

CABINET

DATE	13 January 2021
REPORT OF	Councillor Ian Lindley Portfolio Holder for Children's Education and Young People Councillor Philip Jackson, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Skills and Housing
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Joanne Hewson, Chief Operating Officer / Director of Children's Services Sharon Wroot, Director of Resources and Governance
SUBJECT	Family Hub Review
STATUS	Open

FORWARD PLAN REF NO.

CONTRIBUTION TO OUR AIMS

The review of the Family Hub service model requires the repurposing or disposal of property deemed surplus to the Council's requirements. By considering other options the result could allow for opportunities to consider alternative use of the space or for the Council surrender and transfer to an adjacent Academy School to secure use for continued Educational need which would provide financial savings to the Council.

The service delivery model focusses on the importance of building place-based services so rather than having multiple sites, it is encouraged to move to a 'Super Hub' model where all professionals can work together which meets the Councils outcome of 'Sustainable Communities'.

The repurposing or release of property supports the Council's priority of 'Stronger Economy' by ensuring property continues to provide operational space for other use to ensure sites remain sustainable for the longer term. This could mean, if released, that no further financial constraint is placed on the Council which would support our determination to be efficient and effective.

The repurposing or surrender of property will also contribute directly towards the Council's strategic priority of supporting the development of 'Stronger Communities' by providing a fit for purpose service model aligned to the use of physical property which continues to support communities across the Borough.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report seeks authority to implement the recommendations following a review of Family Hub provision and future use proposals associated with Family Hub accommodation. The review includes changes to service delivery, closure of Hub sites (with repurposing or releasing property) and formalising the provision of day

care places, by private providers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Approves the findings of the Review and delegates to the Chief Operating Officer / Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children's Education and Young People, the undertaking of full engagement and implementation of future use proposals and budgetary savings as set out in Section 5 of the report.
2. Delegates to the Director of Resources and Governance, in consultation with the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Skills and Housing, authority to settle all terms and ensure that all necessary actions are carried out in relation to the repurposing or surrender of surplus accommodation and formalising private day care occupation.
3. Authorises the Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer to complete and execute all requisite legal documentation in relation to the matters outlined above.

REASONS FOR DECISION

The Council has undertaken a review of the Family Hub portfolio and has concluded with several recommendations which, if approved, will set the future shape of service provision across the Borough, seek to rationalise repurpose or reduce the property portfolio and formalise the accommodation arrangements of private day care providers on market terms.

1 BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

- 1.1 In February 2020, a multi-agency project group formed with the task of reviewing Family Hubs (FHs) and primary care accommodation to ensure service provision is aligned where need and demand is located within the Borough.
- 1.2 At the initial meeting of the group, North East Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Group (NELCCG) confirmed there were no suitable vacant spaces within any of the clinical property portfolio.
- 1.3 The service delivery model focusses on the importance of building place-based services so rather than having multiple sites, it is encouraged to move to a Super Hub model where all professionals can work together which meets the strategic outcome of sustainable communities.
- 1.4 There are currently 12 FHs located within four (4) locality areas across North East Lincolnshire which were subject to a full accommodation review resulting in detailed analysis being completed. This analysis considered the following information:
 - **Building:** caretaking arrangements, opening/closing, cleaning, condition survey
 - **Financial:** running costs, building charging policy, day care provision rent subsidy, in kind arrangements
 - **Leases:** with School (Academy Act) and private day care providers

- **Utilisation:** services delivered within the building, partnership arrangements in place, day care provision on site, footfall.

- 1.5 As the Council has been under significant pressure to reduce its budget envelope moving forward, the findings of the review of the portfolio set out proposals towards the ongoing savings target set during the 19/20 financial year associated with this service area and proposes a set of recommendations to retain and open six (6) of the sites, with the remaining six (6) closing.
- 1.6 The first national lockdown associated with the Coronavirus pandemic afforded the opportunity to rethink the provision and alternative models of service delivery leading to a shift from the traditional and physical presence of Family Hub sites.
- 1.7 To ensure the service remained compliant during Covid-19, four (4) FHs have re-opened: Central, Nunsthorpe & Bradley Park, Queensway and Reynolds.
- 1.8 This has ensured adequate provision across the Borough to enable staff to work with priority case families. These FHs were chosen due to their central locations within the Borough, they are standalone buildings owned by the Council, can easily accommodate a one-way system around the buildings, have larger rooms available within them to enable one-to-one family sessions to be held whilst also ensuring the 2-metre social distance requirement.
- 1.9 A further two (2) sites at: East Marsh and West Marsh, located in areas of high demand also need to be retained and therefore the recommendation is to reopen. East Marsh could potentially offer a shared partnership use with Barnardo's, providing much needed Mental Health support for young people in the Borough.
- 1.10 The use of part of the accommodation at East Marsh by Barnardo's would be subject to a formal lease agreement which would generate a rental income and cover a share of service charges. West Marsh is equally important due to its location and support given the levels of deprivation
- 1.11 The remaining six (6) are proposed for closure due to alternative methods of service delivery, proximity to other venues that are available for partnership working arrangements and provide the lowest footfall. All six (6) sites are recommended for continued mothballing leading to permanent closure as a Family Hub. There will be the opportunity to consider whether the accommodation could be repurposed or if not, lead to a transfer to an adjacent Academy.
- 1.12 Four (4) sites: Highgate, Immingham, Scartho and Strand, have been closed since March. A Portfolio Holder decision is in place and discussions already in train with Strand with the intention of surrendering the Council's property interest to the adjoining Academy site. It is proposed the other three (3) would remain closed and the space be repurposed or surrendered to adjacent Academy sites to continue to meet Educational needs.
- 1.13 Two (2) of the Family Hubs: Broadway and Riverside have been closed and the sites have been repurposed to offer Contact Services for a short term. This need will be reviewed further to understand the accommodation requirements in full, however, these two (2) sites would also cease to provide any ongoing Family Hub offer.

