2011
 - Havant Borough Council Parking SPD July 2016
- 4.15 These documents support the implementation of the Local Plan by promoting high-quality, sustainable development. The Transport Statement and Travel Plan concludes that the site is accessible by sustainable modes. The existing car park has sufficient capacity to

accommodate the proposed use. An additional 5 cycle spaces and EV charging points are proposed. The layout enables the theatre and changing rooms to operate independently for community use, improving management and security outside of normal school hours.

5. The Proposals

5.1 The proposals comprise:

- A new theatre building to support the Performing Arts curriculum;
- Changing rooms to serve the adjacent sports facilities;
- Associated landscaping, planting, and ancillary works, including improved pedestrian and cycle access.

Educational and Community Rationale

5.2 The new theatre will provide a dedicated performing arts space for pupils, supporting drama, music, and performance teaching throughout the year. The existing school hall currently doubles as an exam venue, limiting the school's ability to deliver performing arts activities during key assessment periods.

5.3 The new facility will ensure that performing arts provision can continue uninterrupted, while also serving as a multi-use venue for assemblies, film screenings, lectures, and community events.

Design Approach

5.4 The design of the proposed theatre and changing room building has evolved through close collaboration between the school and wider design team to ensure that the new facilities are functional, visually coherent, and respectful of the school's established built form.

5.5 The new building is positioned south-west of the main car park, immediately west of the Schilling Building, and adjacent to the multi-use games area (MUGA). This location was chosen to make efficient use of underutilised land and to maintain convenient pedestrian access from the main school circulation routes. The building's orientation ensures natural overlooking and security from existing school areas while maintaining a positive relationship with the adjacent sports facilities and playing fields.

- 5.6 The theatre building is two storeys in height, designed with a simple and legible form that reflects its function. The volume of the auditorium is expressed through a slightly higher central element, while the entrance foyer and ancillary spaces are contained within a lower, more articulated frontage. The overall massing responds to the surrounding school buildings, providing visual interest without dominating the campus setting.
- 5.7 The imagery and proposed plans illustrate a contemporary yet sympathetic design, using a combination of light and dark cladding panels to break up the mass and complement existing school materials. Large areas of glazing at the main entrance create a welcoming and interactive frontage, animating the approach from the car park. The rear elevation facing the playing fields is simpler and more restrained, with high-level windows allowing natural light while minimising glare during performances. There is a meeting room on the upper floor with a seating area outdoors that overlooks the MUGA for spectators.
- 5.8 External materials are proposed to include:
- High-quality cladding panels in timber at the lower level and grey tones for the upper storey to harmonise with existing school buildings
 - Glazed entrance screens and curtain walling to the foyer
 - Brick or masonry base courses for durability at ground level
 - Standing seam metal flat roof construction, partially incorporating green roof areas on the single storey elements
 - Durable and low-maintenance finishes suitable for long-term educational use.
 - These materials have been selected for their durability, sustainability, and visual coherence, reflecting the school's modernisation programme. The proposed finishes express the modern character of the new building.
- 5.9 The site-plan drawing shows the retention of the majority of existing trees, with only two moderate-value specimens removed to facilitate the development. New tree and shrub planting, totalling 58 native trees, will reinforce the boundaries and soften views from the north and west.
- 5.10 Soft landscaping around the building will integrate the new structure into its setting, with native planting, replacement trees, and improved pedestrian routes connecting to the wider campus. The forecourt to the theatre will provide an attractive and functional space for informal gathering before events, with low-level lighting and planting to enhance safety and visual appeal.

- 5.11 Internally, the building will provide a flexible theatre and performance space with seating and stage area, backstage changing facilities, storage, and support rooms. Upper levels include a viewing gallery, control room, and conference/meeting space, maximising the usability of the building for a range of educational and community activities.
- 5.12 The design embraces BREEAM “Very Good” sustainability principles, with high energy performance standards, efficient natural ventilation, and integration of sustainable drainage and green roof features. This includes the installation of solar PV on the larger two storey roof. The form and materials have been designed to ensure longevity, low maintenance, and energy efficiency, consistent with the school’s commitment to sustainable construction.
- 5.13 Overall, the building will deliver a high-quality, modern addition to The Cowplain School campus, providing an inspiring environment for learning and community performance while respecting its established setting.

