



Planning, Design & Access Statement

Incorporating 'Heritage Statement' &
'Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment'



Contents

1. Introduction
2. Site Analysis & Context
3. Planning Policy
4. Scheme Proposal & Design
5. Access Statement
6. Heritage Statement
7. Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
8. Conclusions



Introduction

This Planning, Design & Access Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application to refurbish and enhance the existing sporting facilities at John Port Spencer Academy (JPSA) which will be shared with Etwall Leisure Centre to meet the demand for recreational facilities created by local housing growth and secured through S106 funding. This application seeks **Full Planning Consent** for the *‘Restructuring and resurfacing of the existing tennis courts and basketball courts including the erection of new fencing and floodlighting at John Port Spencer Academy, Etwall’*.

The school currently provides 11-16 education with a net capacity of 1800 pupils (360 PAN), alongside post-16 (6th form) education with a net capacity of 313 pupils, and has recently obtained planning consent for new accommodation to support expanding the school net capacity for 11-16 to 2,100 pupils (420 PAN) and post-16 to 400 pupils (200 PAN). The sporting facilities, including a 25m swimming pool and sports hall, are shared through a Joint Use Agreement with Etwall Leisure Centre which occupies the same site as JPSA.

The scheme proposals comprise of the resurfacing of the existing tennis courts with a porous macadam surface, along with the erection of floodlighting, to improve the provision of tennis facilities, and the restructuring and resurfacing of existing basketball courts with a polymeric surface, along with the erection of rebound fencing and floodlighting, to provide two multi-use games areas offering mixed sport facilities.

The following planning, design & access statement demonstrates how the proposals have been developed in response to the site context, constraints and local planning policy. This statement should be read in conjunction with the submitted design drawings and supporting documentation.





Diagram 1: Historic Photo of Etwall Hall

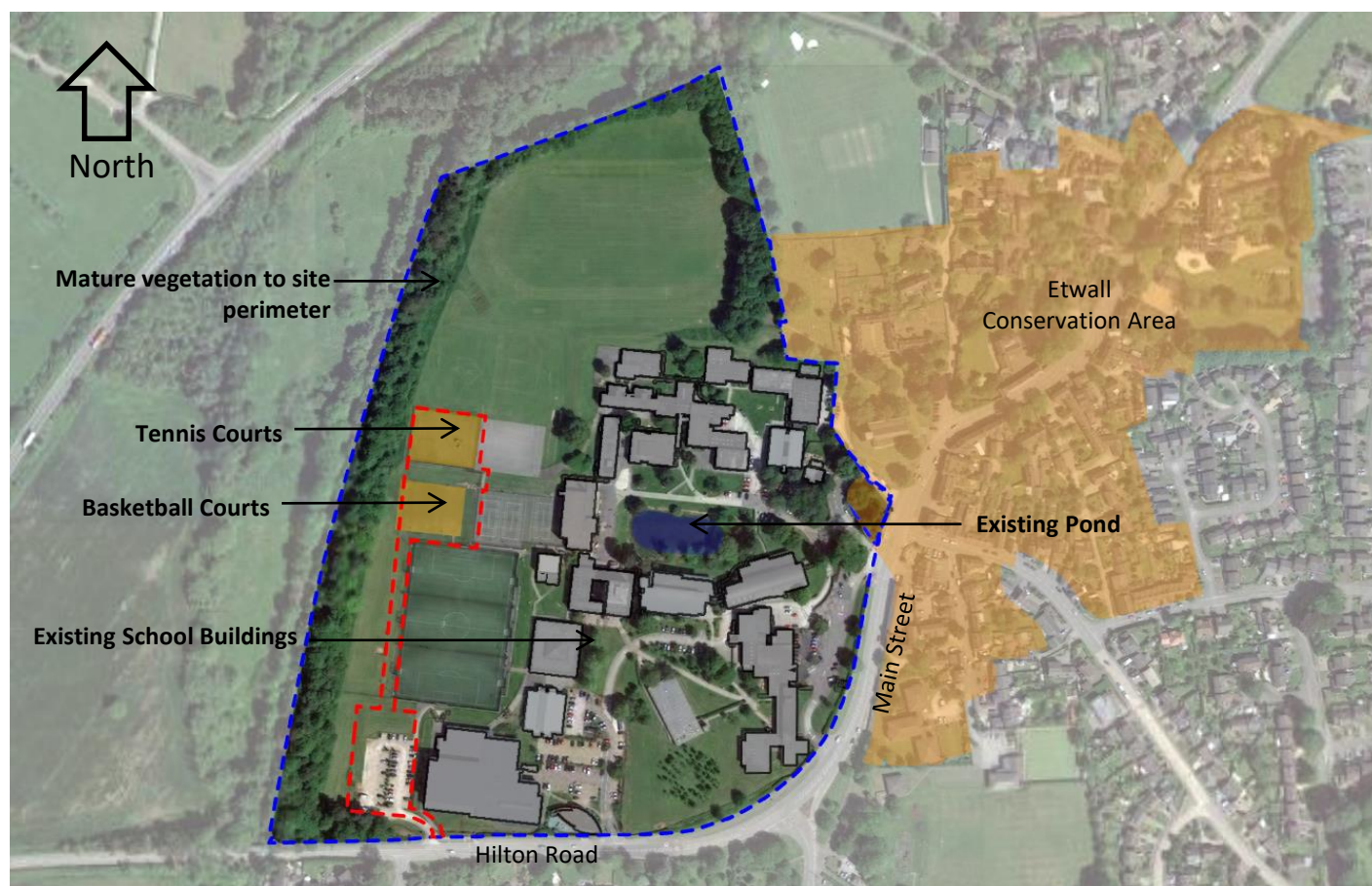


Diagram 2: Existing Site Features

Existing Site & Context

JPSA is located in the Derbyshire village of Etwall, situated approximately 7 miles south-west of Derby city centre. The 2011 Census recorded the local population as being 2,906. The application site sits on the western boundary of the campus, and will be accessed via the new overflow car park off Hilton Road. Dense and mature vegetation along the north and west boundaries provides a green backdrop to the application site, while faculty buildings screen it from the east and south.