- 1.14 In summary, of the current 12 Family Hub sites, it is proposed that six (6) are to be retained and remain open or re-open with the remaining six (6) being proposed for closure and repurposed or surrendered to an adjacent Academy.
- 1.15 There are several considerations to take into account when approving the recommendations and proceeding with withdrawing the FH use at these sites, as outlined in the risks and opportunities section of this report.
- 1.16 Furthermore, there is a statutory duty placed on the Council to continue to provide day care places. As a result, there is a need to retain day care places operated by private day care providers which is separate but adjacent or shared within part of the accommodation of the Family Hub at each of the sites. The Council therefore proposes to review this space and align this in the most appropriate configuration and progress with new lease agreements on market terms.
- 1.17 This will see a change to some of the rent levels which were set in 2009, whereby the Council approved a reduction in the rent to some of the providers. However, it is timely to review this position and where necessary reduce or remove the subsidy as part of providing formal lease agreements for occupation, which will ensure those places continue to be secure.

2 RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

There are several potential risks associated with the change of use or surrendering use of the Family Hubs:

- Secretary of State approval for change of use
- Potential grant funding claw back on investment as a Children's Centre (nearing the end of the claw back period)
- Securing continued Education need and the ability for the Academy to take responsibility for the former Family Hub space
- Retention of the day care places / providers within part of the current Family Hub or retained and repurposed accommodation
- Viability in formalising accommodation arrangements of private day care providers with market rents and full service charge recovery.

3 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Do nothing – would result in a missed opportunity to meet the evolving demand in service need and would not enable the Council to repurpose or release property for other uses and the Council being able to achieve the financial savings required.

4 REPUTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

There are both potential positive and negative reputational implications for the Council resulting from the decision to review the service delivery model, repurpose or release property and formalise accommodation agreements. The risks will need to be fully understood against the need and demand from our community, ability to change the use or release property and secure formal agreements with private day care providers. The Council's Communications Team has been briefed of the proposal and will issue any information requirements in respect to this proposal.

5 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 The financial savings below will only be achieved from the release of property at the point where all contracts for services and utilities, repairs and maintenance responsibility either cease, following any consultation and claw back risks once a transfer to an adjacent Academy has completed.
- 5.2 The proposed annual savings, based on the cash budget proposed for 2020/21, for each of the properties for proposed closure and release are as follows:
- Highgate – £18,700
 - Immingham – £41,500
 - Scartho – £24,300
 - Strand – c£9,300
 - Broadway – £24,162
 - Riverside – £51,080
 - Total annual budget savings potential - £169,042
- 5.3 Further to these savings, additional rental income and service charge recovery are to be reviewed and could be factored in following the potential occupation of Barnardo's and rent and service charge recovery from each of the private day care providers.

6 CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The recommendations outlined within this report have been considered so far as their impact of the proposal on climate change and the environment. In reference to the Council's environmental policy, the proposal supports the Council's environmental priorities:

- a. By recognising and realising the economic and social benefits of a high-quality environment.
- b. By working towards a low carbon North East Lincolnshire that is prepared for, and resilient to, the impacts of climate change.

7 CONSULTATION WITH SCRUTINY

There has been no consultation with Scrutiny to date.

8 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Closure of some family hubs will achieve cost savings estimated at £169k per annum towards the £200k savings requirement incorporated into the Council's current budget.
- 8.2 Options around generating additional rental income will also help towards achieving the remaining £31k required to meet the overall savings total.

9 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The review and subsequent recommendations are consistent with the Council's strategic aims and objectives and align with the place-based approach for services across the Borough.

9.2 The delegations are consistent with an exercise of this nature.

9.3 Legal officers are available to support, as necessary.

10 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

The closure of 6 FHs may have an impact on staff who currently work within those premises. Employment matters will be dealt with in accordance with established HR procedures to achieve the proposals identified. Trade Unions and staff will need to be kept engaged throughout the respective processes with consultation as appropriate in accordance with the procedural and legal requirements.

11 WARD IMPLICATIONS

This proposal directly impacts on the Immingham, Scartho, East Marsh, Croft Baker and Yarborough Wards.

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are no background papers to this report.

13 CONTACT OFFICER

13.1 Joanne Hewson, Chief Operating Officer/Director of Children's Services,
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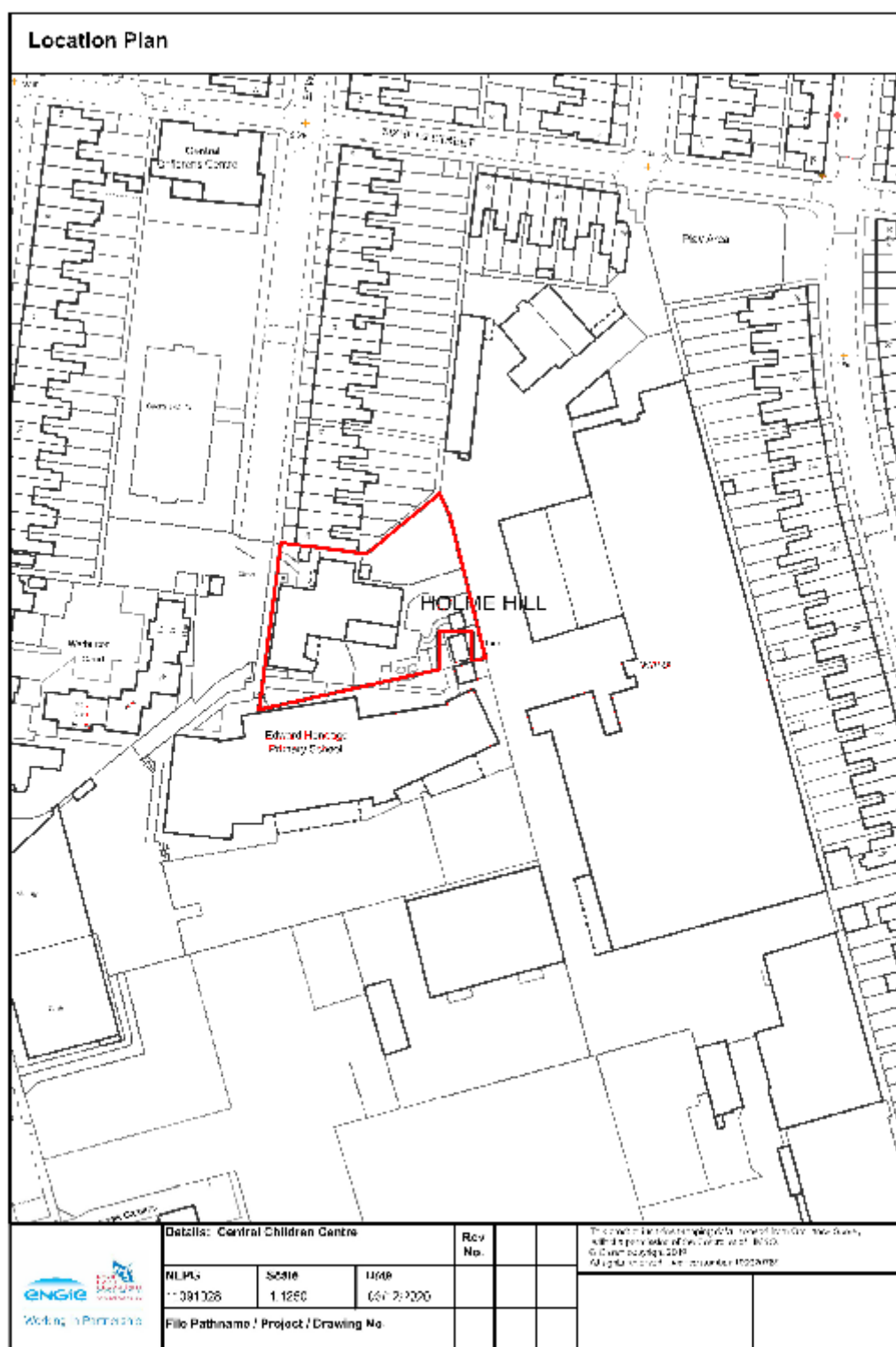
13.2 Sharon Wroot, Director of Resources and Governance, 01472 324423

