



HOPTON CEVCP SCHOOL

BOUNDARY FENCE WORKS

THELNETHAM ROAD

HOPTON

DISS

IP22 2QY

Heritage Impact Assessment



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DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET

Project :	Hopton CEVCP – Boundary Fence works/ Replacement
Job Number:	122757
Document Title:	Heritage Impact Assessment
Author:	Joseph Ssemanda
Contributors:	Matthew Smith
Version Number:	P1
Date :	31.03.23
Checked by:	Matthew Smith
Date:	31.03.23

CONTENTS

1. Introduction	4
2. Use.....	5
3. History	5
4. Listing	7
5. Site.....	9
6. Existing Construction.....	10
7. Proposals	12
8. Conclusion	15

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to support the planning application for the replacement and installation of boundary fences at Hopton CEVC Primary School.

The following documents have also been provided as part of the planning application and should be read in conjunction with this statement.

122757-CDP-ZZ-XX-DR-B-2000 – Site Location Plan

122757-CDP-ZZ-XX-DR-B-2001 – Proposed fence plan

122757-CDP-ZZ-XX-DR-B-6001 – Fence & Gate Details



Fig 1: Hopton CEVC Primary School Aerial Image (google 2022)

2. USE

The site to which the proposed works are to be undertaken is:

Hopton CEVC Primary School, which is in the village of Hopton, which is located 9.3 miles West of Diss and is mainly residential in nature. The primary school provides for children aged between 3 and 11 years. The school also includes a SEND provision on site.

The school is set in large grounds where there is a hard surface playground, a large, grassed area, and the site includes a large number of trees and hedges, with dedicated early years fenced play area.

3. HISTORY

The property is Grade II Listed due to its architectural significance. The property was constructed and completed in 1973.

School building was both a symbolic aspiration of post-war Britain and an urgent need, driven by the 'baby boom', the raising of the school leaving age, planned new towns and estates and the reconstruction of bomb-damaged buildings. Programmes of new schools were coordinated and designed by local education authorities with loans and oversight from central government. Collaboration between architects and educationists could result in expressive plans which facilitated patterns of learning and movement, whilst requirements for abundant daylight and outdoor access led to dispersed layouts, a trend which was sometimes conditioned by tight cost limits and constrained sites. Informal, 'child-centred' learning through first-hand experience, advocated in the influential Plowden report of 1967, was encouraged by the provision of special areas for quiet and messy work and more open layouts, a trend which was sometimes conditioned by tight cost limits and constrained sites.

In West Suffolk, post-war school building was strongly influenced by earlier developments in Hertfordshire, where Jack Digby, Suffolk County Council's chief architect from 1964 to 1971, had worked as Group Leader in Hertfordshire's County Architects' Department. In 1963 Hertfordshire, Kent and the War Office had formed the South-Eastern Architects Collaboration (SEAC), a consortium which developed prefabricated building systems and modular designs which made

possible much-needed economies of scale and provided the means of building the required number of new schools and other priority buildings in the member counties. Digby secured associate membership of SEAC for West Suffolk which allowed the county authority to benefit from the economies that SEAC made possible, whilst at the same time retaining design independence when it was deemed to be appropriate. To this latter end, West Suffolk County Council became a member of the Anglian Standing Conference, which sought to promote traditional building methods for projects which would also be subject to 'a high degree of organisation and management'.

The design for the new school at Hopton was conceived within this context. The job architect was John Blackie, who had designed the earlier and larger school at Great Waldingfield. The school was designed in 1971 and completed in 1973. Much of the detail at Hopton replicates that found in the Great Waldingfield design, including the sunken central hall, the use of curved brick walling and turret-like projections from the body of the school. The school was also equipped with a separate outdoor swimming pool and changing rooms located to the west of the main building (now closed and not included in this assessment).

In 1966, West Suffolk County Council had introduced a three-tier education system, which had the effect of alleviating the pressure on its most crowded village schools. However, when Suffolk County Council returned to a two-tier system in 2007, most primary schools, including Hopton needed to be extended to provide places for two additional year groups. As a result of these changes, the school was enlarged by the addition of a large room at the north-east corner of the building, and a further detached teaching building to the north of the main building (not included in this assessment) There have been no other significant changes to the plan of the school, but a number of UPVC window frames have replaced original, timber components.