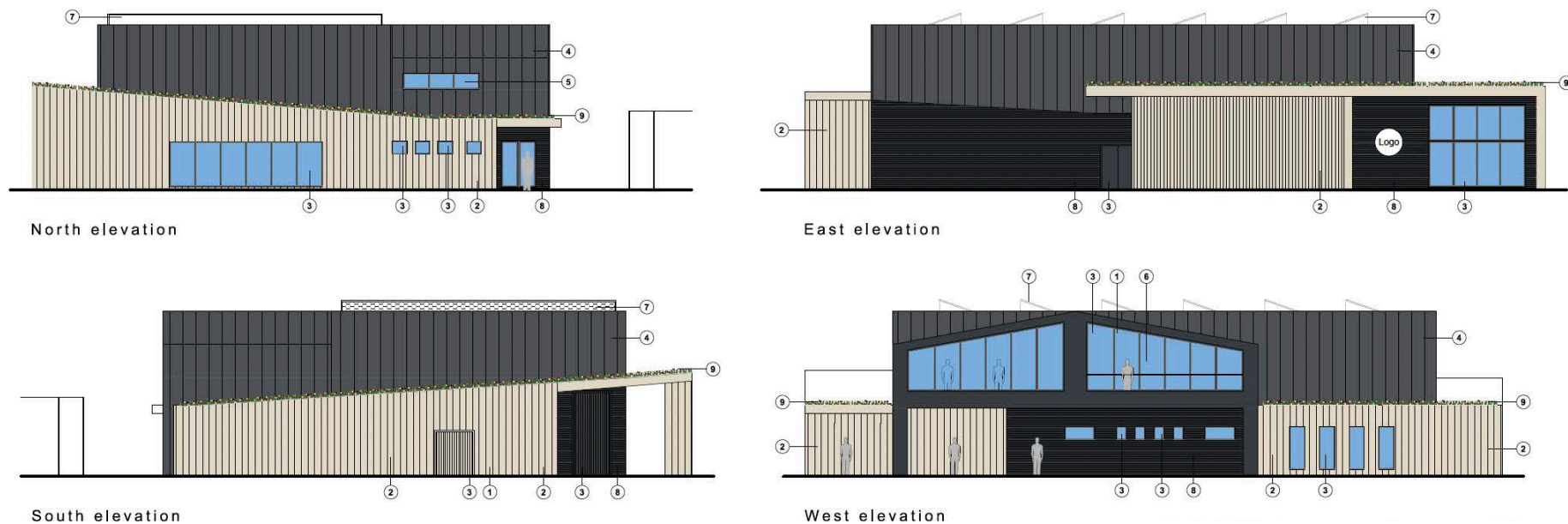


Figure 7 – Proposed Elevations

Key:

-  Areas of grass
-  Existing tree removed
-  Vehicular access to playing field (maintenance and emergency access)
-  New tree
-  New hedgerow
-  Footpath
-  Out of hours pedestrian route
-  Car park access to theatre & changing rooms
-  Building entry points
-  Out of hours pedestrian access
-  Electric vehicle charging point
-  New litter bin location
-  Additional bike spaces

