

**West Haddon Primary School – New Hall – Ref: 17/00062/CCDFUL  
Response to Parish Council comments received 17<sup>th</sup> January 2018**

During the course of the consultation period it has been noted that in general the requirement for a new school hall at West Haddon Primary is largely supported. However it is also apparent that the main reasons for objection to the project are the size and the position of the hall on the existing site.

The size of the hall is determined by the floor area requirements in the Department for Education Building Bulletin 103 (180m<sup>2</sup> for a 210 pupil school). The height of the building was reduced by 0.5m as a direct result of feedback from the public consultation. This brings the internal ceiling height down to 4.5m which is well below the clear heights recommended by Sport England for indoor games. It is felt that any further reduction in height would compromise the practical use of the hall for PE and drama teaching.

The hall was also subject to modification in order to facilitate it being pulled further back from the eastern boundary edge. This amendment both limited the encroachment into the root protection area of the trees at the eastern edge of the site on the neighbour's side and reduced the impact on the neighbouring property.

A number of different schemes and alternative locations for the hall were discussed at the feasibility stage before the project was progressed to its current stage. A number of factors were prevalent in this decision, among them being ease of construction, integration into the existing school layout, minimising disruption to the school, budget and value for money. The school site is also somewhat challenging due to the considerable change in level from the front to the rear.

The option to build the new hall adjacent to the existing one as shown in diagram 8 of the Design and Access Statement was rejected for a number of reasons as described below (refer also to attached drawings).

**Integration with existing school layout**

Whilst it may be seen as relatively straightforward to simply drop the plan of the proposed hall into the new location there are some fundamental design issues that would need to be overcome. One of the reasons the existing hall is not fit for purpose is because it is located in the middle of the school and is used as a link between the two ends. This makes it difficult to use this space for teaching due to the interruptions caused by the space being used as a corridor. By creating the new hall at the far end of the school there is an opportunity to make better use of part of the existing hall as a break out space, small teaching space, exhibition space, etc, with the use of free standing partitions or screens. However if the new hall was built adjacent to the existing one a permanent connection would need to be maintained making it difficult to use the existing hall for another purpose.

If the new hall was positioned adjacent to the existing hall it would block the windows on the hall façade and the adjacent classroom. In order to maintain the required natural daylighting levels to these spaces several rooflights would need to be installed. This may also require additional remedial work to the classroom located in the Victorian block due to the age and condition of the roof. Also the classrooms are currently naturally ventilated so there may be a requirement to add a mechanical system if the ventilation requirements were not maintained through the loss of windows.

### **Disruption during construction**

By building the new hall on the existing playground there is an opportunity to use some of the surrounding space for a Contractors compound. Whilst this means there will be a temporary loss of playground during the construction period it is hoped the impact of this is mitigated by carrying out the majority of the work over the summer months meaning the school playing fields can be used during break times. Also the bulk of the construction can be carried out in isolation with minimal disruption to the running of the school, with the final corridor connection being made during the summer holidays.

It is unclear how a Contractor's compound could be provided to build adjacent to the existing hall, partly because of the significant change in level around this area and partly because of the proximity to the existing classrooms and nursery building. There is no obvious space to locate site huts, storage facilities, or plant and it's likely these would need to be positioned on level ground some way from the construction making the project impractical at best.

Part of the school would most likely need to be vacated while the excavation was taking place in such close proximity to the existing building due to the risk of potential collapse. Temporary mitigation measures would also need to be put in place during the construction to compensate for the noise disruption. This could range from temporary acoustic hoarding to relocating pupils to other locations.

### **Site topography**

The change in level across the area adjacent to the existing hall is approximately 2.8m. It is estimated that approximately 375m<sup>3</sup> volume of earth would need to be excavated and removed from site in order to insert the new hall into this location. Assuming the necessary plant could even be brought onto such a constricted site the amount of trips required to remove the spoil would make this work incredibly disruptive not only to the school but to the whole village.