The academy is situated on the site of a demolished country manor, Etwall Hall, once owned by the Port family but later purchased by Derbyshire County Council in 1952. After intensive use during the Second World War by the Army as a fuel depot and equipment supply centre, the Hall had fallen into a dilapidated state and was demolished in 1955. Shortly after, Etwall Secondary School and John Port Grammar School were built on the site, which were later amalgamated to form John Port School in 1965; named after Sir John Port, founder of nearby Repton School.

In 2018, John Port School became a full member of the Spencer Academy Trust. The academy now has a role of over 2,000 pupils, providing teaching for ages 11-18, and is now one of the largest schools in the Trust group, and the largest secondary school in Derbyshire.

The academy is structured on a 'green campus' design ethos, with faculty buildings surrounding one of the original fishing ponds on the grounds of Etwall Hall. Teaching facilities are spread across the site, with each faculty having separate buildings, set within open green spaces and mature trees / vegetation. The schools sports facilities, including a full size artificial playing surface and a number of tarmac tennis / netball / basketball courts sit along the western edge of the site. These facilities are shared through a Joint Use Agreement with the Etwall Leisure Centre, opened in 2009, and students have access and use of the sporting facilities within the leisure centre, including a 25m swimming pool and sports hall.

The site is not susceptible to flooding, with the development site sat within Flood Zone 1, and having discussed the application with the Environmental Agency, we submit that an FRA is not required. The FRA for the school masterplan shows that the basketball courts can be subject to localised surface water flooding as a low part of the site, taking water away from the more vulnerable parts of the site, and the MUGA will be designed to accommodate this constraint.

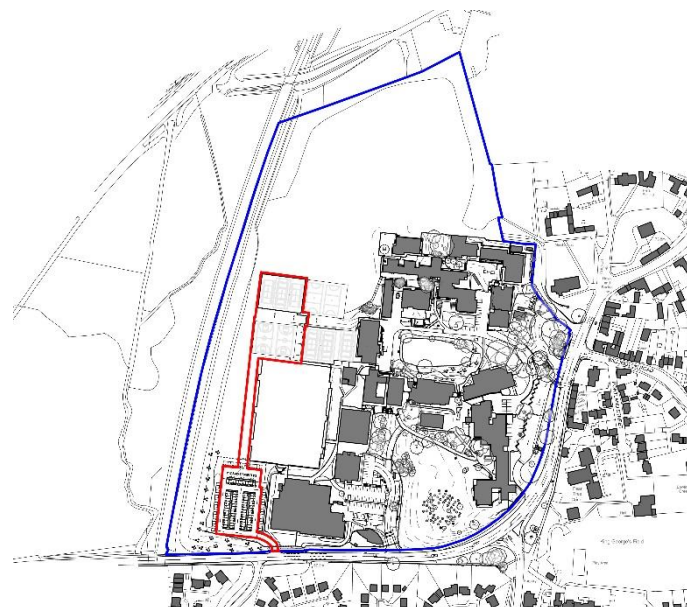


Diagram 4: OS Location Plan Extract



Diagram 3: Existing Site Plan

Existing Buildings

JPSA occupies an attractive and substantial site on the edge of Etwall village, with 15 faculty buildings, including the joint use Leisure Centre (C), but excluding the Sure Start Children's Centre building (D). There are no buildings within the application site, and the proposed scheme has no impact on any of the existing buildings.

Services & Utilities

JPSA is currently serviced by electricity, gas, water, BT, and foul drainage. The proposed development will only require electrical connections, and the aim will be to retain and adapt these services to meet the demand of the additional development.

Size and Topography

The academy site, including the Leisure Centre and Children's Centre, is approx. 7.6 hectares / 18.9 acres, has a relatively regular shape, although marginally tapering towards the north, and a 17m level difference between the north and south site boundaries. The application site is 0.88 hectares / 2.17 acres, with a gradual incline from the car park (E) up to the basketball courts (B) followed by a 3m embankment up to the tennis courts (A).

