

**NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL
LAW AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

**Scrutiny call-in mechanism on Cabinet/Portfolio
Holder decisions**

Date	13/1/21
Cabinet Item (title)	FAMILY HUB REVIEW
Decision Notice No.	DN.76
Reason(s) for Call-in	The Family Hub review has not been before Scrutiny or been clearly evidenced as the best option for service users, and has failed to evidence that the existing hubs couldn't be better utilised for better service delivery.
Desired outcome for Call-in	To better utilise the existing sites as the service will likely see much more demand for use in a post Covid environment.
Intended Recommendation to Cabinet	Pause the decision, call a cross party select committee that can investigate changes to the service in greater depth in a public forum to allow for informed decision making. The findings are to be forwarded to Scrutiny for their input prior to any final decision made by cabinet.
Details of estimated/actual cost	Cost of maintaining sites that remain operational, offset against the successful early intervention work that is proven to have, where successful vast financial and social benefits long term.
To be referred to which Scrutiny meeting?	Children and life long learning.

SIGNATURES OF TWO MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

(signature)

(printed name)

(1)_____

Matthew Patrick

(2)_____

Kathryn Wheatley

**NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL
LAW AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

Notes on Scrutiny call-in mechanism on Cabinet/Portfolio Holder decisions

- 1 A Decision Notice of a Cabinet/Portfolio Holder meeting or a key decision made by an officer with delegated authority from the Cabinet will be published within two working days of the meeting/decision and will be sent to all Members of the Council with a copy of this form. That notice will include the date on which it is published and will specify that the decision will come into force, and may then be implemented, on the expiry of five working days after the publication of the decision, unless any two Members of the Council object to it and call it in.
- 2 The notice must be signed by any two Members of the Council (including co-opted members provided the Proposal relates to their area of responsibility) and must give reasons for the suspension and referral of the decision to Scrutiny.
- 3 The notice must be received by the Chief Executive no later than 4.00 p.m. on the fifth working day after publication of the Decision Notice, and must specify the item reference number in question and indicate which Scrutiny meeting the matter will go to with reasons for preference. The Chief Executive will adjudicate on allocation to the appropriate Scrutiny meeting and the decision-taker shall be notified of the call-in.
- 4 A maximum period of 28 days will be set for scrutiny to hear a call-in following receipt of notice. Having considered the decision in question, the Scrutiny Panel must resolve either to:
 - (i) free the decision for implementation (the decision shall take effect on the date of the relevant Panel meeting);
 - (ii) refer it back to the decision making person or body with a recommendation for amendment; or
 - (iii) refer the decision to the Council for approval.
- 5 If referred back to the decision making person or body, they shall reconsider within a further four weeks before adopting a final decision. If decision making person or body resolve to accept the recommendations of the Scrutiny Panel, the decision may be implemented as amended. Otherwise the decision must be referred either back to Cabinet or Council, together with the recommendation of the Scrutiny Panel for determination.
- 6 If the matter was referred to full Council and the Council does not object to the decision which has been made, then no further action is necessary and the decision shall take effect on the date of the Council meeting. However, if the Council does object it has no power to make decisions in respect of a Cabinet decision unless it is contrary to the policy framework, or contrary to or not wholly consistent with the budget. Unless that is the case, the Council will refer any decision to which it objects back to the decision making person or body, together with the Council's views on the decision. That decision making body or person shall choose whether to amend the decision or not before reaching a final decision and implementing it. Where a decision was taken by the Cabinet as a whole, a meeting will be convened to reconsider within four weeks of the Council request. Where the decision was made by an individual, the individual will also reconsider within four weeks of the Council request.
- 7 The call-in procedure set out above shall not apply where the decision taken by the Cabinet is urgent. A decision will be urgent if any delay likely to be caused by the call in process would seriously prejudice the Council's or the community's best interests. The record of the decision, and notice by which it is made public shall state whether in the opinion of the decision making person or body, the decision is an urgent one and the reason for this, and therefore not subject to call-in. The Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council must agree both that the decision proposed is reasonable in all the circumstances and to it being treated as a matter of urgency. In the absence of the Leader and/or Deputy Leader, the head of paid service (Chief Executive) or his/her nominee's consent shall be required. In all cases, the Cabinet will be required to consult with the Chair of the relevant functional Scrutiny Panel to satisfy that person that urgency is justified. In the absence of the Chair of the relevant functional Panel, a Chair of another Panel shall be consulted. Decisions taken as a matter of urgency must be reported to the next available meeting of the Council, together with the reasons for urgency.
- 8 The operation of the provisions relating to call-in and urgency shall be monitored annually, and a report submitted to Council with proposals for review if necessary.

