



# New 6FE School Briefing Document



# 1.0 Introduction

## brief

Gloucestershire County Council are looking to build a new secondary school with six Forms of Entry (6FE) to provide the required pupil places in the Cheltenham area, as expansion of existing schools would not meet demand. The search for a site was focussed on South Cheltenham, as this is where the pressure for school places is most acute.

A detailed feasibility study was produced by Roberts Limbrick Architects in order to assess three parcels of land, based on the following information:

- Building Bulletin 103: Area Guidelines for mainstream Schools
- Draft Landscape Planning Appraisal
- Interim Findings: Planning Strategy Appraisal
- Phase 1 Ground Survey
- Arboricultural Assessment (Based on OS map)
- Advice from Counsel
- Photographic & Video Drone Survey
- Utilities record drawings
- Ecological Survey
- Archaeological Assessment
- Sequential Test Report (SFP Planning for Gloucestershire County Council)
- Secondary School Provision Assessment Report (EFM for Miller Homes, April 2018)
- Topographic survey

Following production of the feasibility study it was decided that only one of the sites should be considered for development. The purpose of this document is therefore to present a summary of the site now being considered for development, along with two potential site layouts for a 6FE school.

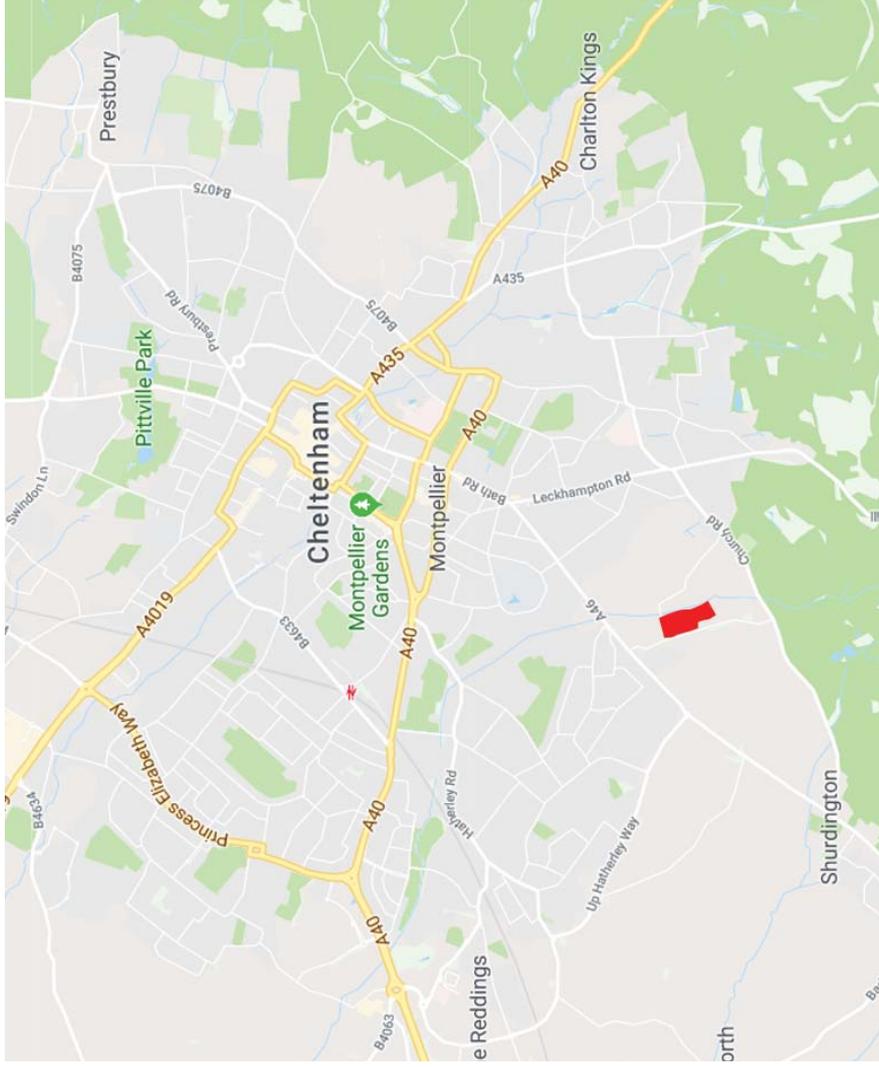
It should also be noted that Cotswold Transport Planning are currently carrying out a Transport Assessment relating to this project, the conclusions of which will have implications for any developing strategy for the school site.