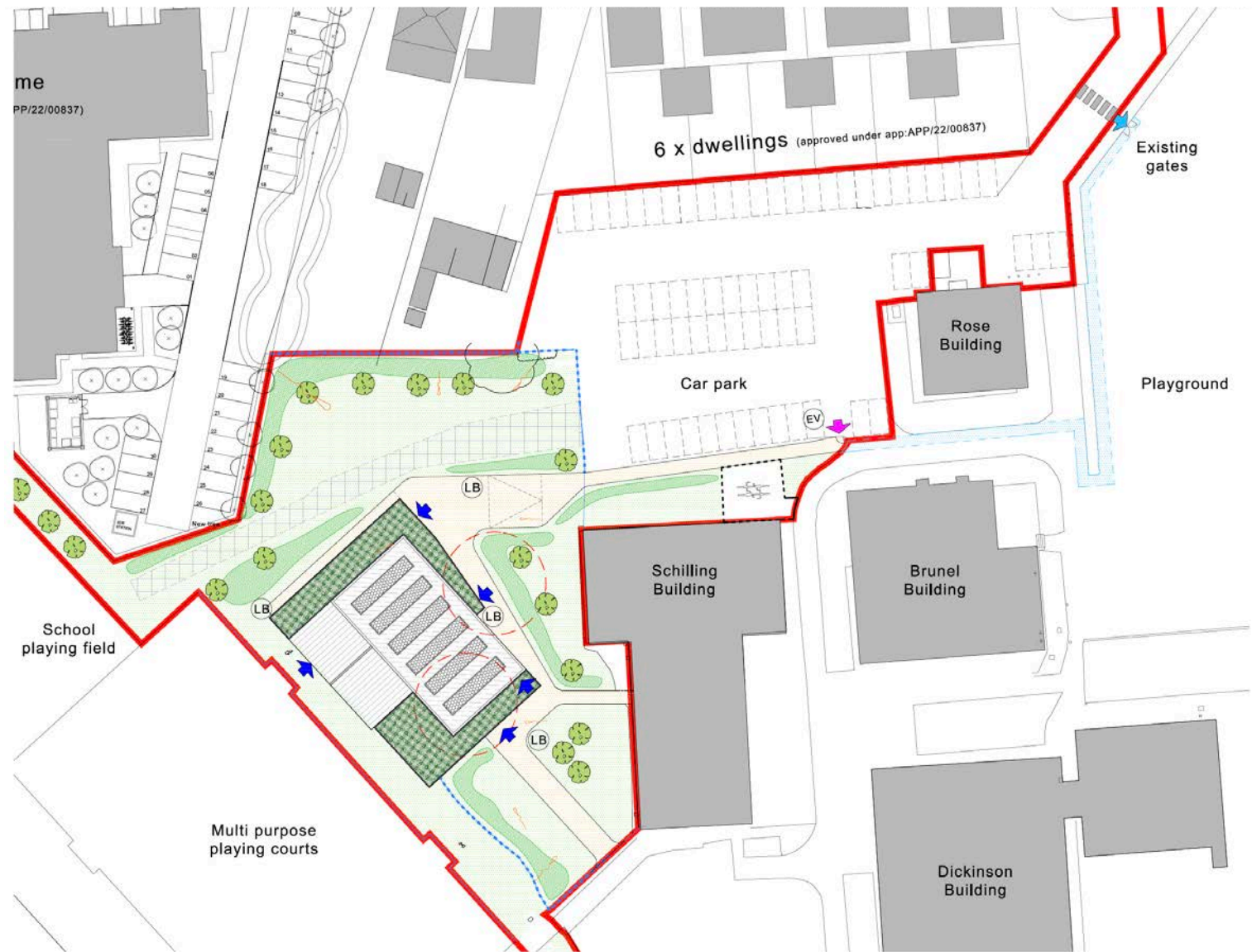


Figure 8 – Proposed Site Plan

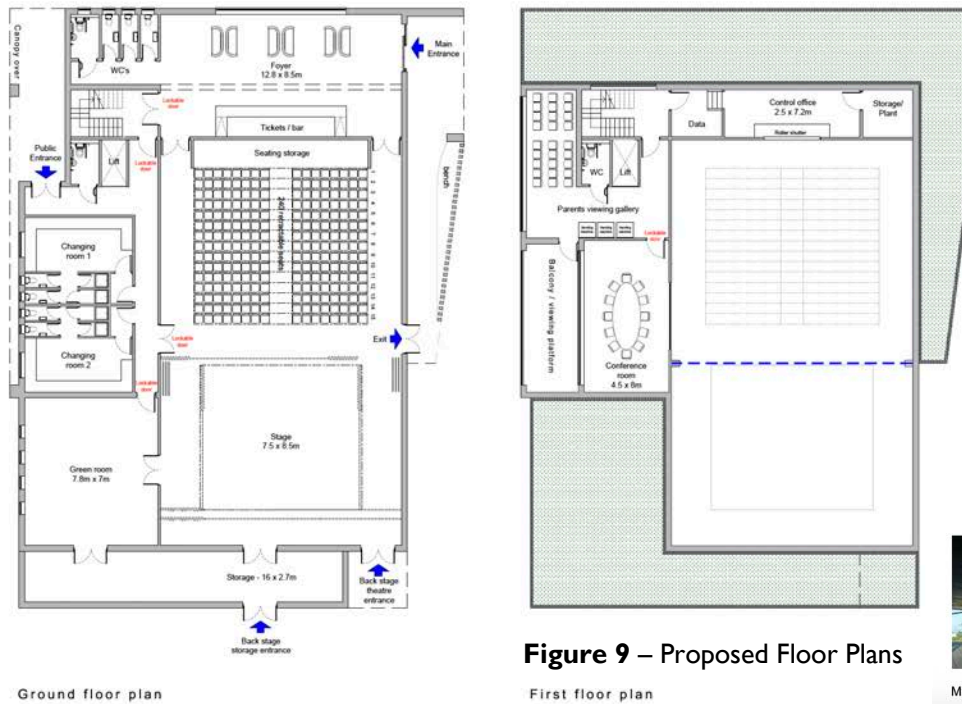
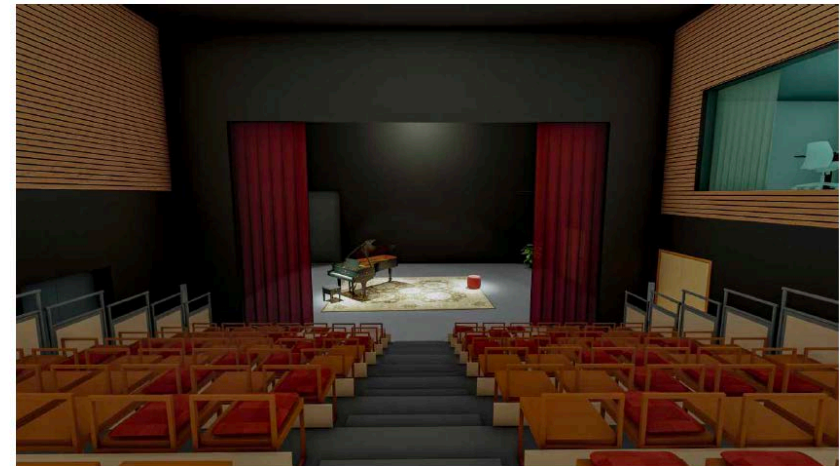


Figure 10 – Illustrative Internal Visual and Materials



View 1 - Rear elevation - overlooking sports field



View 2 - Front elevation - view towards main entrance

Figure 11 – Illustrative Visuals

6. Principle of Development / Planning Assessment

- 6.1 The Cowplain School seeks the erection of a new school theatre building and changing rooms to serve adjacent sports facilities. The development also includes associated landscaping, planting, and ancillary works.
- 6.2 The proposal seeks to enhance the school's educational and extracurricular facilities while providing a modern, flexible, and sustainable learning environment. The performing arts building will create an additional drama practice space (within the green room), accommodate a double height 240 retractable seat performing arts studio, with a balcony for control equipment and meeting space that overlooks the theatre space. There are also two areas that overlook the sports pitches for spectators to watch at the first floor, both inside and out.
- 6.3 The proposed theatre will provide a dedicated performing arts venue, addressing a long-standing operational constraint within the school by allowing performances to continue during exam periods when the main hall is unavailable. This investment will enhance the curriculum, enrich student experience, and provide a valuable cultural resource for the wider community. The building will represent a significant enhancement to the school's teaching environment, supporting creativity, confidence, and collaboration among pupils.
- 6.4 The proposal will not alter existing vehicular or pedestrian access arrangements to the school. The buildings are located within the secure campus and will be accessed internally by pupils and staff. As the school is not expanding in student numbers, it is expected that the current highways / transport situation will remain largely the same. Occasional community use of the theatre will be managed by the school, utilising existing parking and management procedures. The development is expected to generate minimal additional traffic. The site is well connected by public transport and walking routes, consistent with sustainable access principles.
- 6.5 The following sections of this Statement consider in more detail how the proposal addresses other relevant planning considerations, including visual impact, ecology, arboricultural issues, drainage, noise and highway matters.

Design and Appearance

- 6.6 The design has evolved in consultation with the school and design team to ensure that the proposed theatre and changing rooms meet operational needs while enhancing the overall quality of the campus environment.

