

Design & Access Statement

Conversion of existing cricket pavilion into classrooms
Ratby Sports Club, Desford Lane, Ratby, LE6 0LE
for Woldale School



General Information

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Company Biography

HSSP Architects Ltd was established in 1966 and is a professional Company which has always prided itself on its quality service and client relationship. Based in Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire we work throughout the East Midlands and UK

Issue Record

Revision	Date	By	Checked	Admin	Note
P1	22 July 2024	KES	JCB/JW	AJR	First planning issue

Contents

0.0 Executive Summary

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Brief and aspirations

2.0 Site Assessment

2.1 Site location

2.2 Site description

2.3 Site context

2.4 Site history

2.5 Local character

3.0 Planning Policy

3.1 National planning policy framework

3.2 Local plan

3.3 Neighbourhood development plan

3.4 Application site planning history

4.0 Consultation

5.0 Design Concept

5.1 Opportunities and constraints

5.2 Client brief

5.3 Proposed design strategy

6.0 Proposed Design

6.1 Use

6.2 Amount

6.3 Layout

6.4 Scale

6.5 Landscaping

6.6 Appearance

6.7 Site plan

6.8 Floor plans

6.9 Elevations

7.0 Access

7.1 Design and policy approach

7.2 Consultation

7.3 Vehicular access

7.4 Pedestrian access

7.5 Site and building entrances

7.6 Inclusive design

7.7 Public/private space

7.8 Emergency service access

7.9 Sustainable travel

8.0 Appendices

The format and content of this statement has been based upon the guidance supplied by CABE in their publication “Design and access statements - How to write, read and use them”

0.0 Executive Summary

This design and access statement has been prepared by HSSP Architects Ltd on behalf of Woldale School.

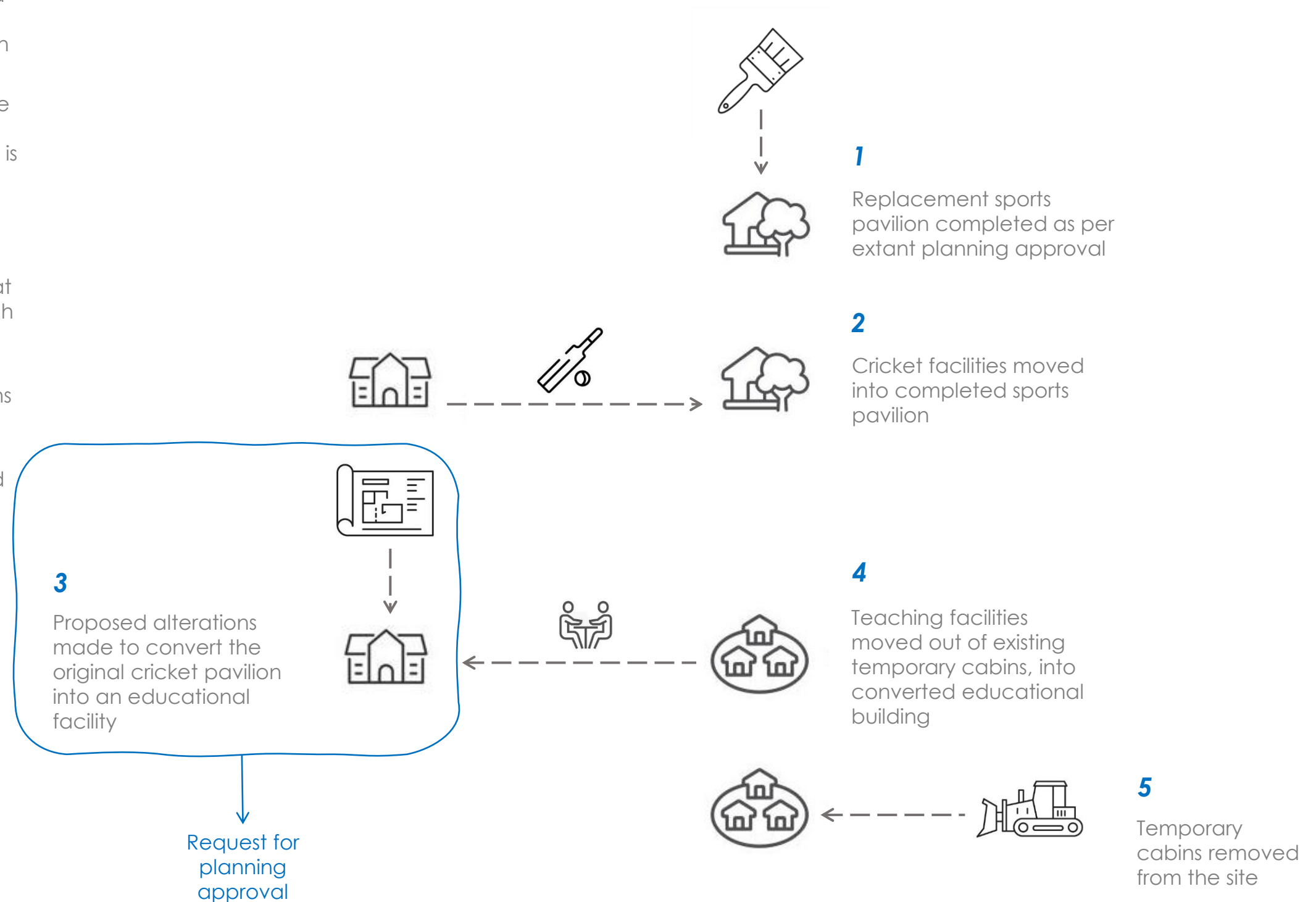
The school is seeking permission to relocate their existing temporary teaching facilities, currently located on the Ratby Sports Club car park, into the adjacent cricket pavilion on the same site.

The cricket club's facilities will first be moved into an existing building further south on the site, since there is an extant planning permission allowing this.

The mobile classrooms currently on site were granted a temporary planning approval, which states that they must be removed by 31st March 2025, and hence this application seeks a more permanent solution.

This document and associated plans are accompanied by the following consultants' drawings and reports:

- Topographical survey, prepared by Ramowski Banner Ltd.



1.0 Introduction

1.1 Brief and aspirations

Wolfdale School is an Independent Specialist School in Leicestershire. Their provision is for young people (aged 7-16) with an Education Care and Health Plan and those with a diagnosis including Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Anxiety, and Social Emotional Mental Health. Wolfdale provide an important role within the county's educational needs and they are very aware that the local need for this type of care is not being met.

Wolfdale School's main site is located in Anstey, and as of 2022 they have also been operating from mobile classrooms located on the Ratby Sports Club car park. The objective of this planning application is to allow teaching to be moved out of the temporary facilities into a more permanent home. In utilising Ratby's existing cricket pavilion, the school can expand and take on more students.

Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council have identified that the number of children attending specialist provision is 'significantly above the national average'. It is identified across the whole of Leicester/Leicestershire that there is an increase of young people being issued with an EHCP and a risk of greater gaps of achievement. (Information taken from the *Leicestershire Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy 2017 – 2020*, and *Leicester's strategy for supporting children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) 2019–2022*).

Recent developments have identified that, even with the local authority creating new specialised schools, there

are still not enough places to meet the numbers required, which has increased the need for established specialist provisions to assess how they can help to support the local authority. Leicester City has only one out of six specialist schools that offer primary age provision which is proving inadequate.

The opportunity to have a school site within Ratby provides ample opportunity for both councils, Leicester County and Leicester City, to offer placement to young people who need it. Wolfdale School opens itself to working alongside authorities to achieve aims set out in the SEND strategies; working towards maximum achievement for the young person promoting and gaining access to vocational and work placement experiences. Along with this, their aim is to develop independence through life skills, community access and self-esteem. Wolfdale's vision is to allow each young person with an EHCP to achieve their aspirations, allowing them to be a valued and contributing member to their community and in turn to the whole of Leicestershire.

Wolfdale is able to offer placements to children with disabilities whether connected to their Autism diagnosis or not; however, this is limited through the availability of space. The school states that they would be able to offer far more beneficial and expanding opportunities for students if they were able to make use of the more versatile space a permanent base would provide.