The site and building areas given in this report are derived from the current guidelines, as defined by the Education Funding Agency (EFA). 'Building Bulletin 103: Area Guidelines for Mainstream Schools' BB103 sets out non-statutory area guidelines for school buildings (part A) and sites (part B) for all age ranges from 3 to 19. It covers all state schools, including mainstream academies and free schools, except special schools and alternative provision.

The EFA points out that these guidelines will not necessarily have to be met in every case and should always be applied flexibly in light of the particular circumstances. In this case it should be noted that there has been no engagement with the Sponsors as yet, therefore the external areas and Schedule of Accommodation provided show the minimum 'standard' requirements. It is fully expected that the areas will be developed alongside the rest of the Design Brief as the design process progresses.

# 2.0 Site Analysis

## Site plans



The proposed site, indicated in red on the above map, is in the Leckhampton district and lies on the outskirts of South Cheltenham.



The full Feasibility Study covered parcels A B & C, however **site B** is owned by Gloucestershire County Council and it was ultimately decided that this should be the development site.

# F02 Site Analysis

## landscape & visual impact



- KEY**
- Site Boundary
  - 5m Contours
  - Grade II\* Listed Building
  - Grade II Listed Building
  - Scheduled Monument
  - Footpath (LF - Leckhampton Footpath) (SF - Shurdington Footpath)



- KEY**
- Public rights of way
  - Watercourse
  - Residential views towards site
  - Grade II Listed Buildings
  - Existing vegetation providing screening from properties
  - Existing sloping ground
  - Development potential High Low
  - Potential mitigation planting

### Landscape Features Plan

There are no listed buildings immediately bounding the site, however there are some in the general locality around the southern end of the site.

The site is bisected by a Public Right of Way in the form of the footpath labelled 'LF9' on the diagram above. This would either need to be incorporated into the design or potentially a redirection could be applied for. It is also worth noting that there are several residential properties in reasonably close proximity to the eastern boundary of the site, and directly across the road along the western boundary.

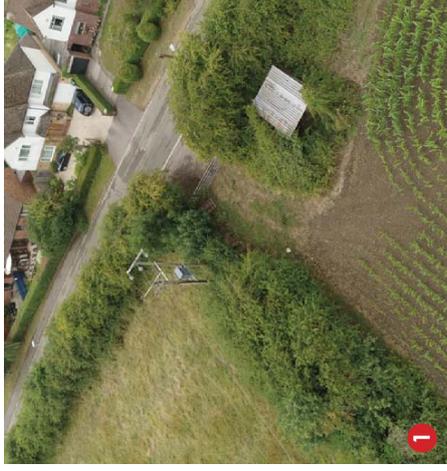
### Constraints and Opportunities Plan

The colours on the diagram above indicate the suitability of land for development, from a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment perspective. This indicates that the greatest development potential for any buildings is at the northern end of the site. A two storey maximum should be observed, and attempts should be made to diminish the mass of the building as viewed from the Cotswold Way.

The watercourse running along the eastern boundary is Hatherley Brook. Because it is at a lower level than the site it is not thought to pose a threat to development in terms of groundwater or present an elevated flood risk.