COUNCILLOR IAN LINDLEY
PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION AND YOUNG
PEOPLE

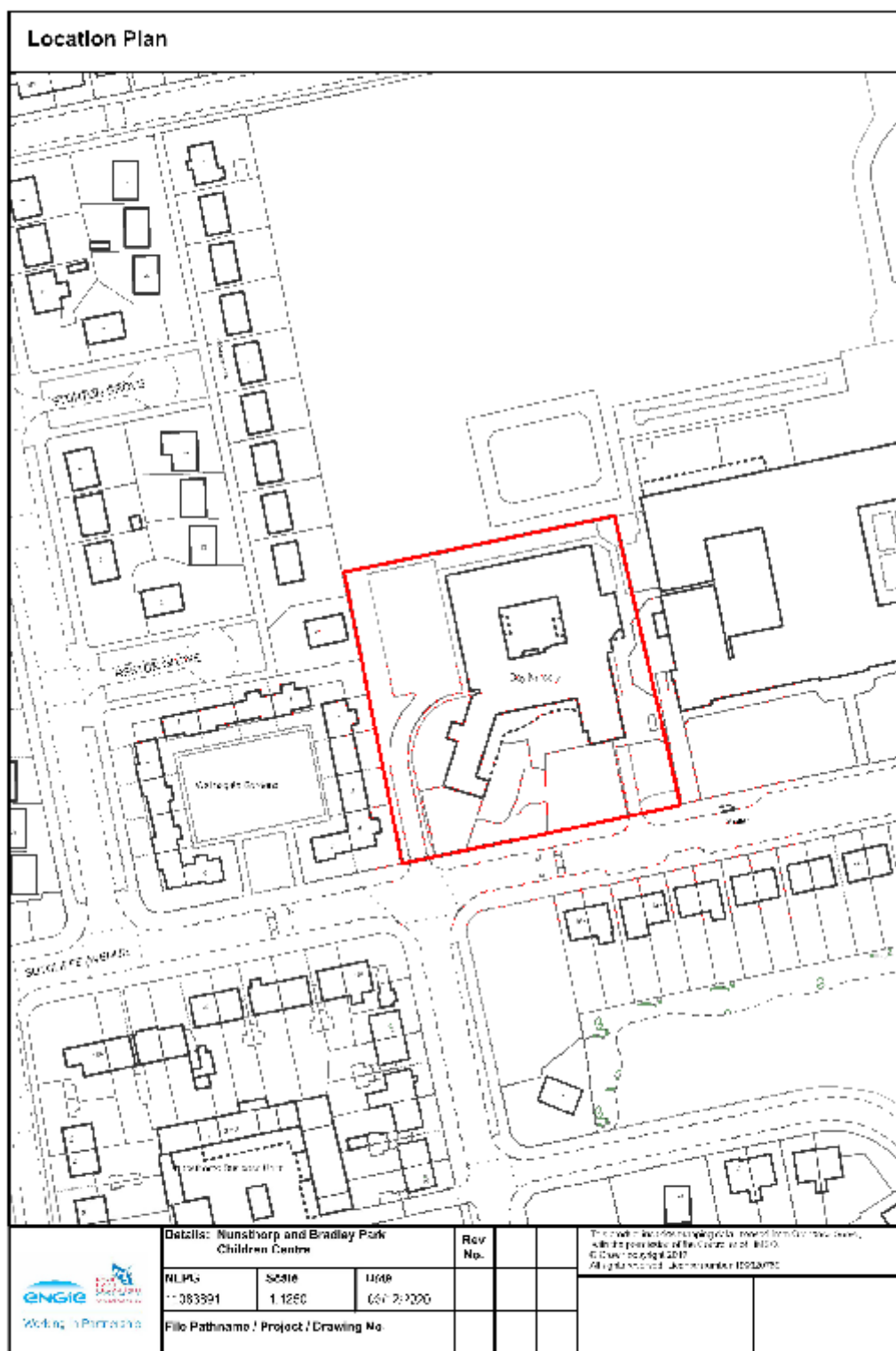
COUNCILLOR PHILIP JACKSON
LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR REGENERATION, SKILLS AND
HOUSING