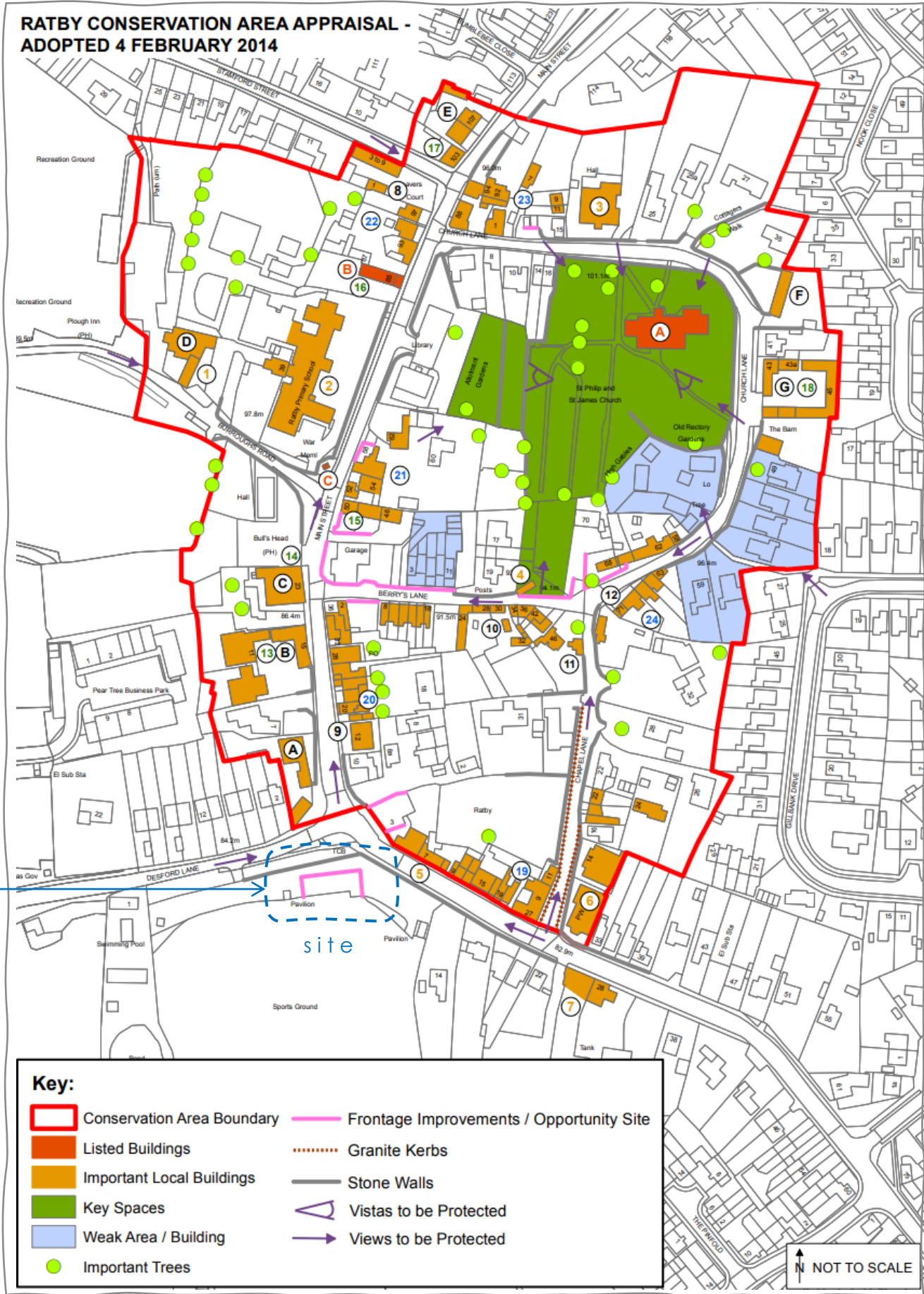


2.0 Site Assessment

2.1 Site location



The site is located at Ratby Sports Club, Desford Lane, Ratby. The site sits outside of the village conservation area, and the pavilion has been identified as having the potential for frontage improvements or being an opportunity site.

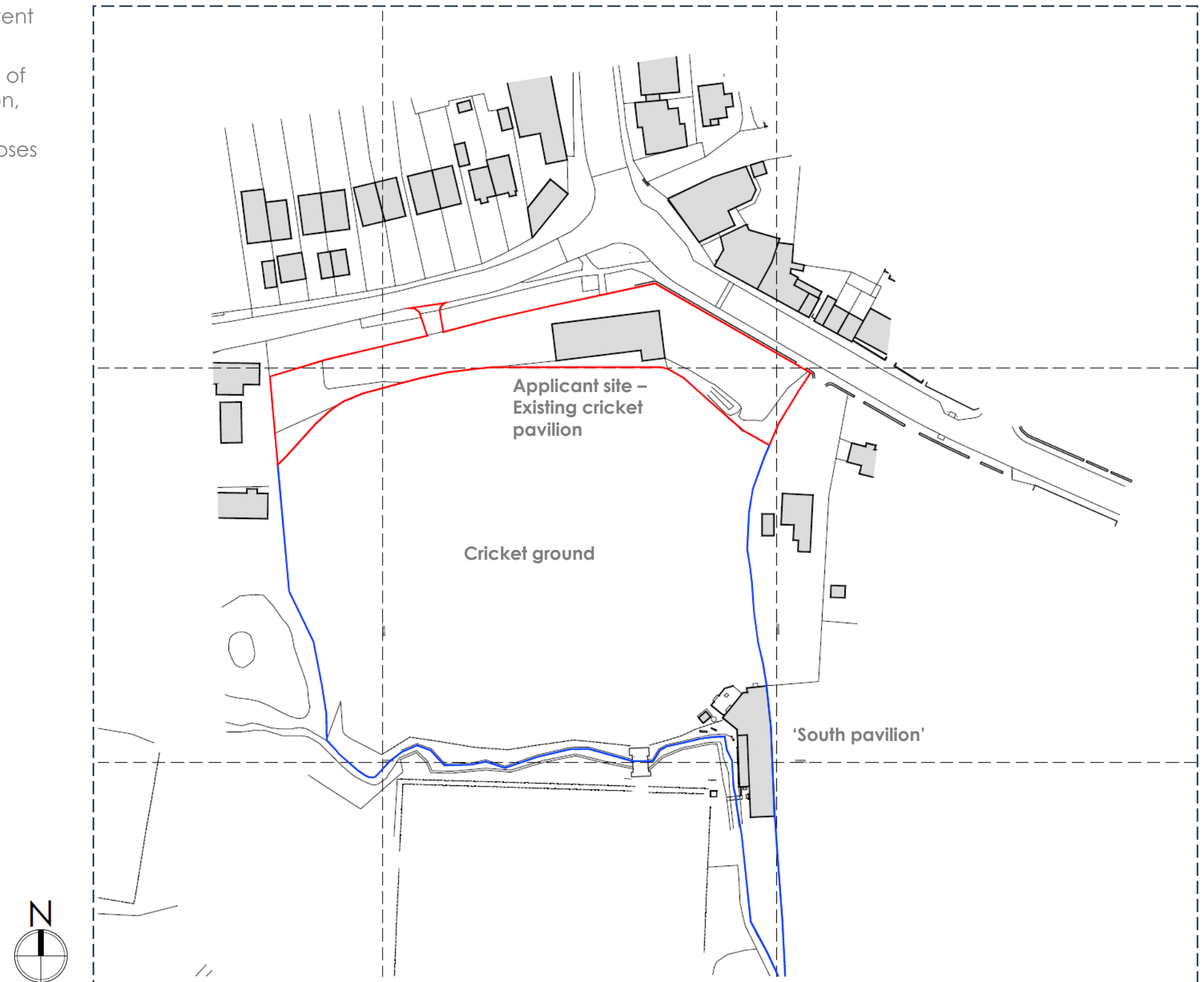


2.0 Site Assessment

2.1 Site location

The adjacent site location plan shows the full extent of the boundaries.

The client owns the cricket ground directly south of the site (blue boundary), and the second pavilion, which is unfinished but has an extant planning permission (named “south pavilion” for the purposes of this document).



2.0 Site Assessment

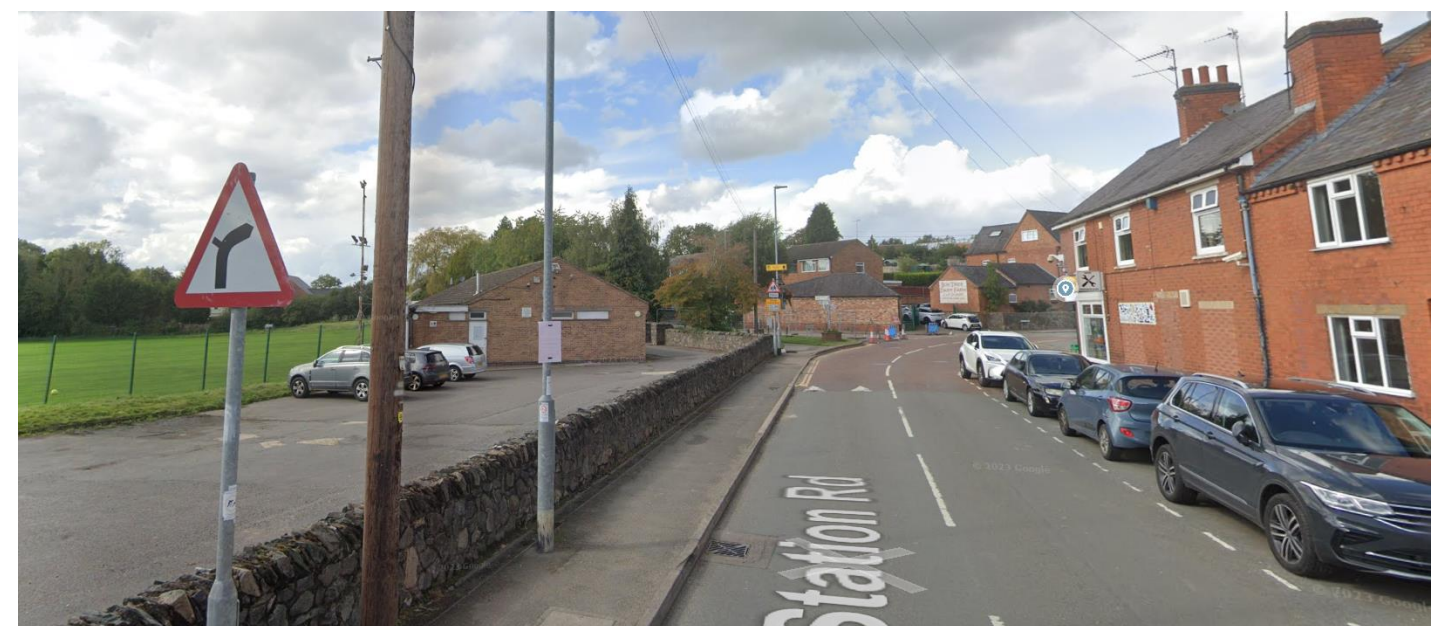
2.2 Site description

The building is located at the junction between Station Road and Desford Lane. It is visible from both directions, however as the building is single storey and set back from the road, it does not have an overly dominant street presence.