- 6.7 The overall height of the theatre building has been dedicated by its function, but is considered a modest building size in comparison to the surrounding character of development, including other education blocks and the two-storey care home under construction which also has an institutional character. The position and location of the theatre building was chosen as it has good legibility from both the car park and within the school grounds. This design has sought to articulate the entrance with glazing and the timber canopy that wraps around the main frontage. The wider site proposals have included a new pedestrian footpath from the cycle parking area opposite the Schilling Building and seeks to improve legibility for those walking to access this area of school campus.
- 6.8 A range of high-quality external materials have been chosen for durability, sustainability and visual coherence with existing school buildings. Albeit a more contemporary style has been used to reflect it being a modern addition to the school site. The proposed soft landscaping and tree planting will soften the appearance of built form and new pathways will help improve legibility and connectivity within the school grounds to this area of the campus.

Ecology and Trees

- 6.9 An Ecological Appraisal has been undertaken to assess the potential impacts of the proposal on the site's biodiversity value by South Downs Ecology. A comprehensive suite of ecological surveys has been undertaken to inform the proposals, including an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA). The surveys were carried out by a qualified ecologist, with the site visit taking place on the 1st April 2025.
- 6.10 The site consists of a carpark with access road and footpaths, and a section modified grassland amenity area with two large trees. A clump of aspen line the northern boundary and a coniferous hedgerow lies just offsite to the north. An area of modified grassland and bramble scrub is proposed to be planted with trees as part of the landscaping proposals.
- 6.11 Two moderate-value trees will be removed to enable construction. These will be replaced by 58 new native trees and native scrub planting, improving site biodiversity and amenity value. All other trees will be protected during works. The proposals are expected to have a negligible impact on ecology; the habitats in the site footprint are of very low distinctiveness other than the trees, and offer minimal potential for protected species.

- 6.12 The new tree and scrub planting measures will provide long-term ecological, arboricultural, and amenity benefits, significantly improving screening and biodiversity compared to the existing site conditions. The Arboricultural Assessment concludes that the proposals are supportable and will result in a net positive impact on the school grounds and local environment.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 6.13 A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment has been prepared for the site. The baseline habitat value is 2.32 units, and the proposals represent a predicted increase to 2.58 units, achieving an 11.47% net gain. New habitats include mixed scrub, modified grassland, and urban trees, with management and monitoring secured via planning condition.
- 6.14 The assessment concludes that the proposals will deliver a net gain in biodiversity, consistent with national policy and Havant Borough Local Plan requirements, and contribute positively to the ecological value of the school grounds.

Transport and Accessibility

- 6.15 A Transport Statement and Travel Plan has been prepared by Stuart Michael Associates (SMA) in support of the planning application. These documents assess the transport impacts of the proposal, in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).
- 6.16 The site is already well served by vehicular, pedestrian, cycling, and public transport access, and the proposed development does not alter existing site access or internal road layouts. Vehicle movements associated with the development are expected to be minimal, as the proposals do not increase pupil or staff numbers. Any additional trips from after-school or community activities are outside peak periods and will be accommodated safely within existing capacity. The traffic generation is minimal, can operate without causing an unacceptable impact on highway capacity or safety.
- 6.17 The proposals include additional cycle parking (5 spaces) and electric vehicle (EV) charging facilities, ensuring alignment with sustainable travel objectives. A footpath to the theatre will provide safe and convenient internal access, linking the new buildings with the rest of the campus and parking areas.

6.18 The Travel Plan sets out measures to encourage sustainable travel for all users. Overall, the assessment confirms that the development will not have a detrimental impact on the local highway network and is fully compliant with BREEAM 'Very Good' requirements, national planning guidance (NPPF), and local transport policy. On this basis, the proposed development is acceptable in transport and highways terms, in accordance with the NPPF, the Hampshire Local Transport Plan, the Havant Local Plan and Parking SPD, namely policy DM14 and CS20.

Sustainability Assessment

6.19 The proposed development has been designed to high sustainability standards, consistent with the aims of the Local Plan Policy CS15 and Borough's Design SPD.