4. LISTING

4.1. DESIGNATION

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1439078

Date first listed: 03-Oct-2017

Statutory Address: Thelnetham Road, Hopton, Diss, IP22 2QY

Statutory Address: Thelnetham Road, Hopton, Diss, IP22 2QY

County: Suffolk

District: West Suffolk (District Authority)

Parish: Hopton

National Grid Reference: TL99391 78945

Reasons for Designation

Hopton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School in Suffolk, built to the designs of West Suffolk County Council's Architects Department and opened in 1973, is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

4.2. ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

- For the quality of its design, developed by an innovative and forward- looking local authority architects department;
- The design of the school incorporates prefabricated construction system components alongside bespoke external and internal detailing, which together form a distinctive new-build composition strongly representative of post-war public sector development imperatives such as budget economy and speed of construction;
- The building embodies post-war, spatial planning concepts of how primary schools were intended to function, with permeable interiors, spacious and well-lit teaching areas and a minimum of totally enclosed spaces. This arrangement allows free movement throughout the building whilst still providing a clear distinction between teaching, administration, and communal areas;

- despite early-C21 enlargement, the school remains substantially as first built, its original central hall plan form surviving with little significant alteration and its external elevations unaffected in most areas.

5. SITE

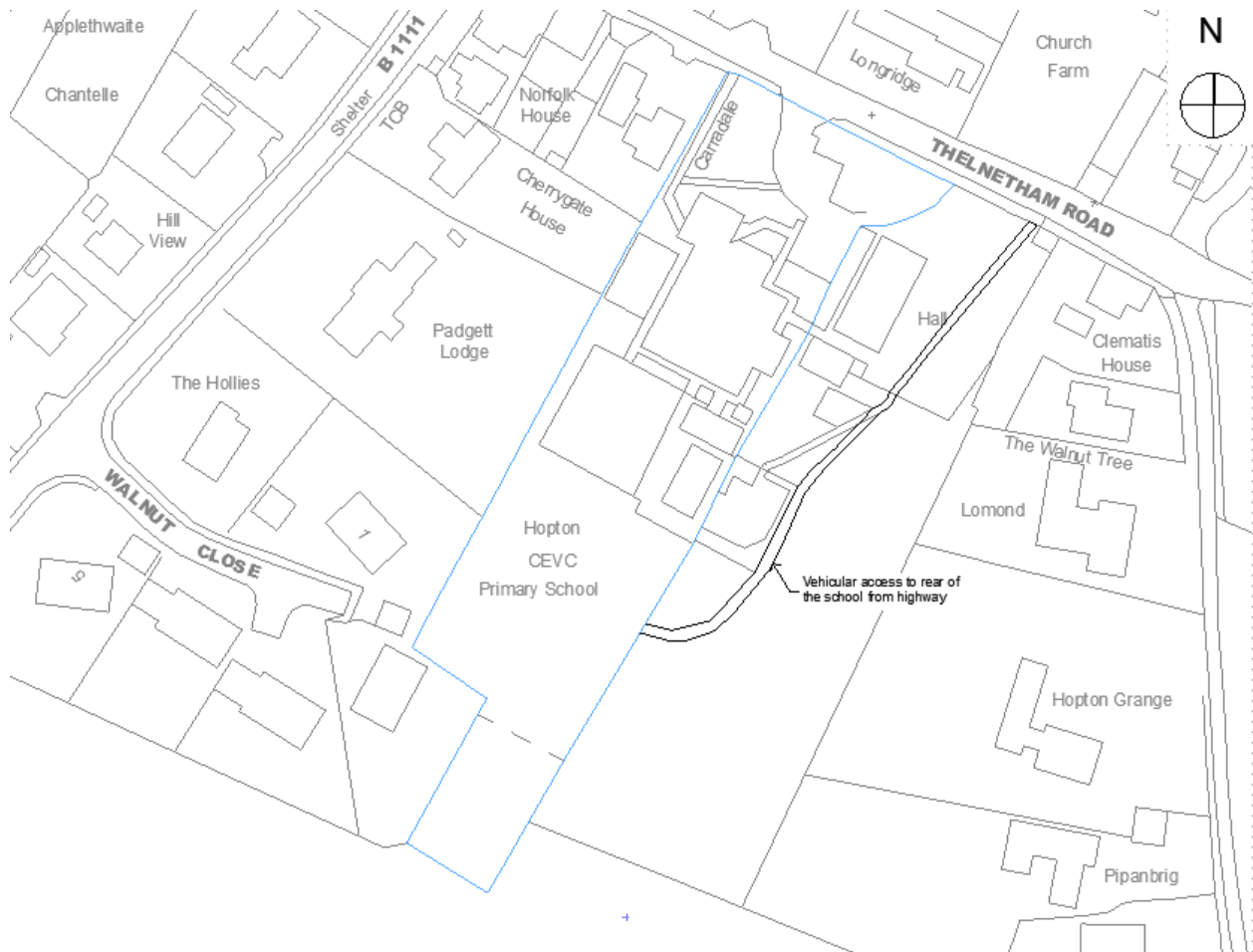


Fig 2: Vehicular access route to rear grounds

The main access is off Thelnetham Road where there is a car park in front of the school building. Vehicular access to the rear of the site is gained through the adjacent Village Hall grounds, as shown above. The main views of the school are from Thelnetham Road

6. EXISTING CONSTRUCTION

A post-war primary school designed by West Suffolk County Council's Architects' Department, led by Jack Digby FRIBA. The job architect was James Blackie and the school was completed in 1973. It was subsequently altered and extended when Suffolk County Council reverted to a two-tier education system in 2007.