Appendix One – Location Plans

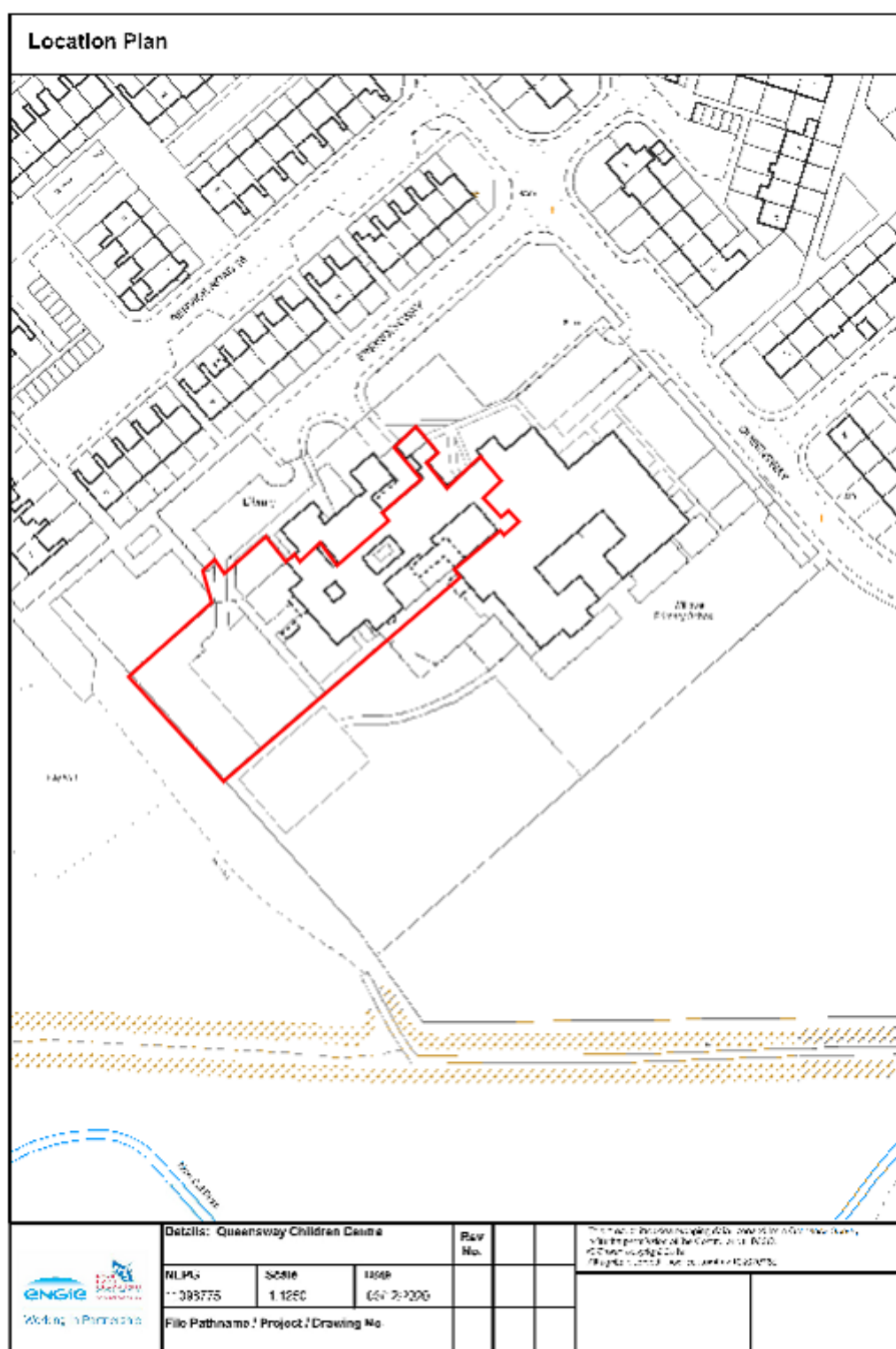
Central



Nunsthorpe & Bradley Park



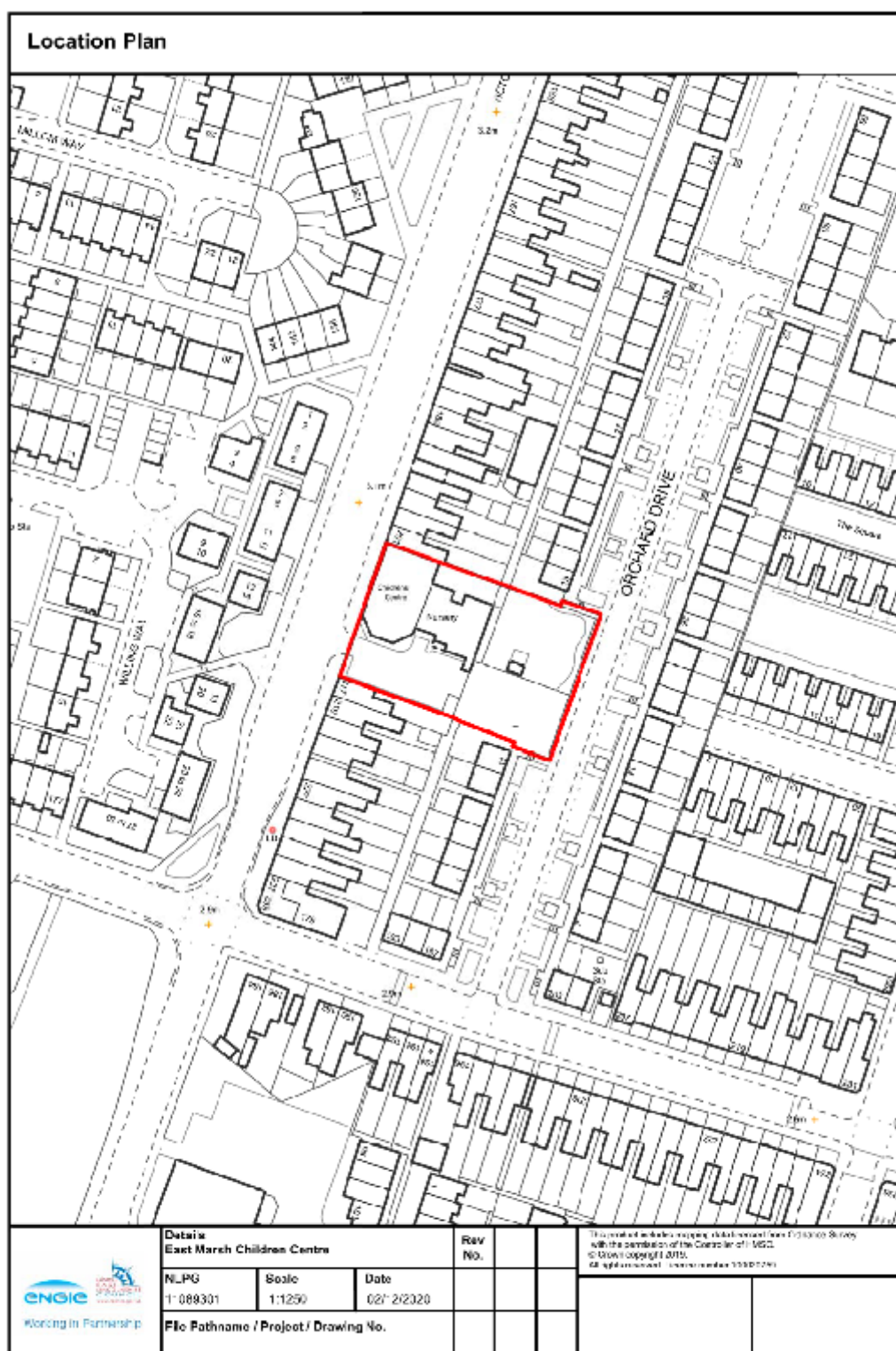