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,
01472 325141

13.2 Sharon Wroot, Director of Resources and Governance, 01472 324423

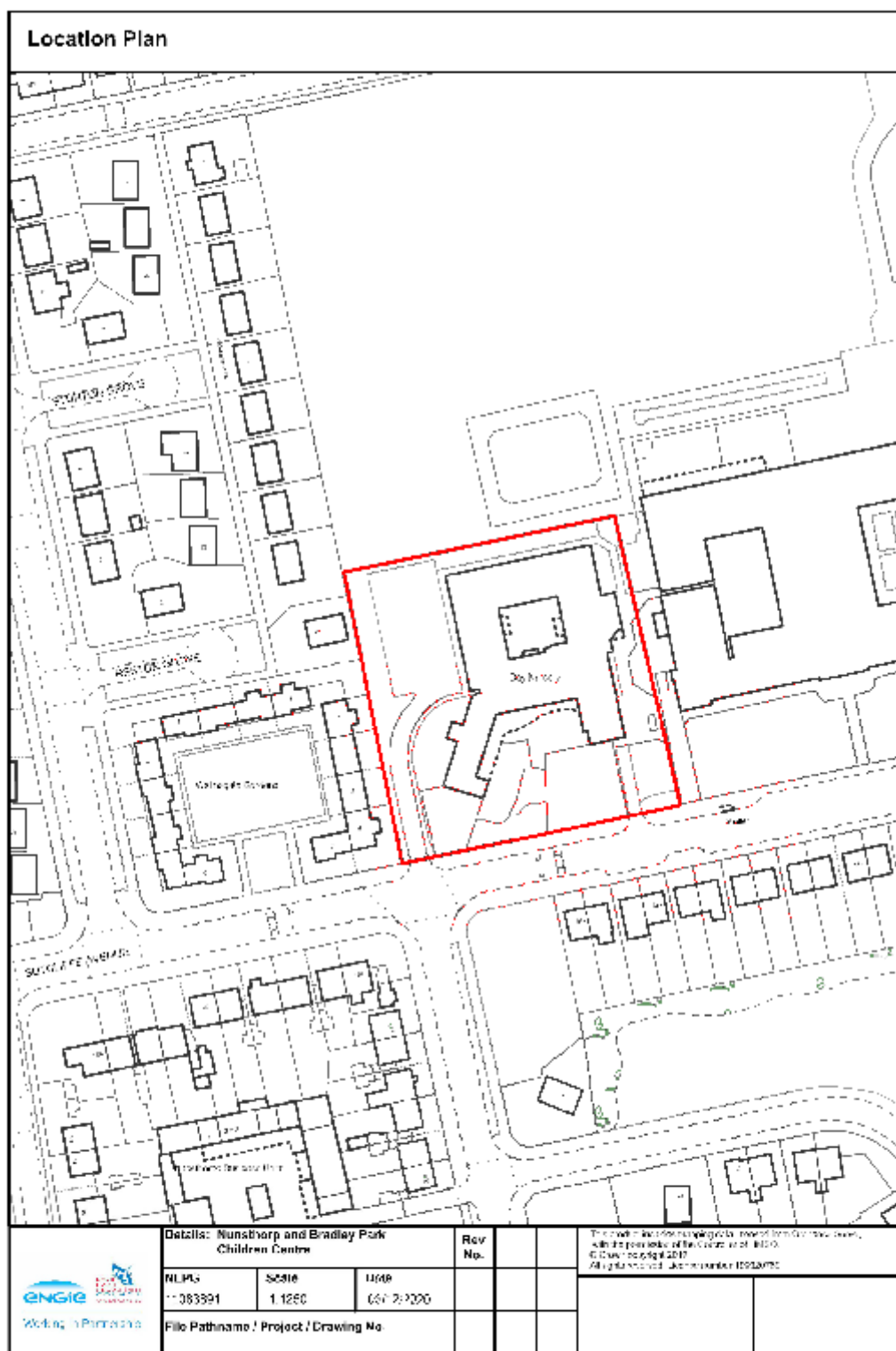
COUNCILLOR IAN LINDLEY
PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION AND YOUNG
PEOPLE