- Vehicular access from Desford Lane will remain as existing
- Pedestrian access from Desford Lane will remain as existing

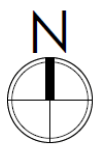
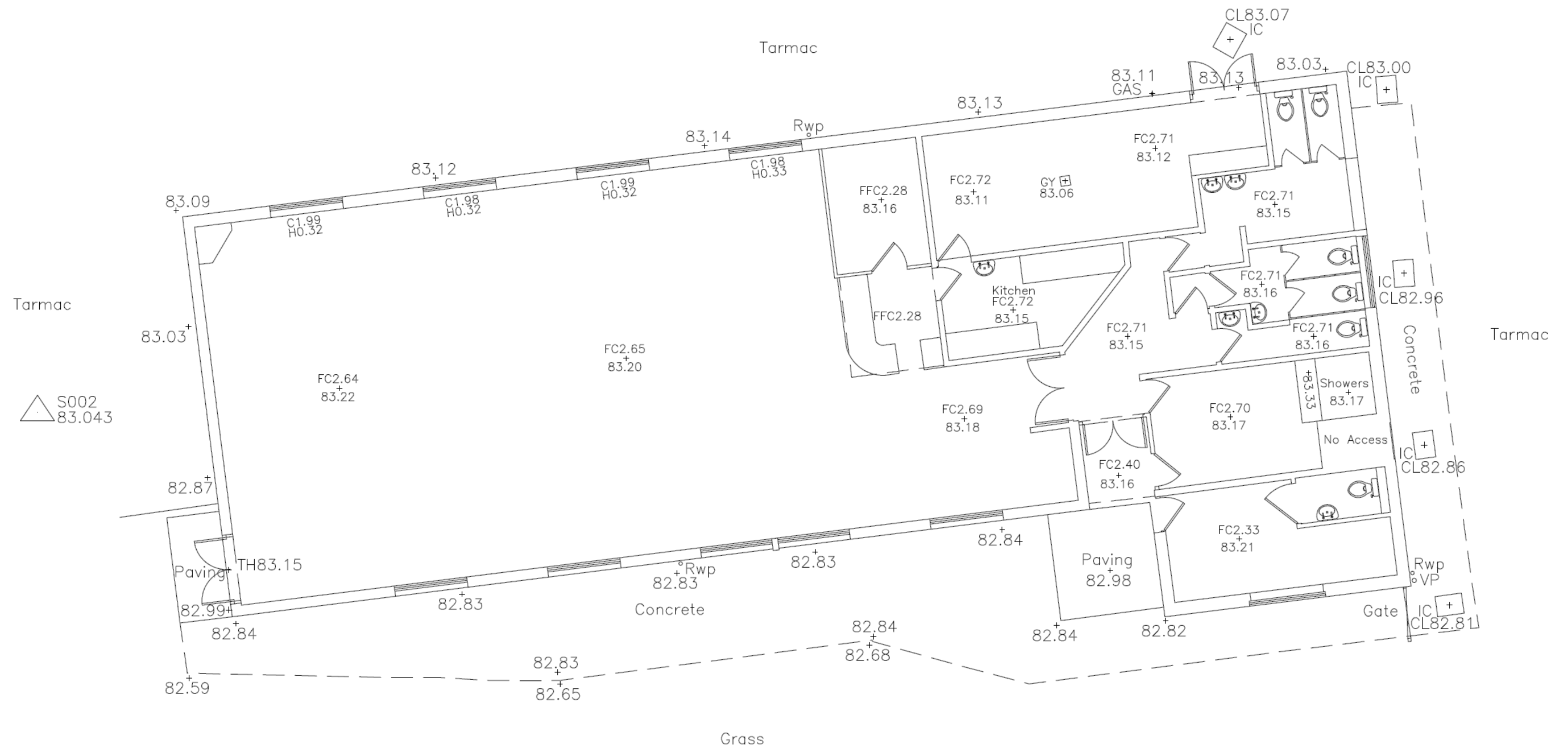
The building is single storey with facing brick and a tile roof. Within the site, the landscape is predominantly tarmacked, with some overgrown shrubbery.



2.0 Site Assessment

2.2 Site description

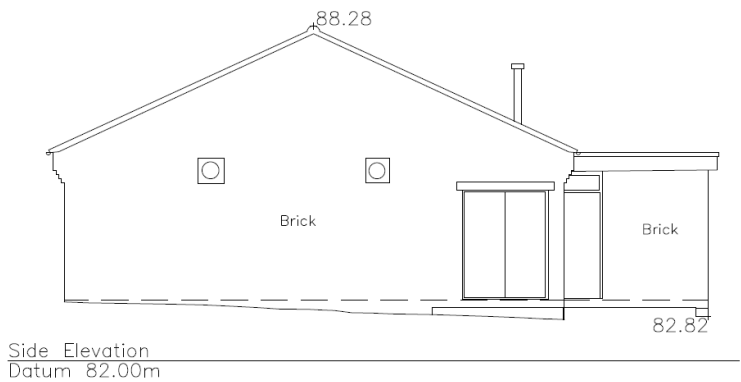
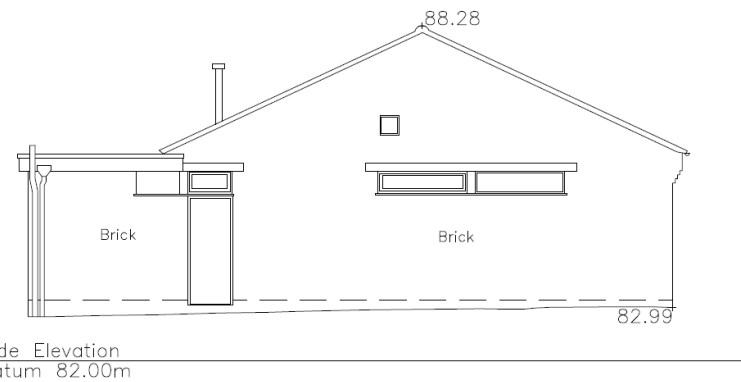
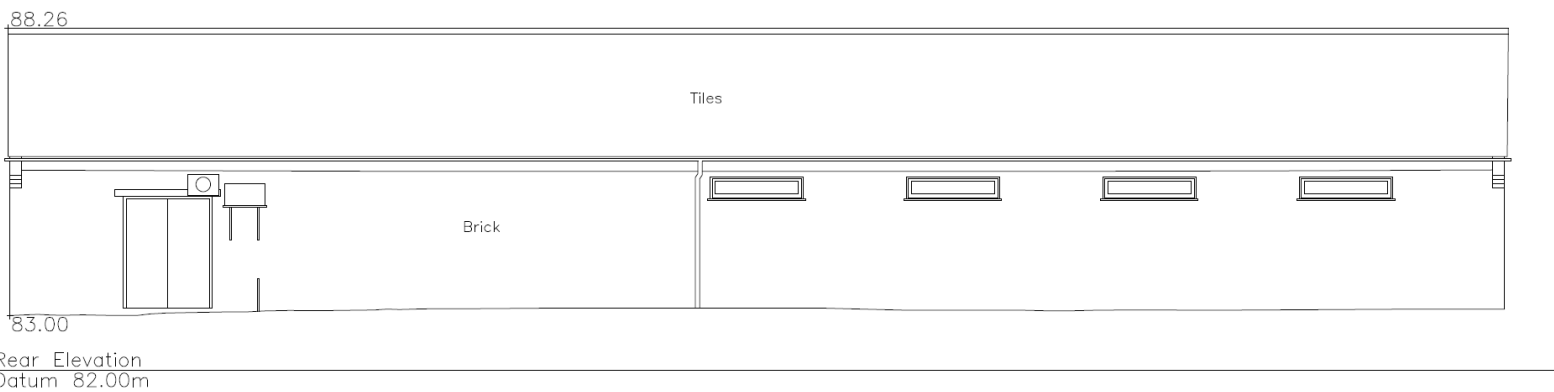
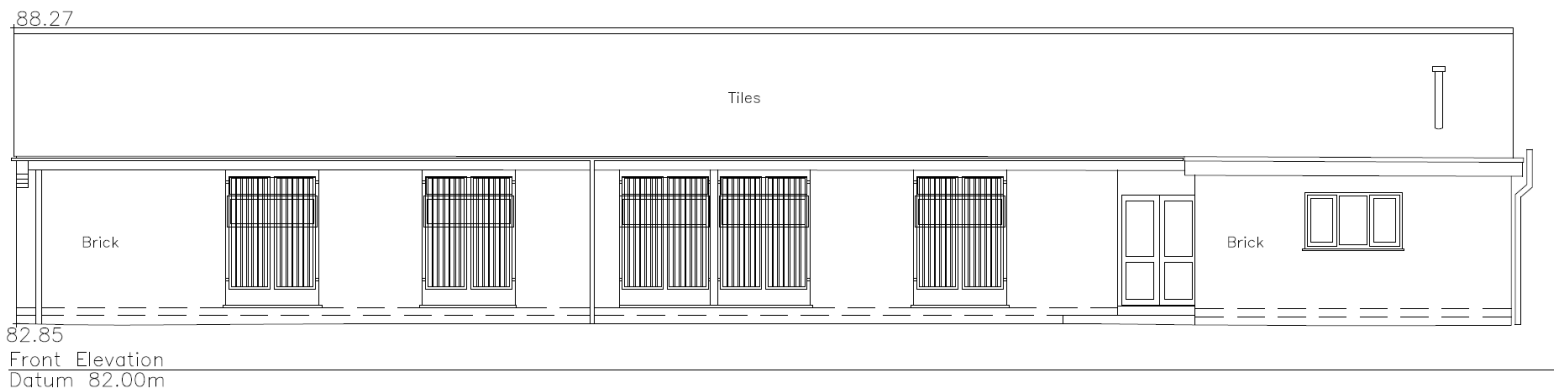
The floor plan of the existing cricket pavilion is shown below. It includes a club room with associated bar, kitchen and storage. It also has WCs, showers, and changing rooms.