Queensway



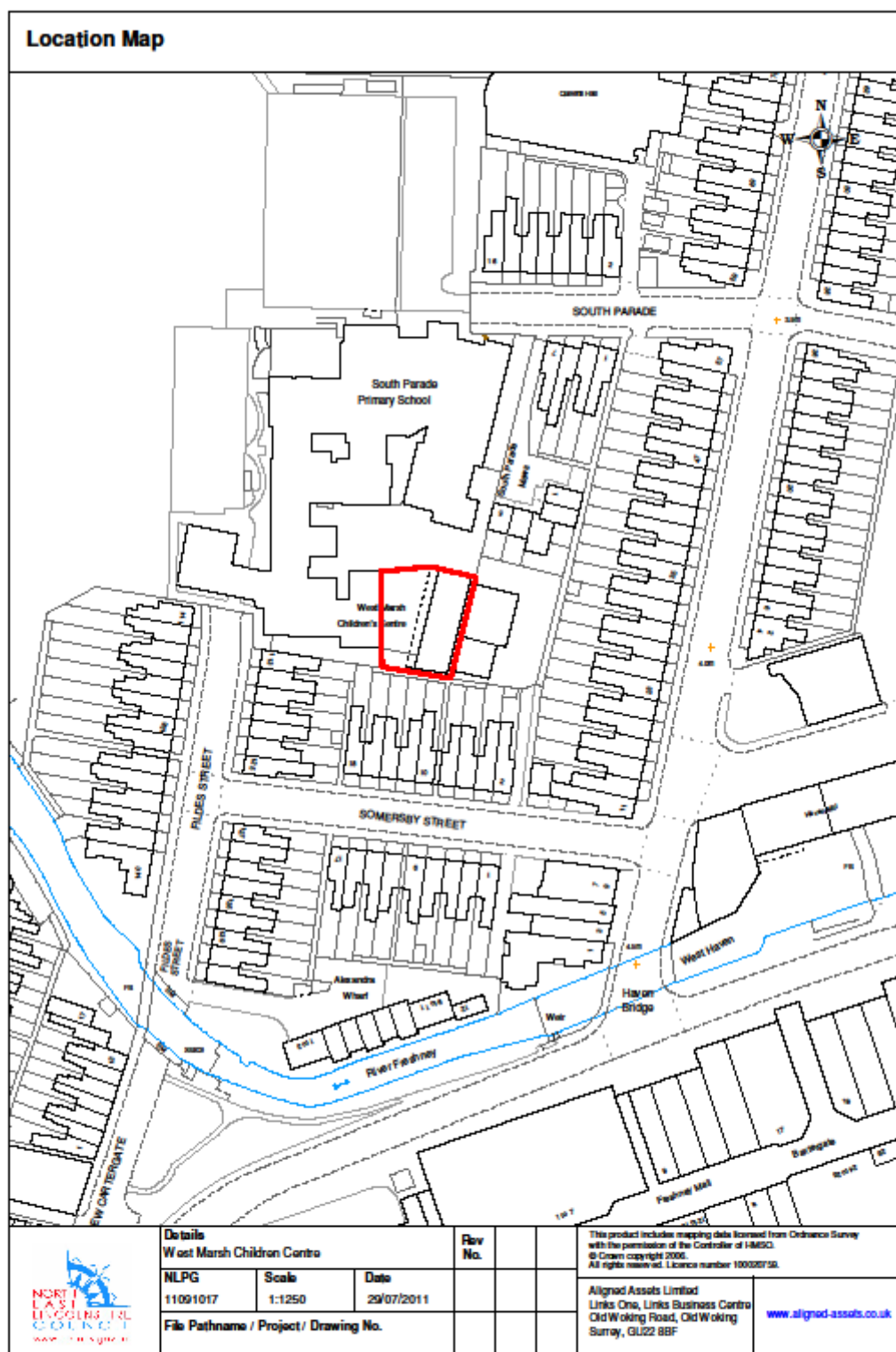
N.B. Council Day Care in separate building outlined blue