MATERIALS: the school is built with lightweight, window walling beneath a flat, metal roof deck, with deep wooden fascia's, supported on steel stanchions. The corners of the teaching areas and the block containing the staff room, kitchen and boiler room, are built of brick. The existing windows on the school building were timber units, however between its original construction and to date many of these units have been replaced with UPVc windows.

PLAN: the main body of the school is square on plan with a central hall, surrounding teaching areas, curved 'turrets' to each corner and a projecting block with curved frontage walling to the centre of the east elevation, now partially enclosed within an early-C21 extension to the north-east corner of the site.

EXTERIOR: the school is single storied with window walling set back below the overhanging flat roof. The entrance elevation has curved brick walling to the left of a C21, angled, glazed entrance area, accessed via double doors with flanking windows. Set back at the south-east corner is the first of four, curved brick corner turrets, linked by wall panels with undivided glazing set below a clerestory band that is carried into the otherwise blind brick turret walling. The walling incorporates glazed doors, with sidelights, to each elevation that give access to the teaching areas flanking the central hall. The north-west, south-east and south-west corners of the building have cross-braced steel stanchions which support the roof deck, set beyond the faces of the curved turrets. The west elevation has two additional stanchions between the south-west and north-west corners. At the north-east corner, the turret is partially enclosed by an early-C21 brick, single-storey extension created to provide an additional teaching area, office accommodation, entrance foyer and corridor access to the main body of the school.

INTERIOR: the four original teaching areas are arranged around a sunken central hall. It is accessed by means of a wide flight of steps that extend from the teaching area on the eastern side. The hall

ceiling incorporates a grid of roof lights, and is supported on lightweight, steel lattice girders. Horizontally-boarded screen walls with blind clerestory lights separate the hall and the surrounding teaching areas on three sides, with wooden doors incorporating low-level glazed panels approached by short flights of steps giving access to the teaching areas in the south-west and north-west corners. The north-west and south-east turrets now contain toilets for the adjacent teaching areas, whilst the south-west turret forms part of the library area.