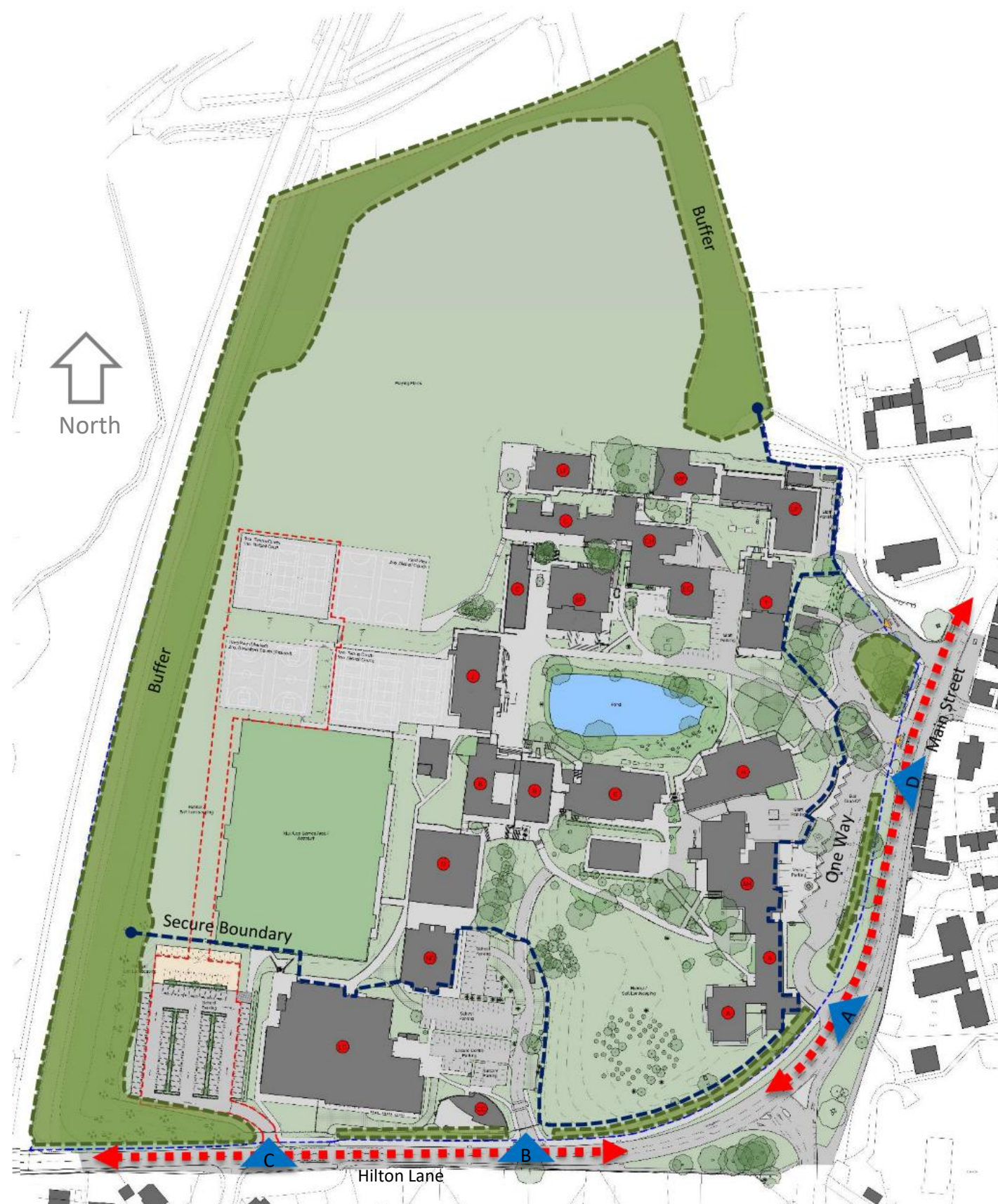


Diagram 5: Access, Boundaries & Vegetation diagram

Vehicular & Pedestrian Access

Vehicle and pedestrian access will remain as existing, with no new routes being formed. Entrance A (see diagram 5) serves as the primary vehicular entrance for JPSA, while Entrance B provides maintenance access to the rear of the academy and is shared with the Sure Start Children's Centre / Leisure Centre car parks. Entrance C gives access to the shared overflow car park and a maintenance / emergency access to the school playing fields and courts. All four entrances annotated on the attached diagram provide pedestrian access to the school, but beyond the site boundary the academy's secure boundary has only a couple of pedestrian entrances, restricting student access to entrances B, C and D. Public access to the courts and playing fields will remain through the Leisure Centre, accessed via entrance B or C.

Existing Vegetation & Screening

There is no vegetation within the application boundary, however the JPSA site boundaries are well defined and established through a mixture of fences and mature vegetation with different grades of transparency and heights. Along the north and west boundary lies a dense buffer of mature trees and vegetation creating a strong visual barrier between the courts and open countryside beyond. High hedgerows along the east and south boundary to the main roads, breaking only at entrance points, along with the faculty buildings and level change, screen the courts from the east and south boundary.

Ecology & Fauna

The courts have no ecological value being tarmacadam surfaces, and are extremely unlikely to support protected / notable species, and amphibian habitat unlikely to be affected. During the school expansion, an Ecological Appraisal identified that campus as having low ecological value, and the measures introduced as part of that approval will be unaffected by these works.



Planning Background

Planning History

There is a varied planning history that follows the expansion of the school. Most relate to minor works projects (fencing / canopies), but the following sets out the more significant developments:

- 9/1994/0316 - The Erection Of A Science Block With Basement Garaging On The Eastern Side Of The Main School Buildings (Toyota Building)
- 9/1998/0733 - The Erection Of A Dance/Drama Studio As Phase I Of The New Expressive Arts Building
- 9/1999/0983 - The Erection Of Phase II Of The Expressive Arts Building, Extension To The Lower Flamstead Building, And The Roofing Over Of The Derwent Building
- 9/2000/0528 – The Erection Of An Extension To Infill Part Of The Undercroft To Provide Two Additional Classrooms At The Bakewell Building.
- 9/2002/0177 - The Erection Of A Single Storey Extension To Middle Flamstead Building.
- 9/2002/1229 - The Erection Of A New Humanities Building And Associated Works.
- 9/2004/1217 - The Erection Of A 12 Classroom Building With Associated Offices And Ancillary Spaces.
- 9/2007/0381 - New Sports Centre Incorporating A Six Courts Sports Hall, Swimming Pool And Associated Changing Facilities (Approval Of Reserved Matters).
- 9/2009/0150 - The Erection Of Children's Centre.
- 9/2011/0223 - The Conversion Of An Existing School Swimming Pool To A Vocational Centre And Classrooms.
- 9/2011/0286 - Proposed New Car Park At Rear Of Sports Hall And New Paths And Fencing Around Derwent Building.
- 9/2014/0452 - Prior Notification Of Proposed Demolition Of Modular Classroom Block (Ilam Building).
- DMPA/2020/0864 – Hybrid application for School Expansion (Outline Consent) and Car Park Expansion (Full Planning Consent).