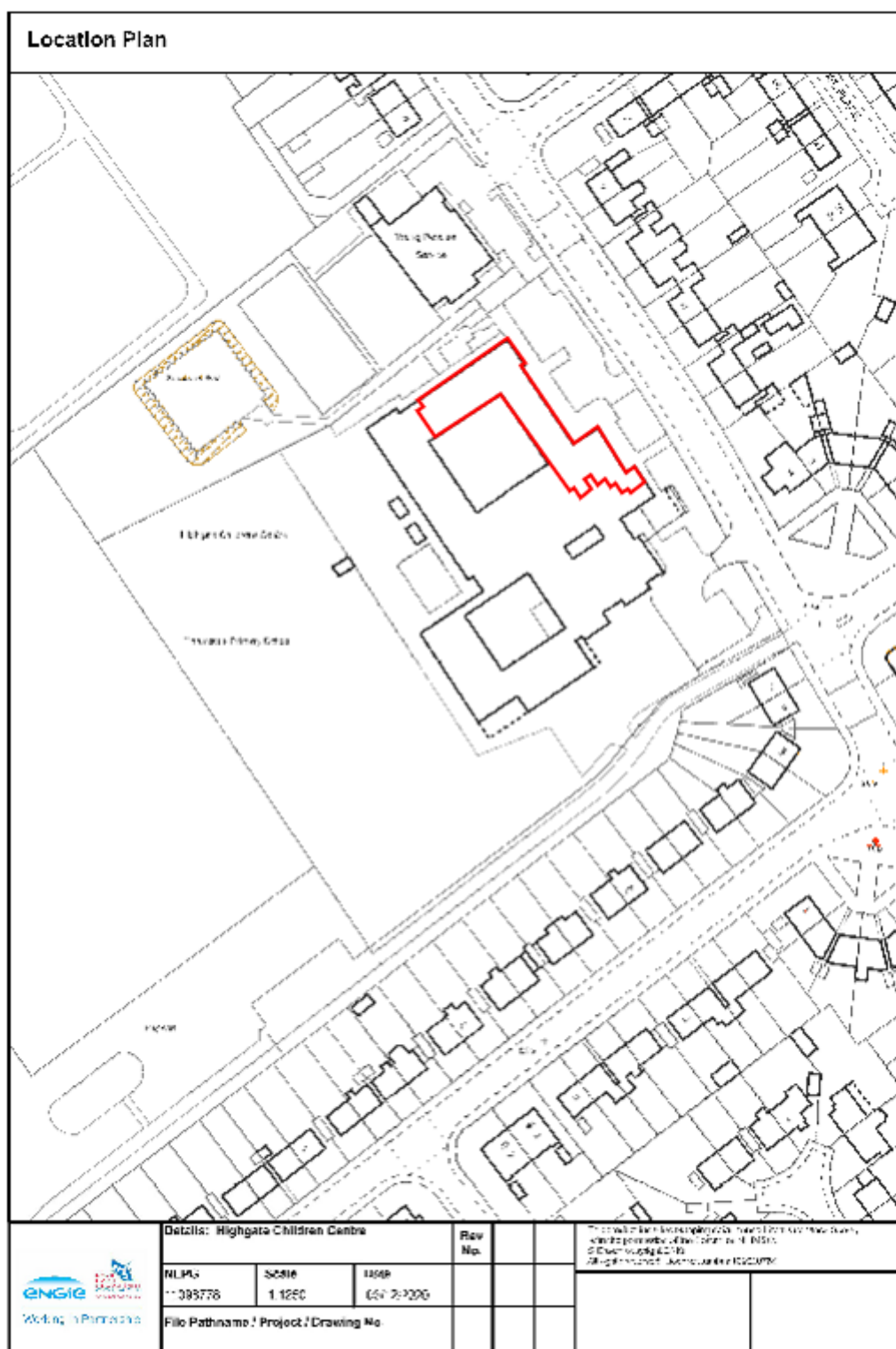
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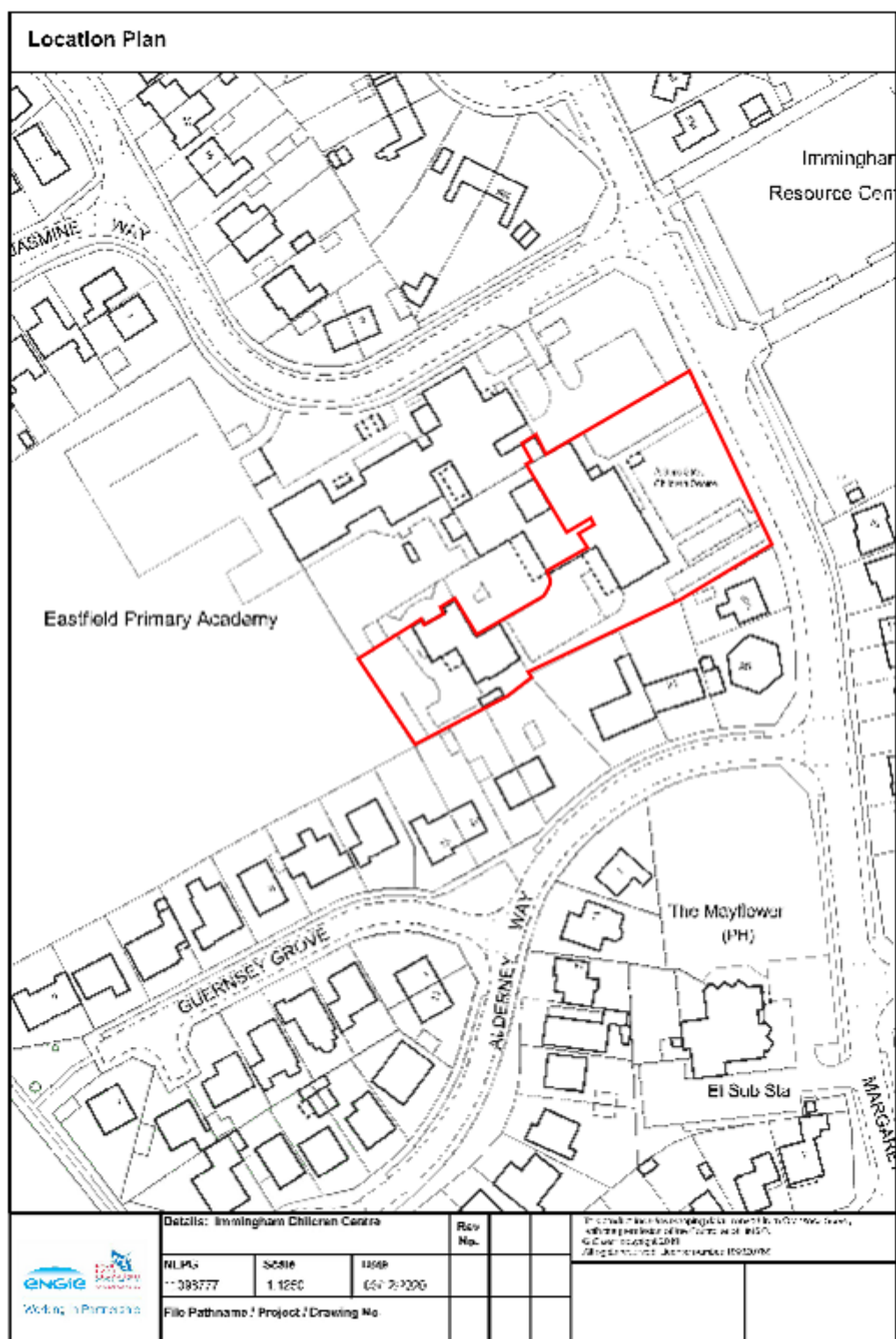
West Marsh