2.0 Site Assessment

2.2 Site description

The existing elevations are also included. The building is single storey with a pitched roof and facing brickwork.



2.0 Site Assessment

2.3 Site context

Whilst the immediate site has only hard landscaping, the client also owns the cricket pitch directly south of the site. In permanently siting the educational facility adjacent to the cricket ground, this allows children and staff to have visual and physical access to green space. As noted, the school is currently teaching from temporary cabins on the site, and children use the cricket ground as a field during lunch times and PE.

Wolfdale School's ethos has an emphasis on outdoor learning and social skills; and research proves that the natural environment has a direct positive impact on emotional wellbeing, reduced stress levels and a more receptive learning state, particularly for children on the autistic spectrum. This therefore makes the site a good choice of location.



The application site has only hard landscaping, but it is largely surrounded by greenery.



Connections to green space from the existing building.

2.0 Site Assessment

2.4 Site history

The original clubhouse at the north of the site was used for both football and cricket. An application was made circa 2000 to construct a new pavilion/clubhouse, which would be used for football only; separating the two sports and allowing for expansion. However, construction work of this new clubhouse (the 'south pavilion') was never completed. The adjacent photos show the incomplete works. An extant planning approval does, however, remain in place.

The aspiration is to complete the works to the new pavilion, and for it to now be used for both football and cricket. This frees up the original pavilion which is proposed to be converted into the educational facility.



There is an extant planning approval relating to the 'south pavilion'; construction works were started but not completed, and the photos show the current condition of the building.

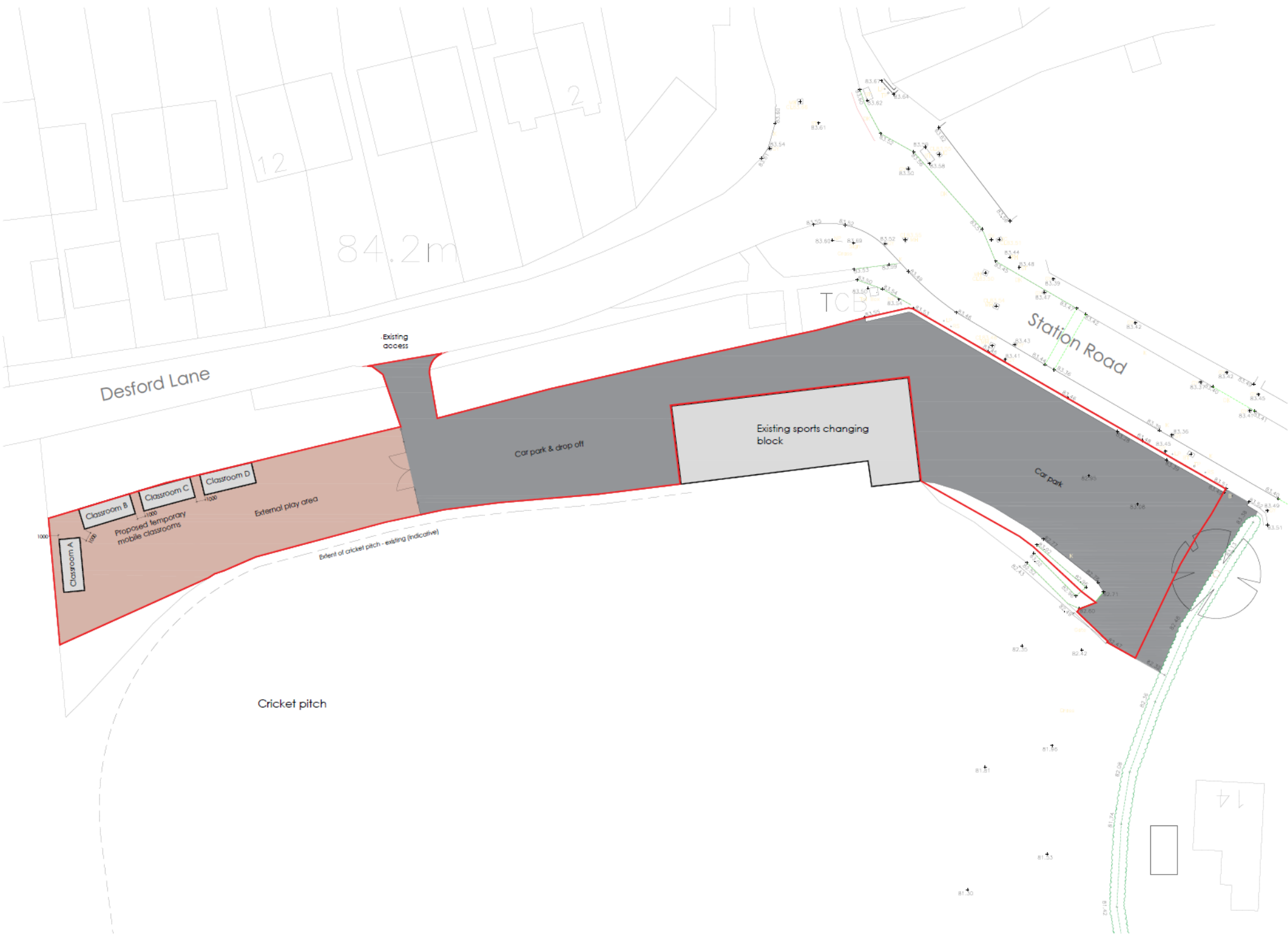
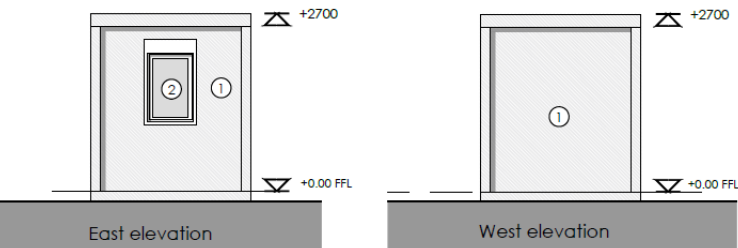
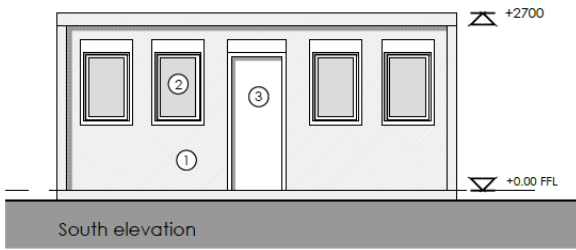


2.0 Site Assessment

2.4 Site history

Planning approval was granted on 16 March 2022 for the siting of four temporary mobile classrooms and fencing and gates (application reference 21/00691/FUL). This states that the mobile classrooms must be removed by the 31st March 2025.

Application 23/00522/FUL for a temporary change of use of the ground floor of the existing pavilion to classrooms for educational use was refused in February 2024.



Approved elevations and site plan for application 21/00691/FUL – the school is currently operating from the approved temporary classrooms. Please refer to the original application for further details.

2.0 Site Assessment

2.5 Local character

- Houses in the vicinity are a combination of red brick and/or render, with pitched roofs.
- Stone walled boundaries line the sports grounds and some houses.
- The mix of housing styles and periods along Station Road give evidence of a growing and changing town.



Houses along Station Road feature both red brick and white render.

3.0 Planning Policy

3.1 National planning policy framework

The proposal supports policy 8 of the NPPF; 'Promoting healthy and safe communities', which states that,

"It is important that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. They should: a) give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools through the preparation of plans and decisions on applications; and b) work with school promoters, delivery partners and statutory bodies to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted." (para. 99).

Wolfdale is a growing school and it is noted earlier in the document that even with the local authority creating new specialised schools, there are still not enough places to meet the numbers required.