Planning Policy

The key policy considerations from the South Derbyshire Local Plan are as follows:

- POLICY S1 – SUSTAINABLE GROWTH STRATEGY and
- POLICY S2 –PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
Refurbishing the existing courts and improving the existing facilities in itself represents a sustainable approach to development and growth.
- POLICY S6 – SUSTAINABLE ACCESS
There are no changes to the existing access.



Planning Background

Planning Policy (Continued)

- POLICY E3 – EXISTING EMPLOYMENT AREAS

The proposed development will not create any new jobs, but renovating and improving the facilities, bringing them up-to-date with current standards, helps secure the future of the site.

- POLICY SD1 – AMENITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

The following section on 'Scheme & Design Proposals' demonstrates how the development enhances the amenity value of the school site.

- POLICY SD2 – FLOOD RISK

The proposed development site falls within Flood Risk Zone 1 and not susceptible to flooding, and the scheme proposals will not make flooding worse in other areas. Installation of a porous surface will improve site drainage and reduce the risk of localise flooding of the surface finish.

- POLICY SD3 – SUSTAINABLE WATER SUPPLY, DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE INFRASTRUCTURE

The works will have no impact on any water supply or sewage infrastructure. The hard standing tarmacadam, draining to the adjacent soft landscaping, will be replaced with porous surfaces to improve drainage local to the basketball and tennis courts.

- POLICY SD6 – SUSTAINABLE ENERGY AND POWER GENERATION

The infrastructure for the existing floodlights to the artificial turf will be extended to supply the additional lighting for the basketball and tennis courts.

- POLICY BNE1 – DESIGN EXCELLENCE

The following section on 'Scheme & Design Proposals' will demonstrate how the development enhances the quality of the existing environment of the school and leisure centre.

- POLICY BNE3 – BIODIVERISTY

The proposals will have limited impact on biodiversity, and the submitted proposals replace a tarmacadam hard standing with a porous hard standing.

- POLICY BNE4 – LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND LOCAL DISTINCTIVENESS

The following section on 'Scheme & Design Proposals' will demonstrate how the proposals enhance the existing quality and character of the academy.

- POLICY INF2 – SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

The submitted proposals have no impact on the existing travel / transport condition.

- POLICY INF9 – OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION

The submitted proposals look to protect and enhance the existing sport and recreation grounds on the campus.





Diagram 6: Extract of Proposed Master-Plan

Use

The development site has an established education / recreational use, and a renovation of the existing facilities is considered to be acceptable in the context of the current site use and local planning policy.

Amount

The amount of development reflects the existing facilities. The submitted application does not seek to increase the amount of development currently on the site, looking to only refurbish the existing facilities.

Site Layout & Approach

The location and the layout for the tennis courts (A) will remain as existing. The replacement basketball courts (B) will be of a similar footprint to the existing, but will be rotated through 90 degrees to provide two multi-use games area that are compliant with the current Sport England standards while having the least impact on the adjacent embankments.

Building Form, Height & Massing

The submitted proposals do not include any building forms or massing, and new fencing to the basketball courts will be of a similar height to adjacent playing surfaces, albeit lower due to differences in site levels.

Appearance, Materials & Landscaping

The courts will be surfaced with a porous pigmented macadam / polymeric surface to a Sport England standard. The basketball courts will be enclosed by a rebound fencing in Moss Green to reflect the fencing to adjacent playing areas. Soft landscaping will be limited to making good of the grass around the basketball court once the courts have been restructured.



Sustainability

Developing the campus on a need basis allows the applicant to deliver sports facilities that meet the current demand, while making the academy and leisure centre more desirable that will support the long term viability of delivering high quality educational and recreational facilities. Providing high quality facilities for use by the local community, via the Joint Use Agreement with the leisure centre, who may chosen previously to travel, in itself promotes a far more sustainable approach to development.

Ecology & Biodiversity

The submitted proposals are for the resurfacing of existing hard standing tennis and basketball courts, and there are no ecological or biodiversity enhancements proposed. The enhancements made as part of the consented masterplan will be unaffected by these proposals.

Flood Risk Assessment

The site falls within Flood Risk Zone 1, and having discussed the scheme with the Environmental Agency, we submit that a Flood Risk Assessment is not necessary. The basketball courts sit within a low spot on the site, which can be subject to surface water flooding as a non-porous tarmacadam which discharges onto the adjacent soft landscaping, however the new surfaces will be of a porous macadam (tennis courts) and porous polymeric surface (basketball courts) to reduce the impact of surface water flooding.