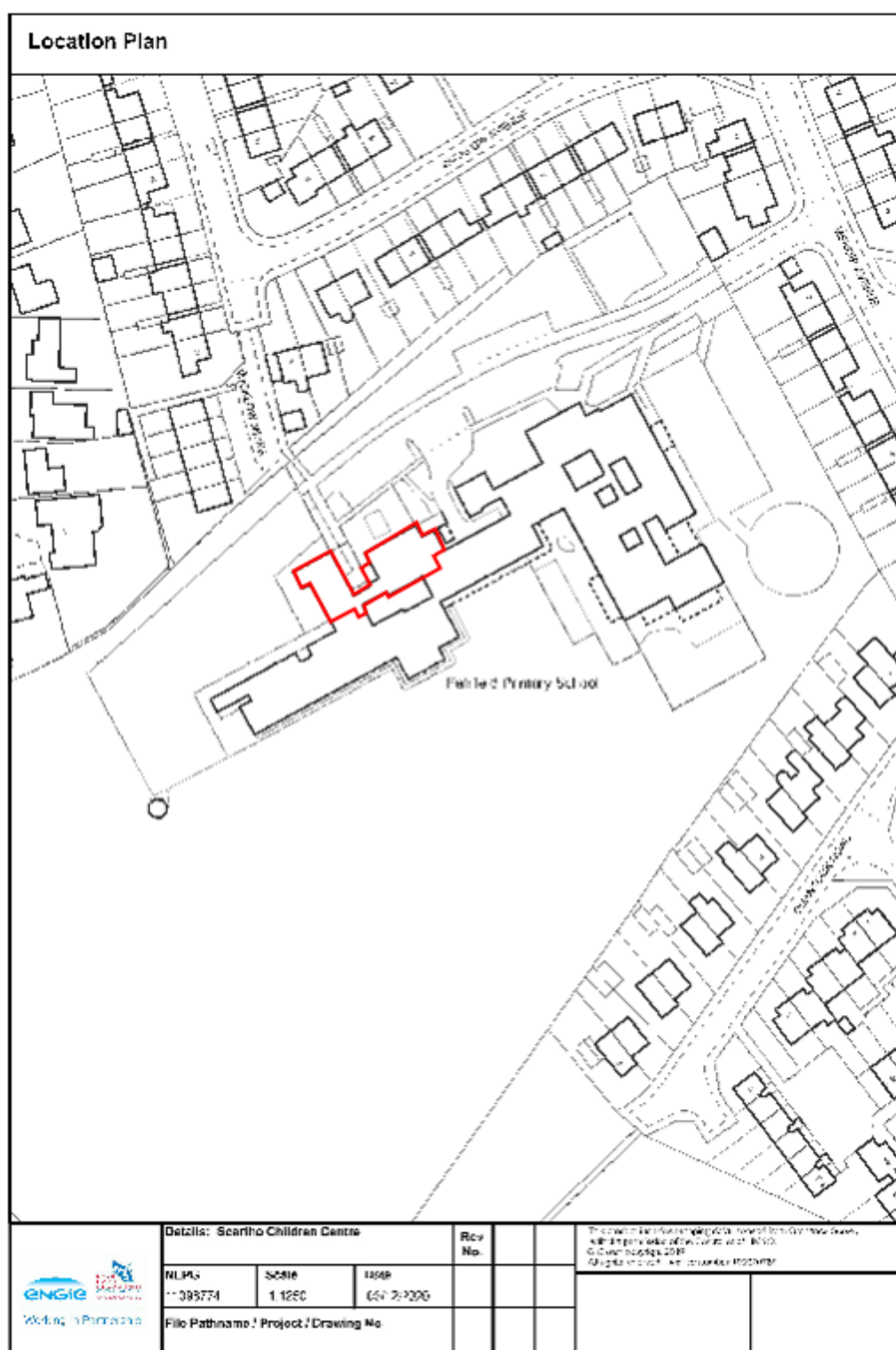
Highgate



Immingham

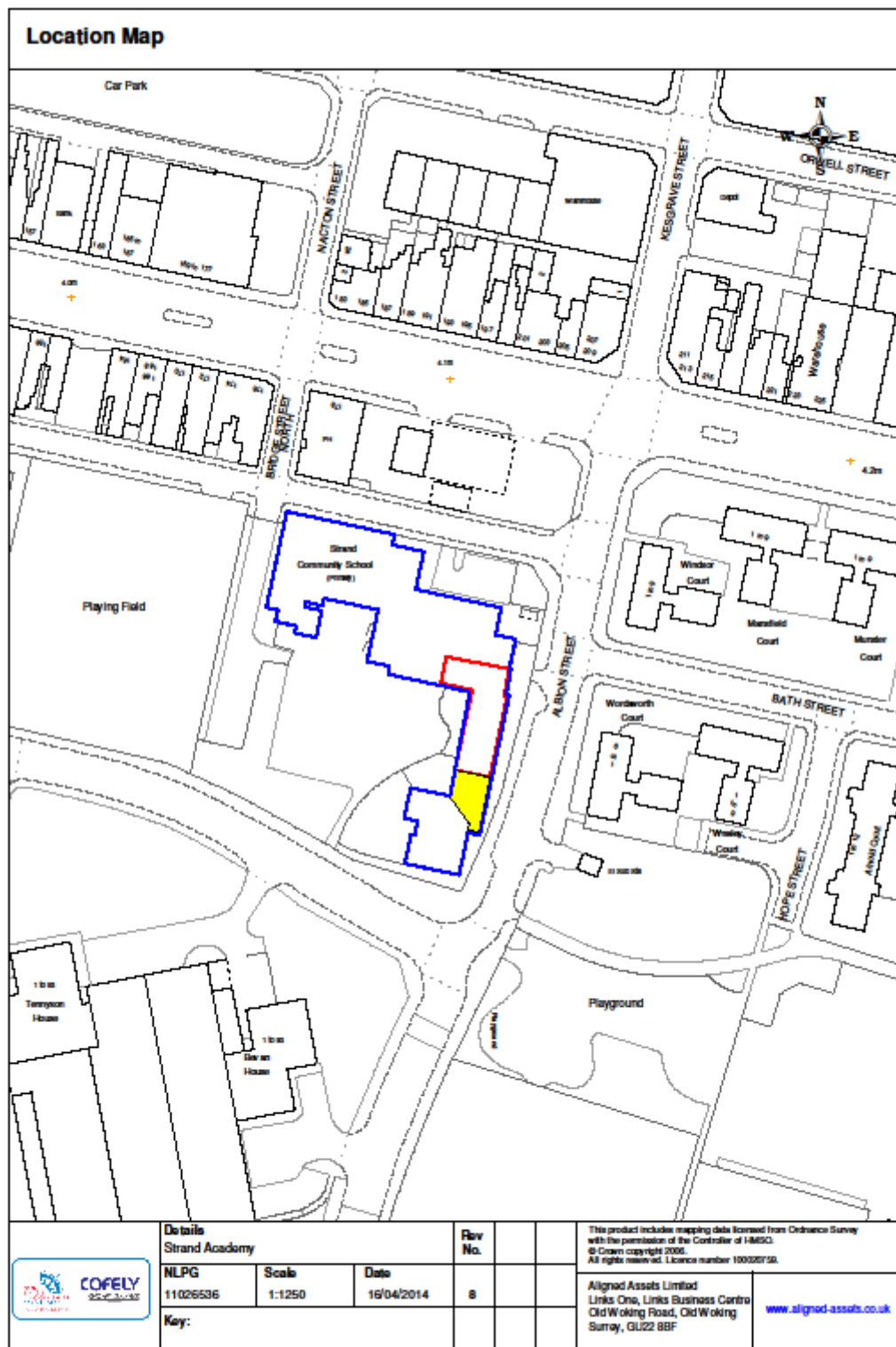


Scartho