# 2.0 Site Analysis

## arboriculture



existing trees

existing shrubs

### Arboricultural Summary

- Most trees are contained within site margins
- Roughly half (29 of 60) of trees are category C / low-quality expected to live in the region of ten years
- 25 trees were classed category B with life expectancy of roughly 20 years
- Only four were classified as category A (for landscape value not individual species type)

# 02 Site Analysis

## ecology

### Ecologist's Conclusions

The site falls within the Impact Risk Zone 1 of Leckhampton Hill and Charlton Kings Common Sites of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Badgeworth SSSI for residential development.

Based on the findings of EDP's initial ecological investigations, the designated sites, habitats and species potentially present within and around the site do not pose an 'in principle' constraint to development of the site. There are no statutory or non-statutory protected nature conservation interests within the proposed development site, or off-site, that are likely to be materially affected by the proposals.

While the majority of the site has been identified as an unconfirmed KWS, the habitats on site, with the possible exception of the stream corridor, are not considered to be of sufficient value to qualify and therefore do not pose a significant constraint to the sites development. However, given this unconfirmed designation, it may be prudent to undertake further evaluation of the habitats present against the KWS selection criteria to demonstrate this.

The habitats present on site are generally of low (site level) intrinsic ecological value, such that development of the site would have a minimal effect on local biodiversity. Some habitats considered of local level value are present, namely Hatherley Brook, the hedgerow/tree network and remnant orchard, but subject to appropriate masterplan design in accordance with the design principles outlined previously, adverse effects upon these habitats can be readily avoided, mitigated or compensated for and a net gain to biodiversity achieved.

Detailed protected species surveys are likely to be required to accompany any planning application for the site, together with an assessment of potential effects and strategies to avoid, mitigate or compensate for such effects. However, it is considered that through the adoption of industry standard impact avoidance and mitigation measures, any adverse effects on protected species can be appropriately addressed to ensure such interests are safeguarded, and there is no net loss to biodiversity, in accordance with national planning policy.

It is considered that the site offers sufficient flexibility to ensure compliance with planning policy at all levels and to avoid 'significant harm' to biodiversity. Furthermore, owing to the current low ecological value of the site, a sensitively designed development incorporating appropriate mitigation and enhancement has significant potential to deliver a net gain in biodiversity.



# 03

## Options Appraisal

# 3.5 Options Appraisal

## Site Layouts: Option 1



### BB 103 (6FE)

Soft Outdoor PE - 37,500 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Hard Outdoor PE - 1,750 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Soft Informal & Social - 2,400 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Hard Informal & Social - 1,100 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Habitat - 450 m<sup>2</sup>

Building Total Gross Area - 6720 m<sup>2</sup>

### Option 1 (As shown)

Site area = 59,535 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Soft Outdoor PE - 25,114 m<sup>2</sup> (41174 m<sup>2</sup> - Rugby/Football Pitch & Astro Pitch can be counted twice (BB103))  
 Hard Outdoor PE - 1,725 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Soft Informal & Social - 2,418 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Hard Informal & Social - 1,856 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Habitat - 450 m<sup>2</sup>

New 6FE School Total Gross Area - 6720 m<sup>2</sup>

# 3.6 Options Appraisal

## Site Layouts: Option 2



### BB 103 (6FE)

Soft Outdoor PE - 37,500 m2  
 Hard Outdoor PE - 1,750 m2  
 Soft Informal & Social - 2,400 m2  
 Hard Informal & Social - 1,100 m2  
 Habitat - 450 m2

Building Total Gross Area - 6720 m2

### Option 2 (As shown)

Site area = 59,535 m2  
 Soft Outdoor PE - 25,114 m2 (41174 m2 - Rugby/Football Pitch & Astro Pitch can be counted twice (BB103))  
 Hard Outdoor PE - 629.6 m2  
 Soft Informal & Social - 3,000 m2  
 Hard Informal & Social - 1 618 m2  
 Habitat - 450 m2

New 6FE School Total Gross Area - 6720 m2