6.20 An initial assessment indicates the ability to achieve a 'very good' BREEAM sustainability rating.

Some of these features include:

- Efficient building fabric and energy systems
- The intention to install solar photovoltaic (PV) panels on the roof to facilitate on-site renewable energy generation
- Inclusion of a green roof on the single storey elements of the scheme (covering some 230 sqm of the roof)
- Sustainable drainage features, including an attenuation tank
- Use of responsibly sourced materials
- Measures to ensure water efficiency and waste reduction

6.21 More broadly, the scheme contributes to the social and economic sustainability of the local area by supporting new performing arts building and learning opportunities for the pupils. It also enables the sports pitches to be used by the wider community more readily and securely.

Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment

6.22 A detailed Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and Drainage Scheme have been prepared by Bright Plan Civils Limited in support of the application. The FRA has been undertaken in line with national planning policy guidance to assess the suitability of the site for the proposed development in terms of flood risk.

- 6.23 The site extends to approximately 0.78 hectares and lies within Flood Zone 1, indicating a low probability of flooding from rivers or the sea. Topographic levels range between 46.40m and 47.50m AOD, and the proposed theatre building is located outside the areas identified as being at risk of surface water flooding.
- 6.24 Surface water from the new development will discharge to Southern Water's public surface water sewer, with flows restricted to 1.0 litres per second. Attenuation will be provided via a 13m x 8m x 0.4m attenuation tank, designed to accommodate a 1 in 100-year storm event plus a 45% climate change allowance. In addition, 230m² of green roof (around 32% of the total roof area) will provide additional storage and water quality benefits.
- 6.25 Foul water will connect to Southern Water's public foul sewer network, subject to the necessary agreements from the infrastructure provider.
- 6.26 The flood risk assessment concludes that the proposed development will not increase flood risk on or off the site and is appropriate in terms of drainage and flood risk management. The design meets the requirements of Policy CS15 (Sustainable Construction) and Policy DM18 (Sustainable Drainage Systems) of the Havant Borough Local Plan.
- 6.27 The development is therefore considered to comply with national and local planning policy requirements relating to flood risk, drainage, water quality, or the wider environment. Please see the Drainage Details prepared for more information.

Noise Impact Assessment and Residential Amenity

- 6.28 A Noise Impact Assessment has been prepared by Sound Advice Limited. This was undertaken to establish existing background noise levels and evaluate potential impacts on nearby residential properties from the new theatre building.
- 6.29 The nearest residential properties are located along Hart Plain Avenue to the north. This includes numbers 41-43, the new six dwellings and care home under construction.

- 6.30 The assessment considered a worst-case operational scenario and concluded that the predicted noise emissions would remain within 'low impact' criteria, indicating that adverse effects on local amenity are highly unlikely. The report recommends specific maximum noise levels for external plant, which can be secured and controlled through a planning condition.
- 6.31 In summary, the proposed development is not considered to give rise to any adverse residential amenity issues. With appropriate conditions in place, the proposed theatre would be compatible with its urban setting and the amenity of neighbouring occupiers, in accordance with Policy DM23 and the wider aims of the Local Plan. The school is used to operating open days and school performances and would continue in a similar manner. Out of school use of the theatre will be limited initially, with focus on the use of the changing rooms and viewing area in association with the existing sports facilities.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 This planning application seeks permission for the 'Erection of a school theatre building and changing rooms to serve adjacent sports facilities, with associated landscaping, planting, and ancillary works'.
- 7.2 The proposed theatre will provide a dedicated performing arts venue, addressing a long-standing operational constraint within the school by allowing performances to continue during exam periods when the main hall is unavailable. This investment will enhance the curriculum, enrich student experience, and provide a valuable cultural resource for the wider community.



7.3 The proposed theatre and changing room complex will:

- Provide a dedicated performing arts venue and flexible space for school and community use
- This is important given the school hall is used for examinations during many parts of the school year, limiting its use currently. This would enable an uninterrupted performing arts curriculum in a purpose built facility
- Enhance the existing sports provision with modern changing facilities and new spectator area
- Deliver sustainable, energy-efficient buildings achieving BREEAM 'Very Good' rating
- Secure biodiversity and arboricultural gains
- Maintain safe and sustainable access with no adverse transport impacts
- Comply with all relevant planning policies.



7.4 The application demonstrates clear compliance with local and national planning policies and represents a sustainable, well-designed, and educationally beneficial development.

7.5 For these reasons, it is respectfully requested that planning permission be granted.