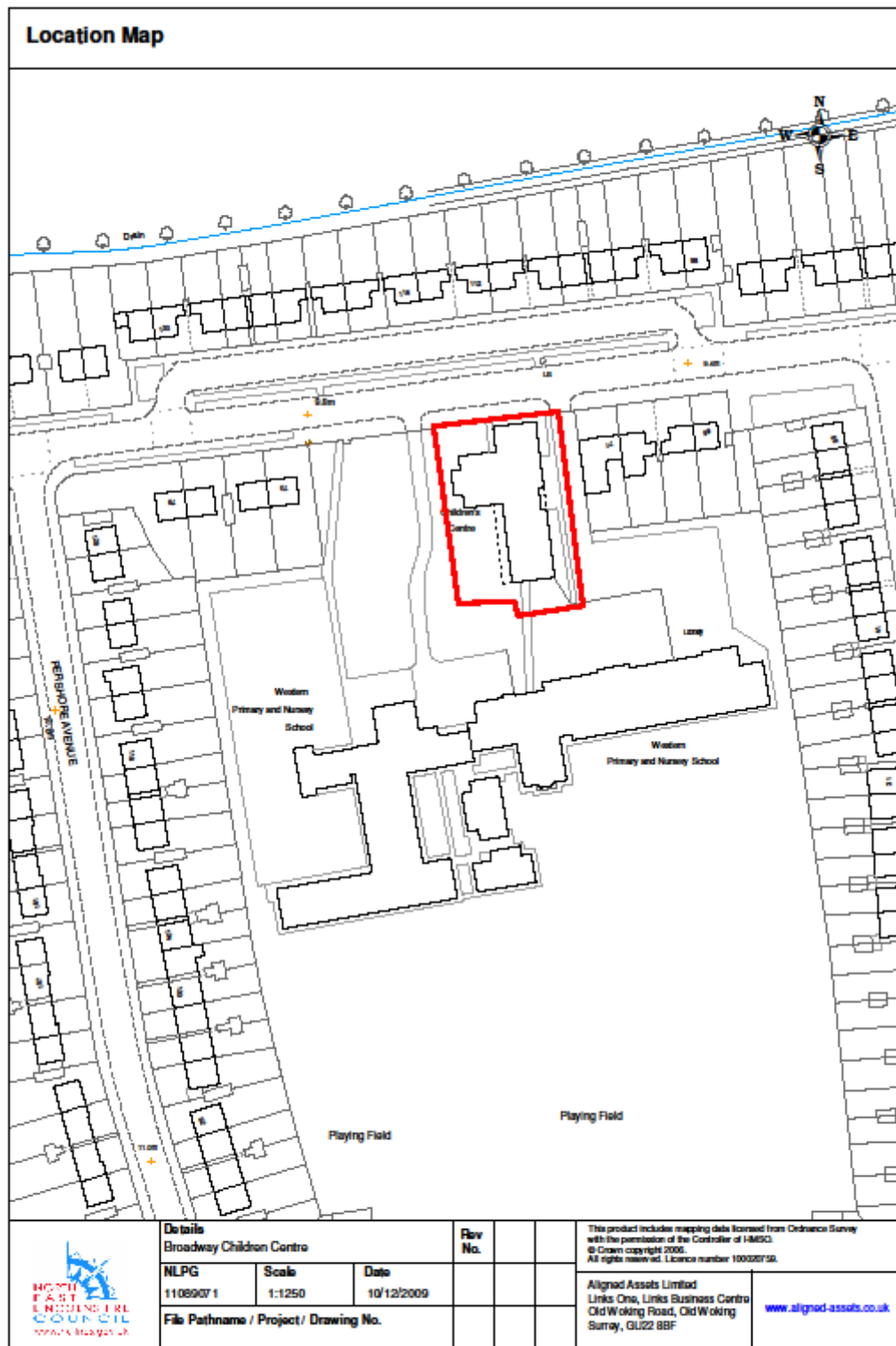


Strand

N.B. shared space shaded yellow



Broadway



Riverside