7. PROPOSALS

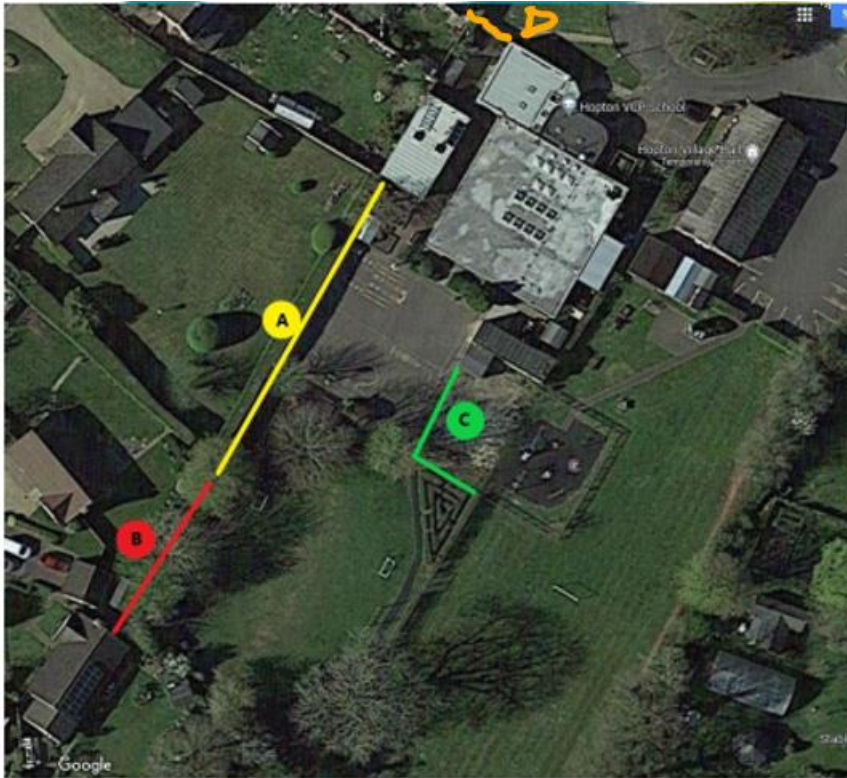
Currently, the school's boundary is made up of residential private fencing much lower than is appropriate for a school fence line and trees, to which there are gaps that permit entry and exit. Health and Safety walks have flagged up the growing concern that the boundary line is not fit for purpose and poses a huge safeguarding risk for children exiting via the openings as well as people entering from them.

In recent months children with social, emotional and mental health needs have begun exploring the boundary line to the right of the school. Although the risk is assessed, it is impossible to reduce the risk of children exiting via these points. If a child should choose to exit, they would then be directly in the gardens of residents with adults restricted in their capacity to follow. This is now becoming a huge concern to the school, and we need swift action to effectively secure the site.

Following the guidance from the Department of Education, school security is vital to protect vulnerable children at schools and is an ever-changing requirement that requires constant review.

We are applying for planning permission to secure the boundary of the school which will involve:

- Replacing the timber fences and gate to the front of the school to 1.8m high green weldmesh fence and gate,
- Providing and installing a 1.5m high green weldmesh fence flush to the conifer hedge at the back of the school, height to match the hedge,
- Providing and installing a 1.8m high green weldmesh fence fixed directly to the existing fence at the back of the school,
- Providing and installing a 1.8m high timber close board fence to include concrete posts and concrete gravel board to secure the former swimming pool area.



Yellow Line A – 1.5m high green weldmesh fence flush to conifer hedge

Red Line B – 1.8m high green weldmesh fence directly in front of the existing fence

Green Line C – 1.8m high timber close board fence to include concrete posts and concrete gravel board.

Orange line D – 1.8m high green weldmesh fence & gate to the front of the school

Examples of fence materials proposed to the school site are as below:



Green weldmesh fence



Timber close board fence with concrete posts.

8. CONCLUSION

Fencing would be replacements for existing. The design is appropriate to the context. The setting is defined by the building's educational use with play areas, etc. The proposals would have no impact on the building's significance which resides in its design, not its setting. The improvement in safeguarding through added pupil security would have public benefits which justify the grant of planning permission.

The planned works are deemed to be beneficial for the school by enhancing the frontage of the school and securing the site.

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