The mobile classrooms currently on site were granted a temporary planning approval to allow them to take on more pupils, expiring in Spring 2025, and hence this application seeks a more permanent solution.

Use of the pavilion rather than temporary cabins will allow the school to better resource for the pupils that they had taken on.

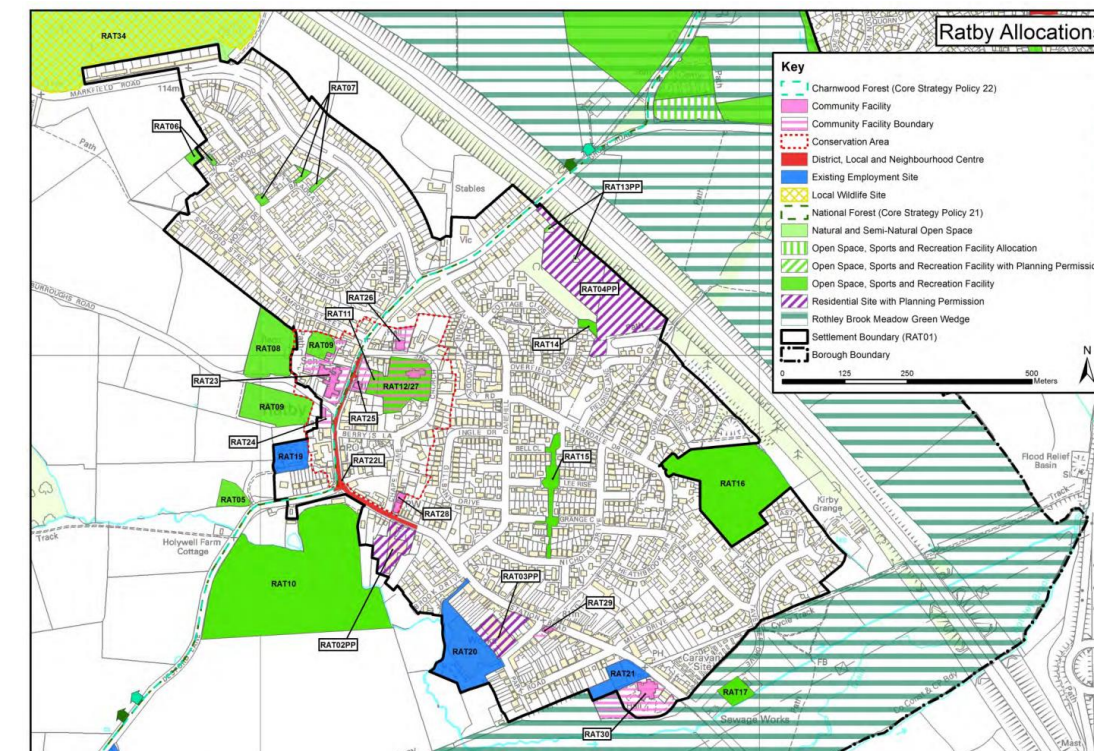
The NPPF acknowledges the importance of open space and opportunities for sport and physical activity. It states that,

"Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless: a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision..."

As explained, the sports provision within the existing pavilion will be relocated into the 'south pavilion' which will be completed ahead of making any alterations to the application site. The south pavilion is considered a betterment for the sports use; it is larger and in a better location in between the football pitches and cricket ground.

3.2 Local Plan

Not applicable, but see the site allocations map below, taken from the Hinckley & Bosworth Site Allocations & Development Management Policies DPD. The site has not been identified as a particular use/allocation.



3.3 Neighbourhood development plan

The site is specifically mentioned in the Ratby Village Design Statement (Adopted February 2011), which states that,

"Desford Lane [...] is one of the main entrances to the village. The fields and mature trees alongside the road, including the cricket field, the white rendered 18th C Box Tree Cottage to the south and the long gardens in front of the late 1960s chalet houses to the north, help to preserve an open, rural approach. The junction with Station Road is the focal point of the village. The Co-operative Store forms a visual "end stop" from Desford Lane. The Sports Club performs a similar function from Main Street. In neither case are they entirely successful. The blanked out windows of the Coop, notwithstanding refurbishment in the 1990s, do not present an attractive appearance."
(Para 3.2.2)

It notes that the pavilion is a focal point of the village, but that its current appearance is unsuccessful. This proposal seeks to help modernise the building by rendering the facing brick and replacing the windows and doors, including the creation of some new openings.

3.0 Planning Policy

3.4 Application site planning history

Refer to paragraph 2.4 – Site history.

4.0 Consultation

None undertaken.

5.0 Design Concept

5.1 Opportunities and constraints

Opportunities

- An educational use is already established on the site, due to the provision of the mobile classrooms.
- Site access and parking is already established, as is the dynamic between parking for the sports clubs and school.

Constraints

- Timescales – the temporary planning permission for the mobile classrooms expires in March 2025, so the design proposal must be reasonably quick to construct.
- The cricket pavilion is currently in use – but the new 'south pavilion' will first be completed, for the sports club to move into, resulting in no loss of sports accommodation.

5.2 Client brief

- Adapt the existing cricket pavilion's internal layout to accommodate a suite of specialist classrooms and associated ancillary accommodation.

5.3 Proposed design strategy

- Utilise existing services for the WCs and kitchen.
- Divide larger function room into classrooms, with the ancillary accommodation being located closer to the existing main entrance.
- Update and modernise the external appearance to suit the scheme.

6.0 Proposed Design

6.1 Use

Change of use, from use class F2 – local community, to F1A – learning and non-residential institutions; provision of education.

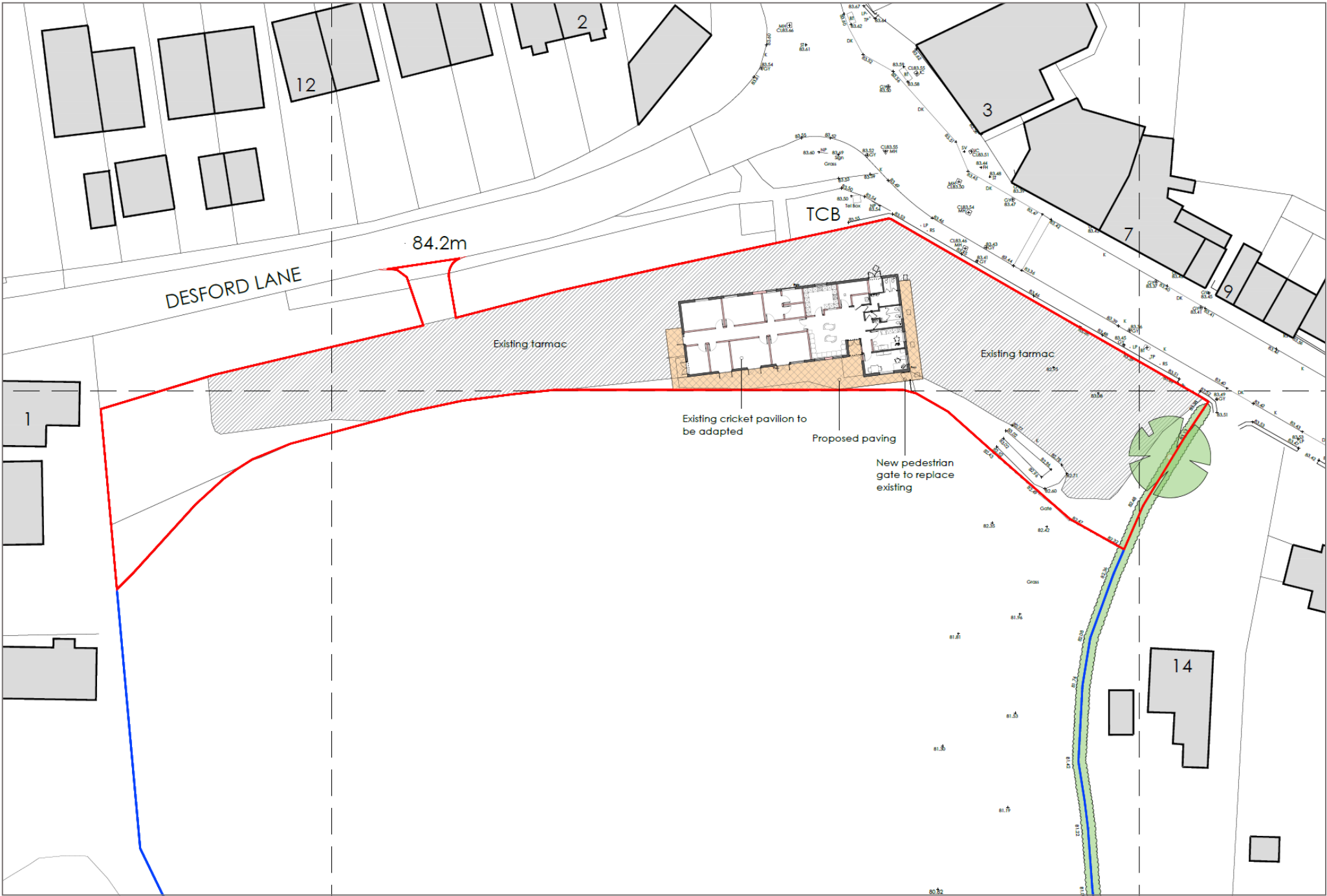
6.2 Amount

The converted pavilion will provide 7 classrooms, one of which includes two smaller breakout rooms. There will be two offices, a kitchen, and storage space. WCs will remain as existing (5 in total). The entrance area will also function as dining and social space. This is shown in paragraph 6.8 (floor plans).