Private Vehicles, Bicycles, Refuse & Service Vehicles

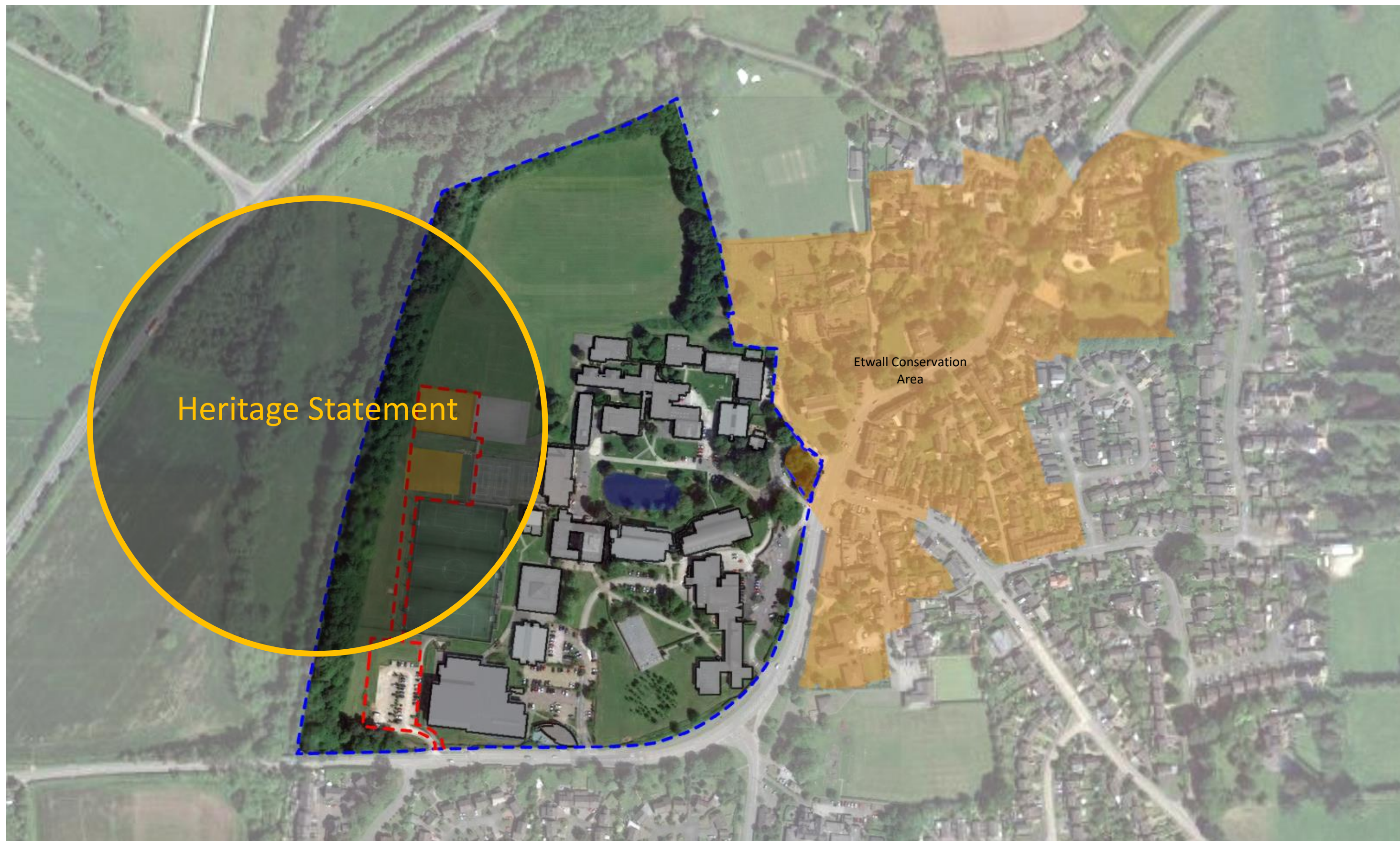
The submitted application does not look alter the existing conditions for vehicles and bicycle access. There will be no requirement for refuse vehicle access, and service vehicles will use the existing gated access via the overflow car park to the south.

Pedestrians

The academy benefits from good pedestrian links with four key entrances and wide pavements in good condition to promote many local journeys to be made on foot. The existing pedestrian entrances to the site will remain unaltered, and the route through the secure school boundary from the car park expansion will remain to the north of the leisure centre. With the secure boundary, pubic access to the tennis and basketball courts is controlled by the leisure centre.

Wheelchairs Users

Existing entrances to the site and into the buildings will largely remain unaltered with firm level paths and marked walkways.





Photograph G: Church of Saint Helens



Diagram 9: Conservation Area and Listed Buildings

Heritage Assets

John Port Spencer Academy sits on the edge of the Etwall Conservaton Area, which is largely defined as a compact nucleated settlement in a semi-wooded setting with large trees in a series of mature gardens. Generous spaces form wide streets with wide pavements, which historically led to the village church and now enhance the setting of its historic buildings. The Conservation Area has a mix of architectural details, with a high proportion of genteel red brick Georgian houses. Spaces are largely defined by continuous enclosures formed by tall brick boundary walls, which are softened by lush planting and overhanging plants (South Derbyshire District Council, 2011, Etwall Conservation Area Character Statement).

There are a number of listed buildings within the village, but most significant to this application is the Grade I Church of St Helen (1096573) and Grade II* Sir John Port Almshouses (1096567) directly to the east of the academy, the Grade II Well Head to the eastern edge of the academy grounds, and the Grade II listed Garden Wall to the north-east boundary of the academy.