In order to fit the new hall into the space adjacent to the existing hall it would have to be located in close proximity to the existing buildings. This would likely mean some remedial work to underpin the existing foundations to prevent structural collapse. In particular the corner of the classroom to the higher end of the hall would require a significant amount of support when the excavation was carried out. Extensive retaining walls would need to be constructed around the hall in order to provide the necessary fire escape routes.

### **Budget and value for money**

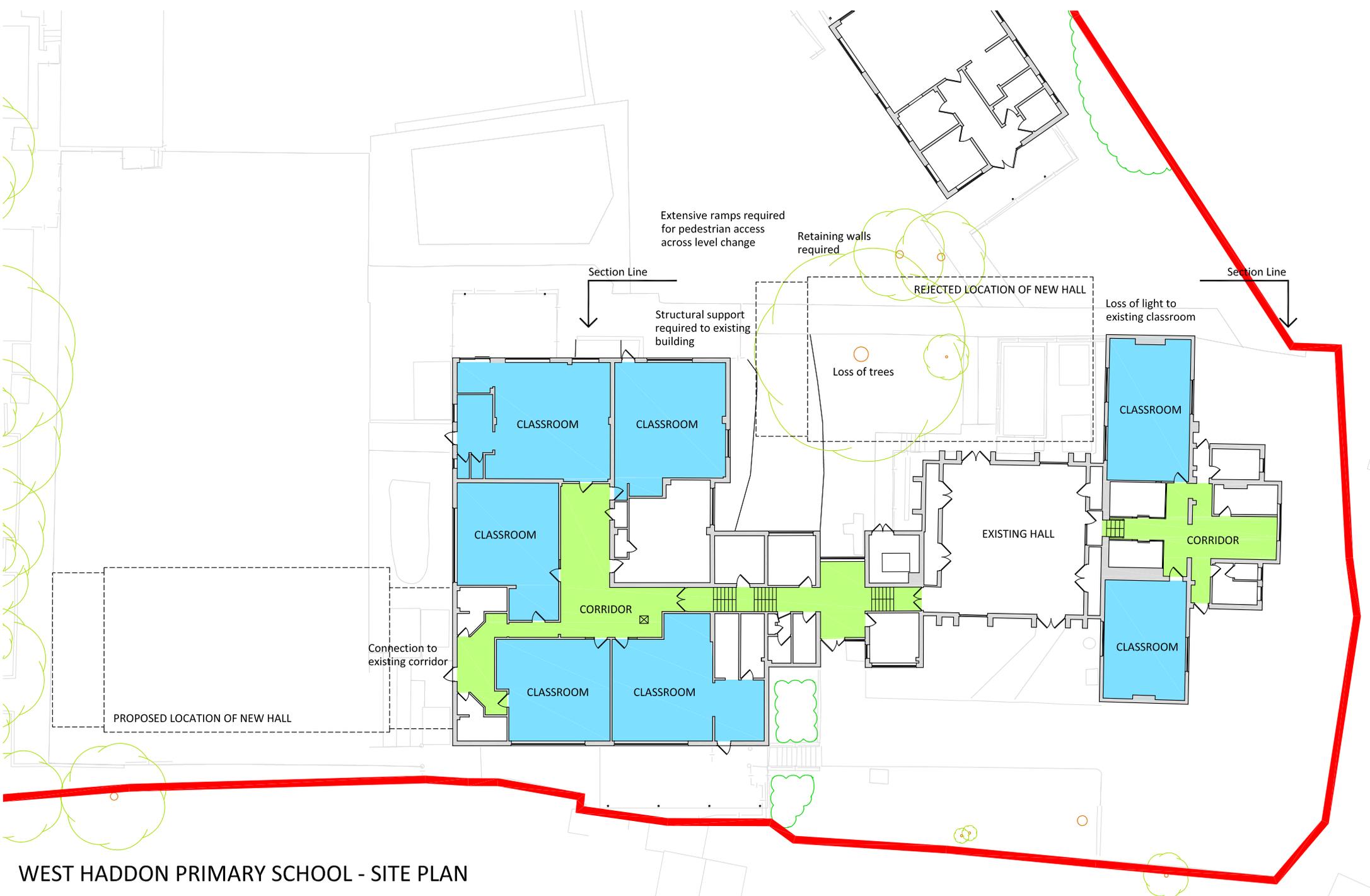
A cost exercise has been carried out by the Quantity Surveyor to give an indication of the additional cost of building the hall in the alternative location. The items listed below have been priced and the overall increase to the project budget would be in the region of £150,000. This list is by no means exhaustive but gives an indication of some of the main elements of work that would be required.