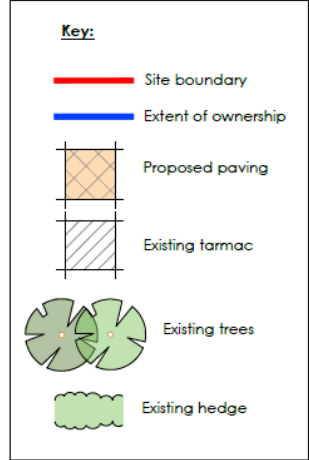
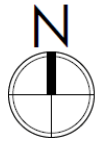
6.3 Layout

The proposed site layout is shown adjacent (please also refer to the submitted site plan).

The tarmac area will remain largely as existing, allowing cars to continue parking on the site. A small perimeter area around the building will be paved.



Proposed site plan extract – refer to submitted drawings.



6.0 Proposed Design

6.4 Scale

There will be no increase or decrease in floor area of the building, and the form will remain as existing.

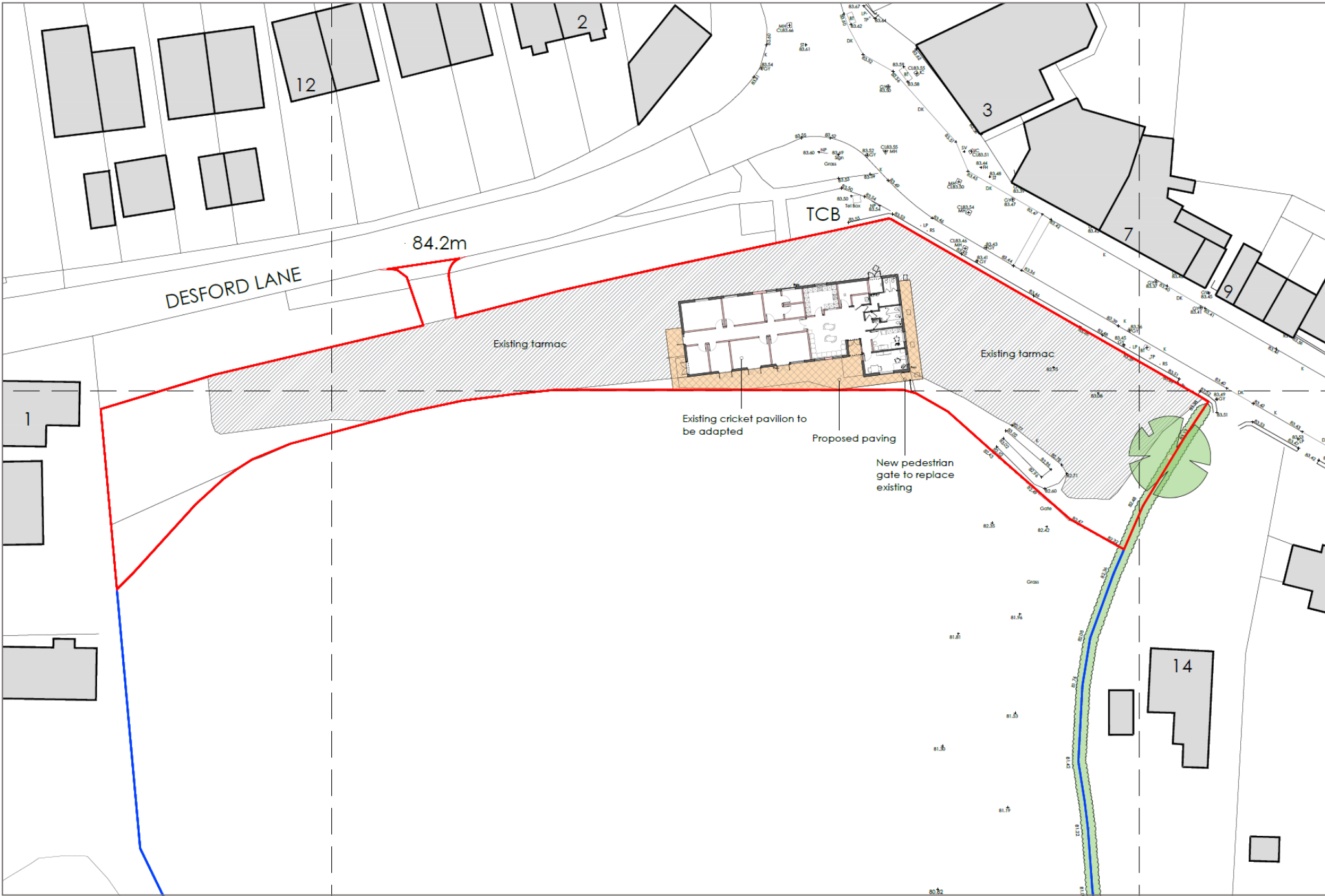
However, in comparison to the mobile classrooms, the proposal increases the teaching space from 59 sq.m within the mobile classrooms to 105 sq.m in the pavilion building. Woldale are not proposing to take on additional staff or pupils compared to those using the temporary cabins, but expansion into this larger building will enable them to fully resource and have the additional space they need.

6.5 Landscaping

The tarmac area will remain largely as existing, but a small perimeter area around the building will be paved.

The project is exempt from the new Biodiversity Net Gain requirements due to the 'Developments below the threshold' exemption. The development "does not impact a priority habitat and impacts less than:

25 square metres (5m by 5m) of on-site habitat; and 5 metres of on-site linear habitats such as hedgerows." (Gov.uk; 2024)



Proposed site plan extract – refer to submitted drawings.

6.0 Proposed Design

6.6 Appearance

Modest adjustments will be made to the exterior of the building to help modernise its appearance.

As shown in the adjacent 3D render and Google street view screenshot, the amendments will not have a significant impact on the street scene, particularly as the pavilion is set back behind trees and a stone wall. However, they help give the facility a new identity.



6.0 Proposed Design

6.6 Appearance

Modest adjustments will be made to the exterior of the building to help modernise its appearance.

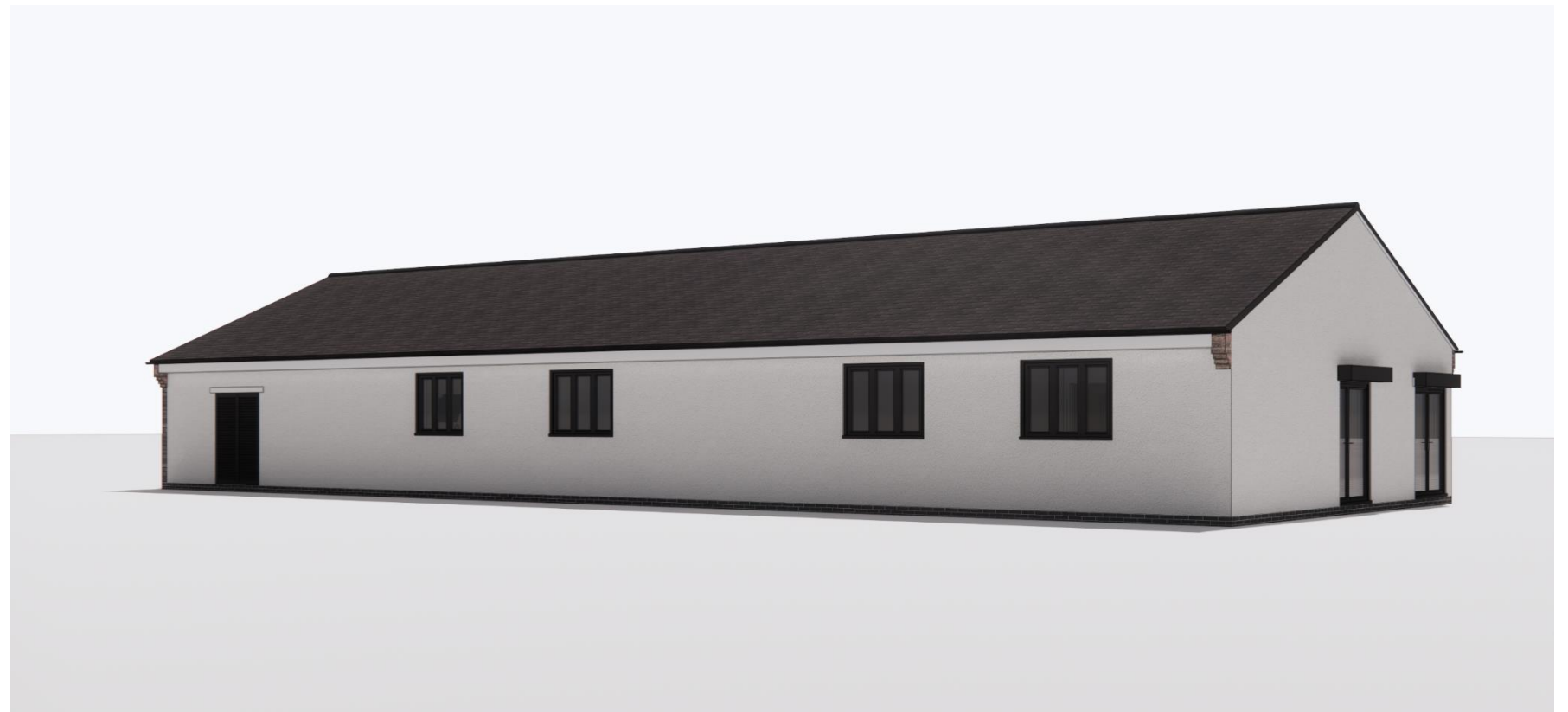
As shown in the adjacent 3D render and Google street view screenshot, the amendments will not have a significant impact on the street scene, particularly as the pavilion is set back behind trees and a stone wall. However, they help give the facility a new identity.