Historic Significance

Served by a number of small springs, the village is Anglo Saxon in origin and inherits its name from the Saxon name 'Eata's Well'; the assumption is that the springs and wells led to the pattern of development. The village has buildings from almost every period of architecture from the late 16th Century onwards, providing a strong visual indicator that it has been inhabited for some 400 years. The settlement pattern is nucleated with the Church to the east of the academy being the focal point, although its strategic importance and physical presence was much more pronounced when the road to Sutton ran between the academy ground and churchyard. The Church is dedicated to St. Helen, and there were more 'holy' wells named for Helen than any other non-biblical female saint, and the link to the village wells is the most likely explanation of this dedication.

The academy itself is built on the grounds of the former Etwall Hall which was founded by the Port family back in the 16th Century following the marriage of Sir John Port the Elder to Jane Fitzherbert. Built in a defensive position overlooking the flood plains, the landscaped grounds of Etwall Hall dominated the western edge of the village, and had a medieval relationship to the Church of St Helens. The hall was demolished in 1955; very little of the grounds fall within the conservation area, and the tombs of the Port Family and Cotton Family (a later resident of the hall) can be found in the Church.



Photograph H: Listed Brickwork Wall



Photograph J: Almshouse



Diagram 9: Conservation Area and Listed Buildings

Architectural / Artistic Significance

Timber frame construction with panels of wattle-and-daub would have been the principal building material in Etwall leading up to the 18th Century due to a lack of stone in this part of the valley; although not immediately visible from the main street now, this is evident upon further exploration. The exemption to this rule would have been the large ornate buildings built by patrons where no expense was spared to import costly materials, and now brickwork is the dominant building material within the village, although sometimes rendered or painted.

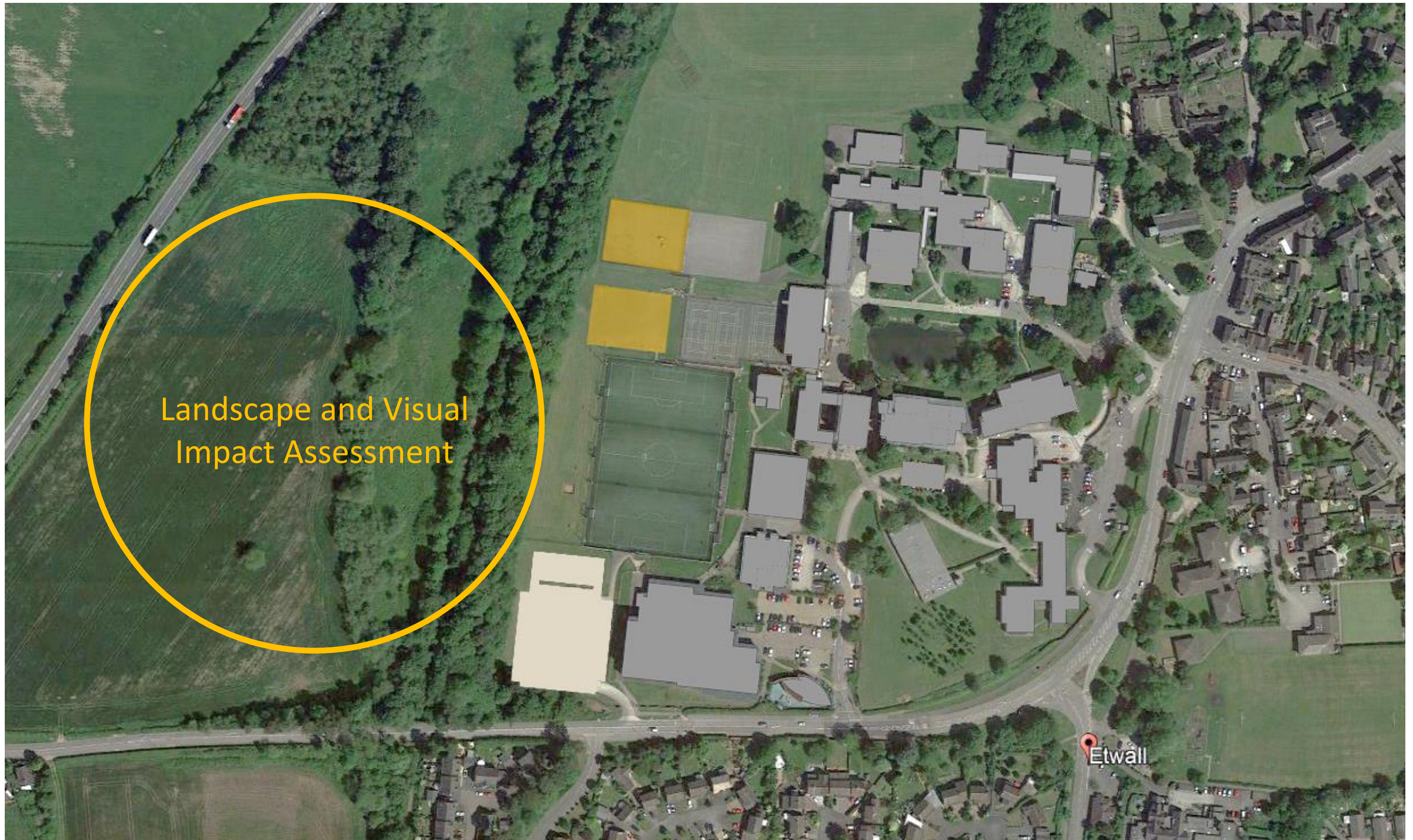
Following the demolition of Etwall Hall, the pink and buff sandstone Church is the only stone building in the village, and is a dominant architectural feature on the edge of the academy. The Grade II listed wall to the eastern edge of the academy grounds is the earliest known example of brickwork in Etwall, alongside the brickwork Almshouses to the north-east of the grounds. The academy itself is much newer, of low cost construction of little to no architectural significance in the wider context of the Etwall Conservation Area.