- Removal of 4 trees (1 at 18m height)
- Removal of kitchen pod and sheds
- Redirect existing foul drainage run
- Excavation and removal of spoil to level site area
- Construction of retaining walls around new hall
- Underpinning / structural work to existing classroom and hall areas
- Additional rooflights to adjacent classroom
- Additional rooflights to existing hall
- Additional Contractor prelims to cover extension to programme for the above items

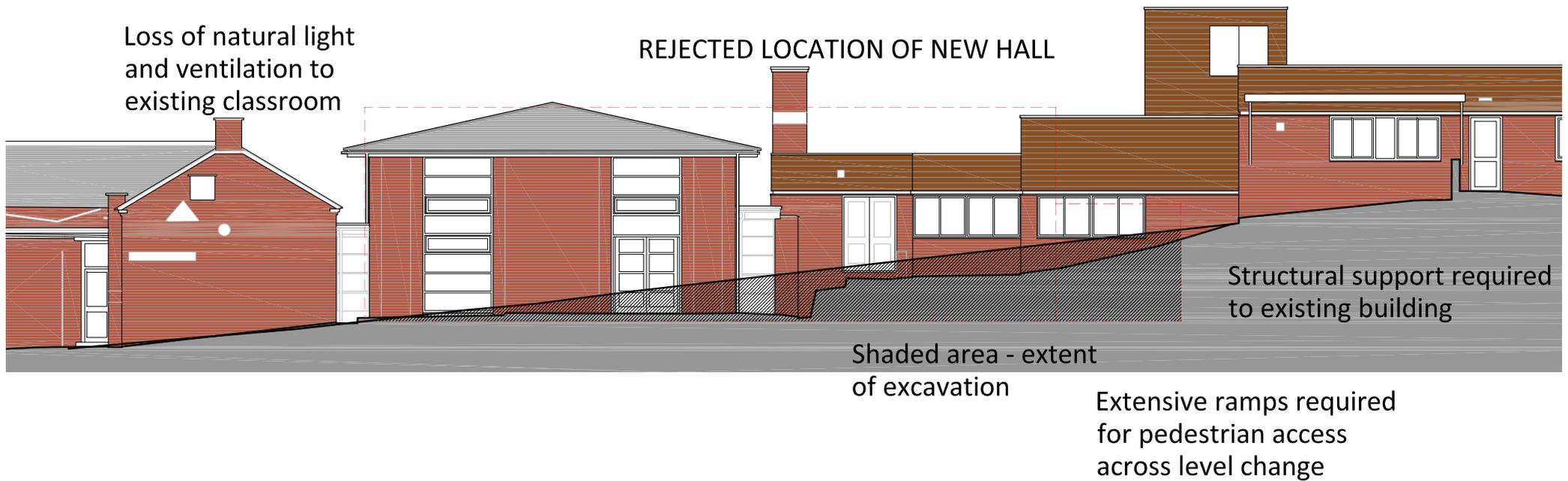
The budget for the project is extremely tight and there has already been a value engineering exercise undertaken to ensure it stays within the cost plan. Any increase to the building cost would therefore jeopardise the project going ahead.

**Conclusion**

For the reasons stated above it would be completely impractical to build the new hall in the area adjacent to the existing one as has been suggested. The chosen location has been determined after much careful consideration of many different factors and it is believed will provide the best solution for the school.



WEST HADDON PRIMARY SCHOOL - SITE PLAN



## WEST HADDON PRIMARY SCHOOL - SITE SECTION