6.0 Proposed Design

6.6 Appearance

The existing facing brick will be rendered in an off-white colour. All windows and doors will be new, including those in existing openings. Frames will be powder coated aluminium, colour to be anthracite grey. Vertical cedar cladding will be used as an accent around the existing flat roof area.



6.0 Proposed Design

6.7 Site plan

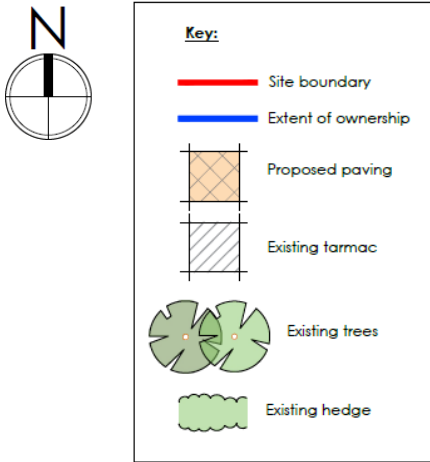
See site plan extract adjacent, and refer to the submitted drawing. The fencing and gates which currently create a separate play area will be removed, and area reverted back to a car park / play area.

The car park will continue to be shared by both Ratby Sports Club and Woldale School. Since the two functions are never on site at the same time, the car park can be used by both parties. The sports club only runs in evenings and weekends, ie. Outside of school hours. This means there is no need to create additional parking in the centre of Ratby.

This arrangement is successfully working between the temporary classrooms and Ratby Sports Club, and at Woldale's main site based at Anstey Nomads Football Club.



Proposed site plan extract – refer to submitted drawings.



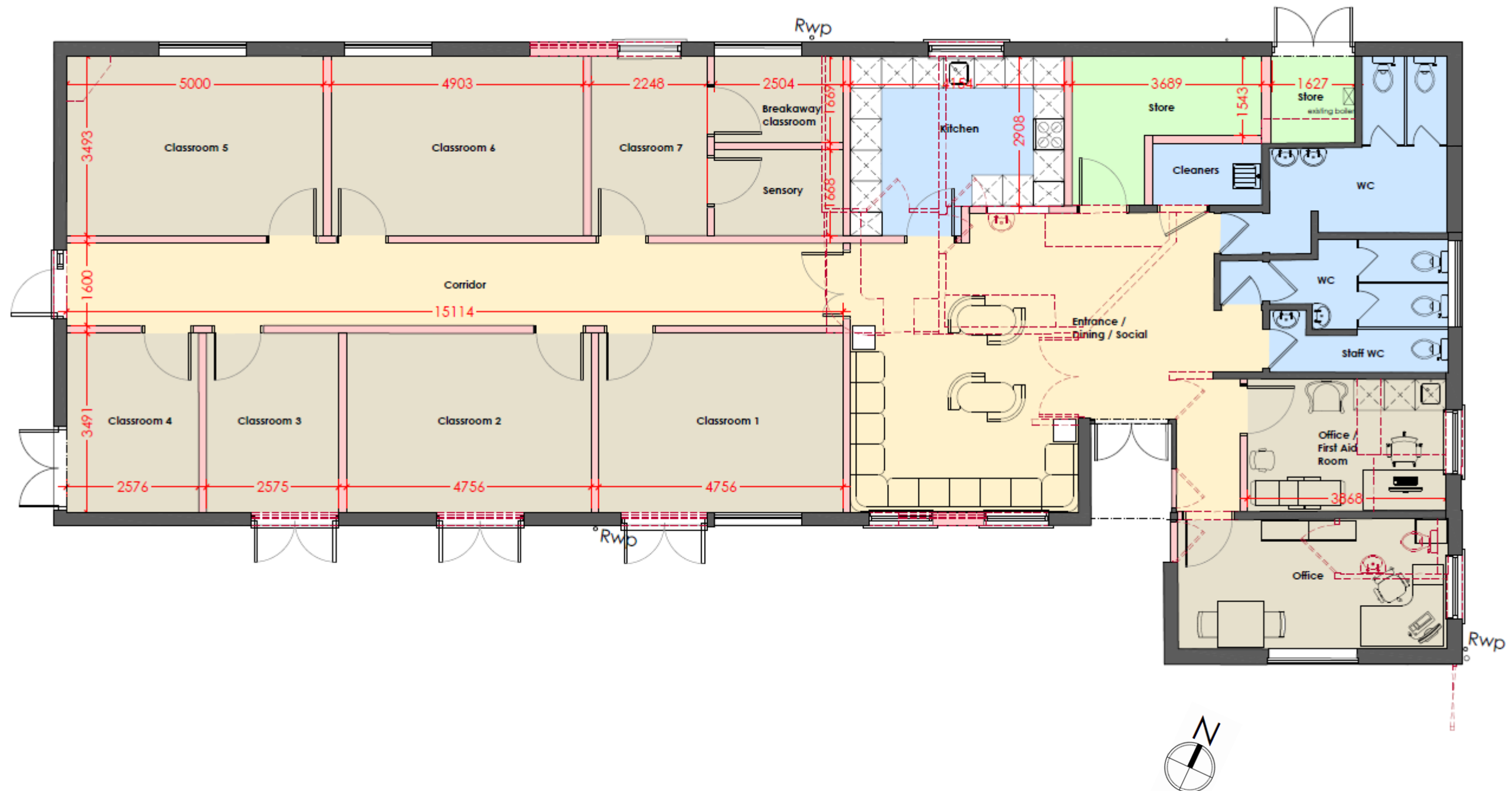
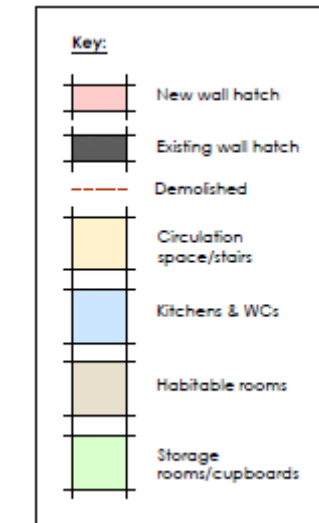
6.0 Proposed Design

6.8 Floor plans

The floor plan of the existing building has been adapted to enable it to function as a small school.

Walls have been retained where possible, in particular retaining the WCs. The kitchen area has been adapted to suit, but remains broadly in the same place as before, enabling the services to be reused.

The larger function area will be adapted into 7 classrooms, plus a small breakout room, and sensory room.