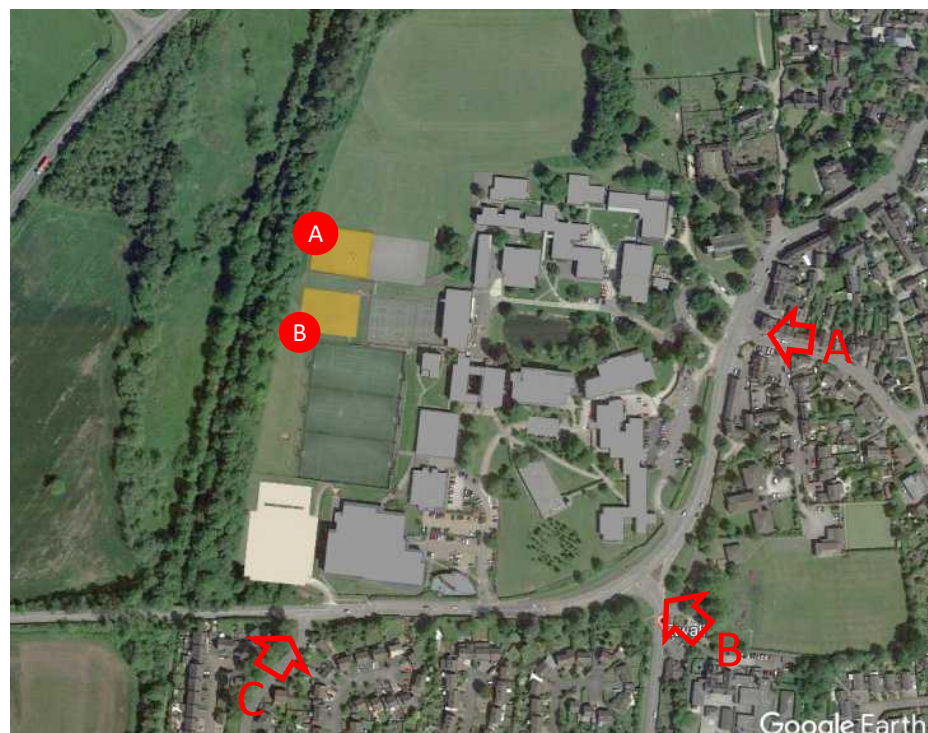
Archaeological Significance

There are no designated Schedule Ancient Monuments on nor near to the academy grounds, however it sits on the edge of a designated 'Area of Archaeological Potential' which follows broadly the line of the Conservation Area. Records show a probable extent of settlement and industrial activity during the medieval and / or post-medieval periods, suggesting archaeological evidence may survive below the ground.

Impact Of Proposals

In summary, we believe that the academy offers little value to the existing conservation area and / or adjacent listed buildings. The submitted proposals seek permission for development well within the grounds of the academy, and this Planning, Design, and Access submits that the proposals will have limited impact on the setting, character and structure of existing heritage assets.





Key Plan:
Court A – Tennis Courts
Court B – Basketball Courts



Street View A: View Of Academy Entrance From Willington Road
Faculty buildings screened by dense mature trees, while the visual impact of the reception building softened by high hedgerows and mature vegetation. Both the Tennis Court (A) and Basketball Court (B) will be screened by the existing mature trees and faculty buildings.



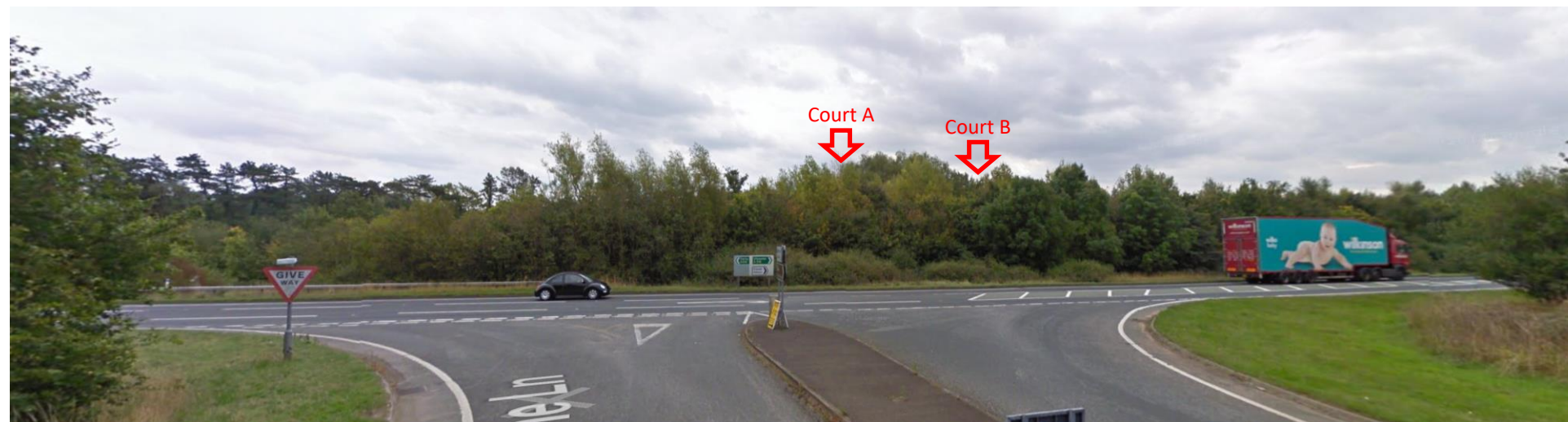
Street View B: View Of Academy From Egginton Road
High hedgerows provide limited screening along south-east elevation soften the visual impact along the main road, and only broken at vehicular entrances. Both the Tennis Court (A) and Basketball Court (B) will be screened by the existing mature trees and faculty buildings.