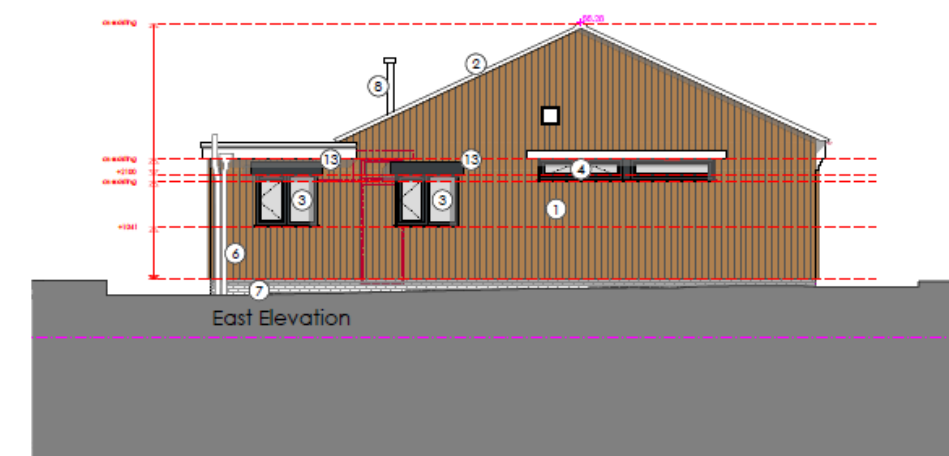
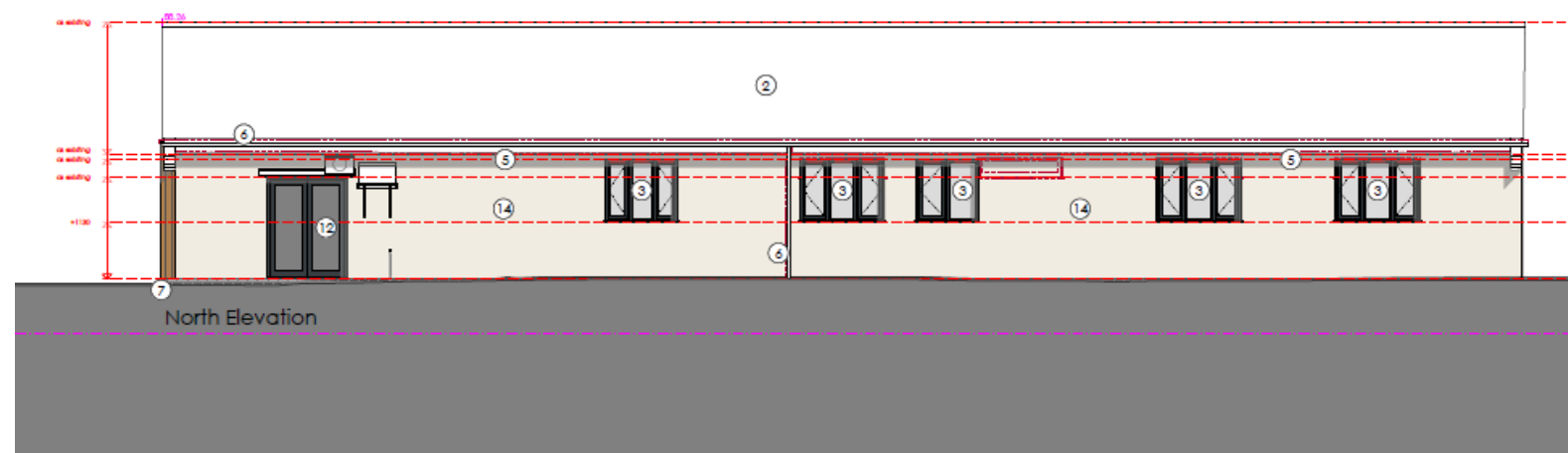
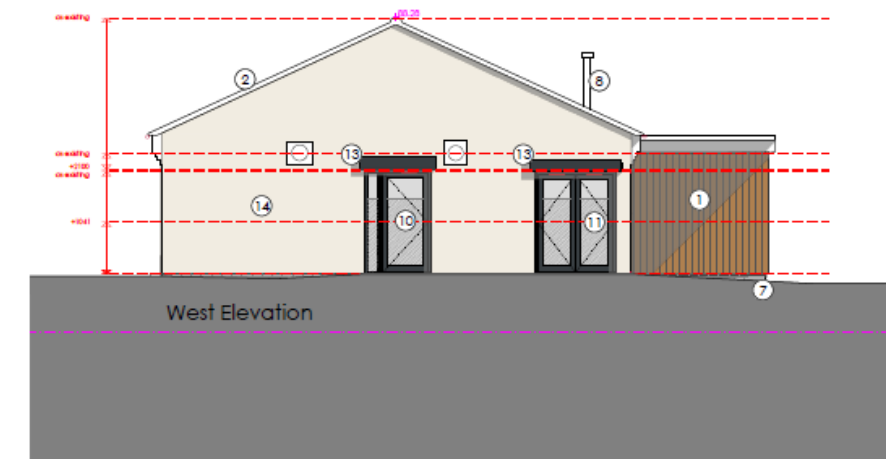
6.0 Proposed Design

6.9 Elevations

The proposed elevations are shown below – please also refer to the submitted elevation drawing.

Materials:

1. Vertical timber cladding (Cedar)
2. Existing roof tile to be retained and repaired as required
3. Lockable windows, side hung thermally broken, polyester powder coated aluminium framed and double glazed with clear laminated glass. Colour to be: Anthracite (RAL 7016)
4. Lockable windows, top hung thermally broken, polyester powder coated aluminium framed and double glazed with clear laminated glass. Colour to be: Anthracite (RAL 7016)
5. Fascia and soffit, colour to be: Anthracite (RAL 7016)
6. Rain water pipes and gutters, colour to be: Anthracite (RAL 7016)
7. Facing brickwork, as existing
8. Existing flue
9. Double glazed windows, polyester powder coated aluminium framed and double glazed with clear laminated glass. Colour to be: Anthracite (RAL 7016)
10. Double glazed doors and side light, polyester powder coated aluminium framed and double glazed with clear laminated glass. Colour to be: Anthracite (RAL 7016)
11. Double glazed doors, polyester powder coated aluminium framed and double glazed with clear laminated glass. Colour to be: Anthracite (RAL 7016)
12. Steel louvred panel double door. Colour to be: Anthracite (RAL 7016)
13. Security shutter. Colour to be: Anthracite (RAL 7016)
14. Proposed through colour render. Colour to be: off white.



7.0 Access

7.1 Design and policy approach

Existing access remains unchanged.
Please refer to the submitted site layout drawing.

7.2 Consultation

None undertaken.

7.3 Vehicular access

Unaffected by the proposals.

7.4 Pedestrian access

Unaffected by the proposals.



The existing vehicular access from Desford Lane is unaffected by the proposals.



The existing pedestrian access from Desford Lane is unaffected by the proposals.

7.0 Access

7.5 Site and building entrances

The site and building entrances will remain as existing. Please refer to the submitted drawings.

7.6 Inclusive design

There will be two designated disabled parking spaces close to the main entrance of the building.

7.7 Public/private space

Access is limited as would be expected of a school.

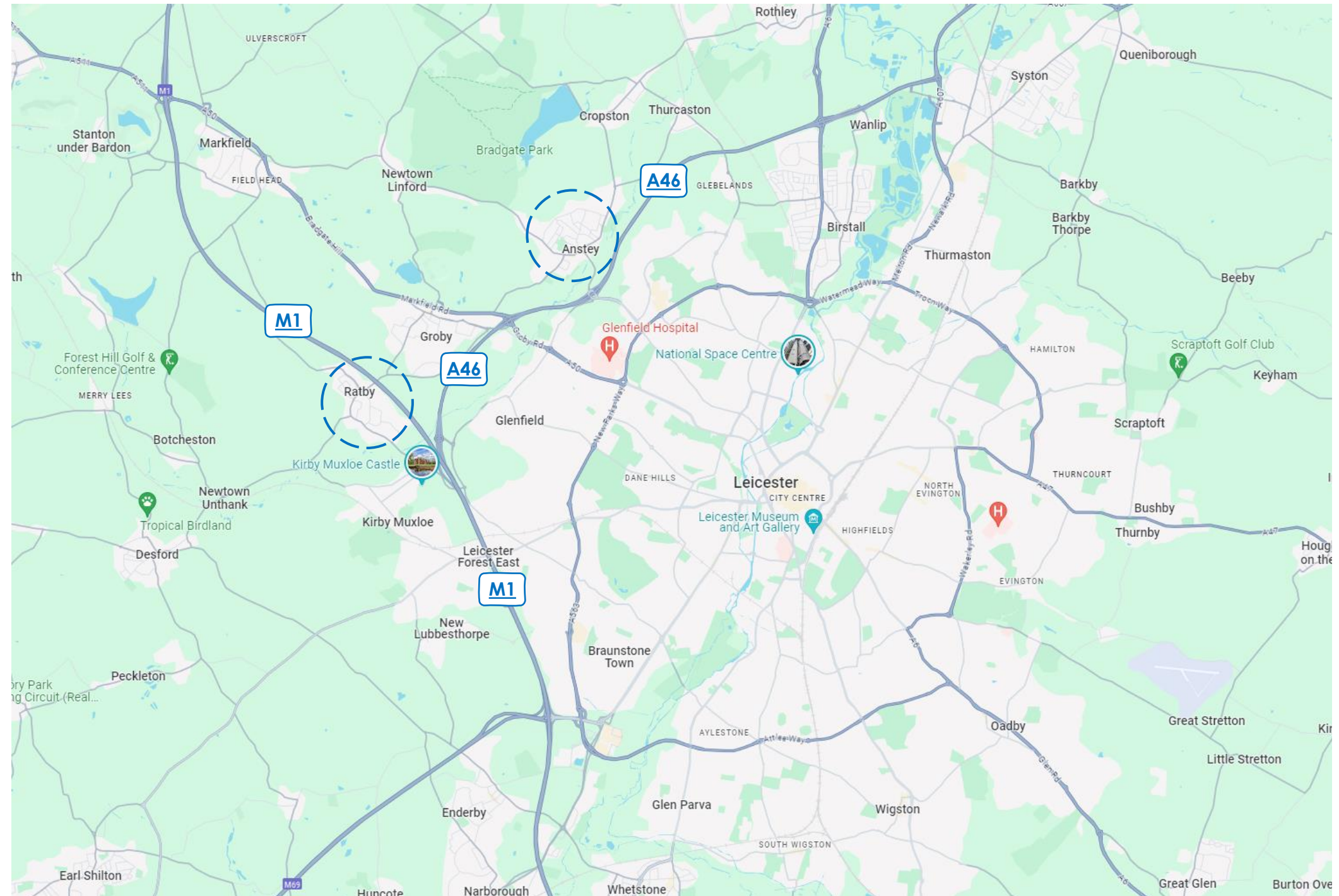
7.8 Emergency service access

Unaffected by the proposals.

7.9 Sustainable travel

As Wolfdale is a specialist school, pupils living across Leicestershire attend. Ratby's location just outside of Leicester and close to both the M1 and A46 makes it a suitable second location for the school (their main site is in Anstey).

All of Wolfdale's pupils are taken to/from school by taxi, and pupils share a taxi where possible and practical, to reduce the number of journeys being made.



8.0 Appendices

None.