Street View C: View Of Leisure Centre and Car Park from Old Station Close
Car park screened from main road by dense vegetation. Leisure Centre and Children's Centre / Nursery are quite prominent along the main road, and will screen all proposed development contained within the centre of the academy campus.



Key Plan:
Court A – Tennis Courts
Court B – Basketball Courts



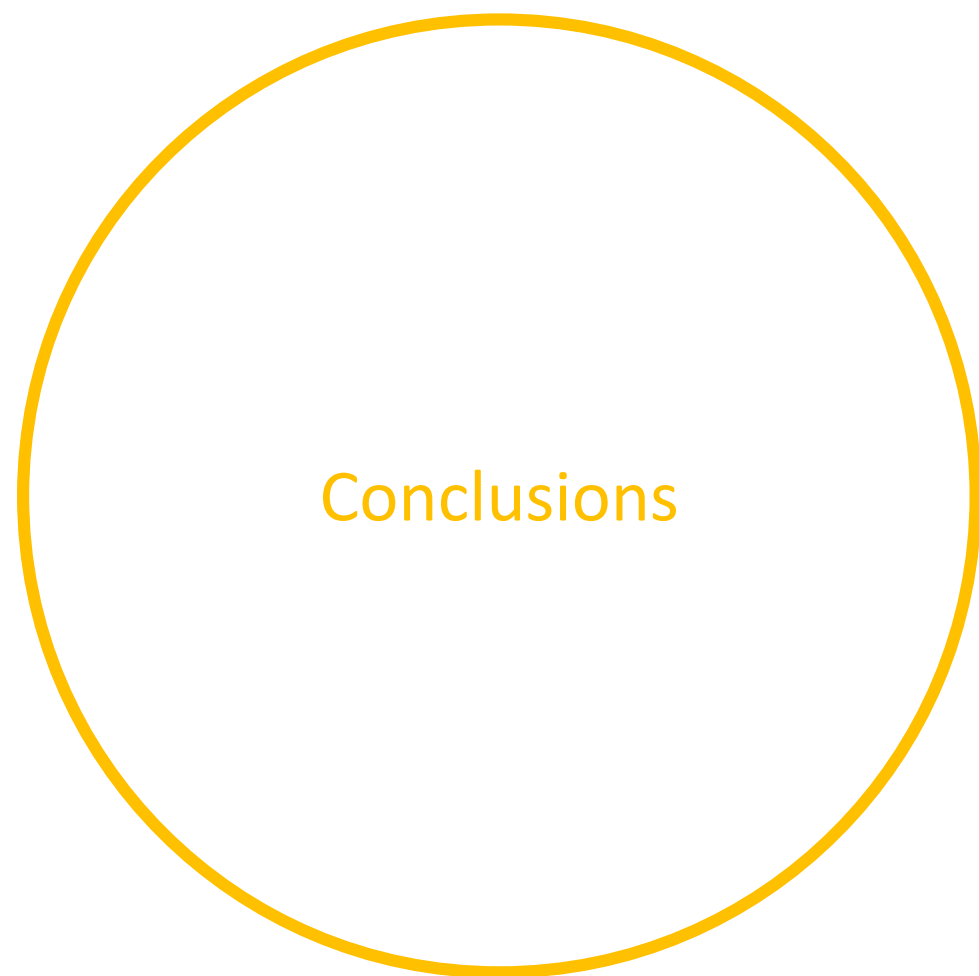
Street View D: View Of Academy From Ash Lane Along A516
Existing faculty buildings and facilities concealed by dense vegetation and mature trees along the length of the A516 presenting no views in this direction. Proposed development will be screened also.



Street View E: View Of Academy From Sutton Lane
Existing faculty buildings and academy grounds screened by dense vegetation and mature trees along the north boundary presenting no views in this direction. Proposed development will be of similar scale to the existing facilities and also be screened.



Street View F: View Of Down Main Street and Past the Church of Saint Helen
The existing faculty buildings and campus are screened by mature trees and dense vegetation that lie beyond the Church. Proposed development will be of a similar scale to the existing and therefore will also be screened and have minimal impact on the setting and character of the Church.



Conclusions

The principle for an educational and recreational use of the site, as an academy and leisure centre is already established. The proposals have been developed to reflect the use, layout, scale and appearance of the existing facilities. The main purpose of the proposed refurbishment is to meet the demand for recreational facilities created by local housing growth and secured through S106 funding. Without this refurbishment, we may find the local community travelling further afield to access quality facilities, and this refurbishment is crucial for the academy and leisure centre to continue to provide up-to-date recreational facilities.

This Planning, Design and Access Statement demonstrates that the proposal complies with the material planning considerations, will have limited impact on the conservation area and / or views into the site, and the applicant respectfully requests that the local planning authority grants planning permission for this proposal.



Aerial Image of Current / Existing Academy Campus

Notes & Qualifications

- 1) Presentation output scale is A3.
- 2) Drawings shown are not to scale

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