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

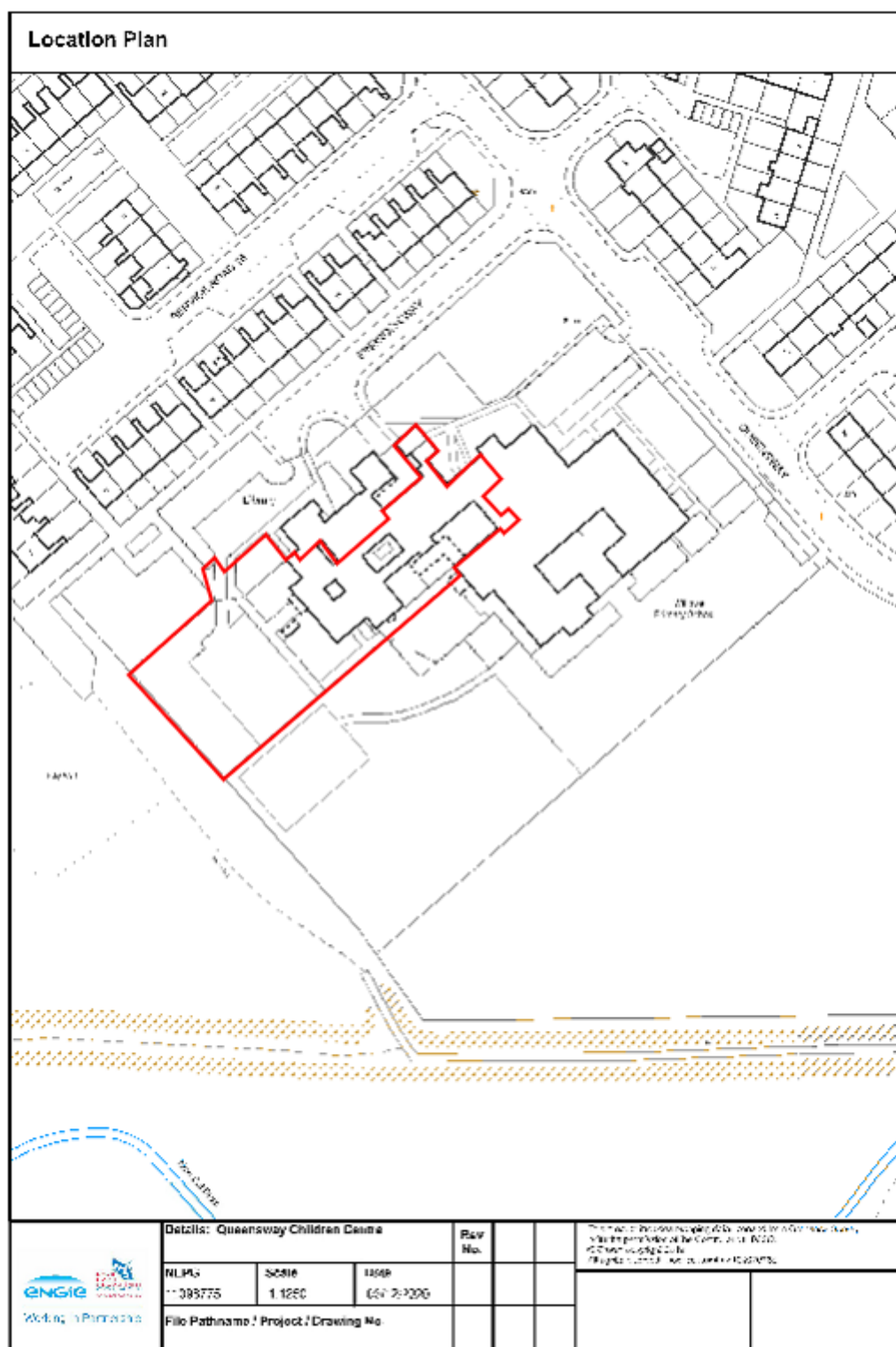
Central



Nunsthorpe & Bradley Park

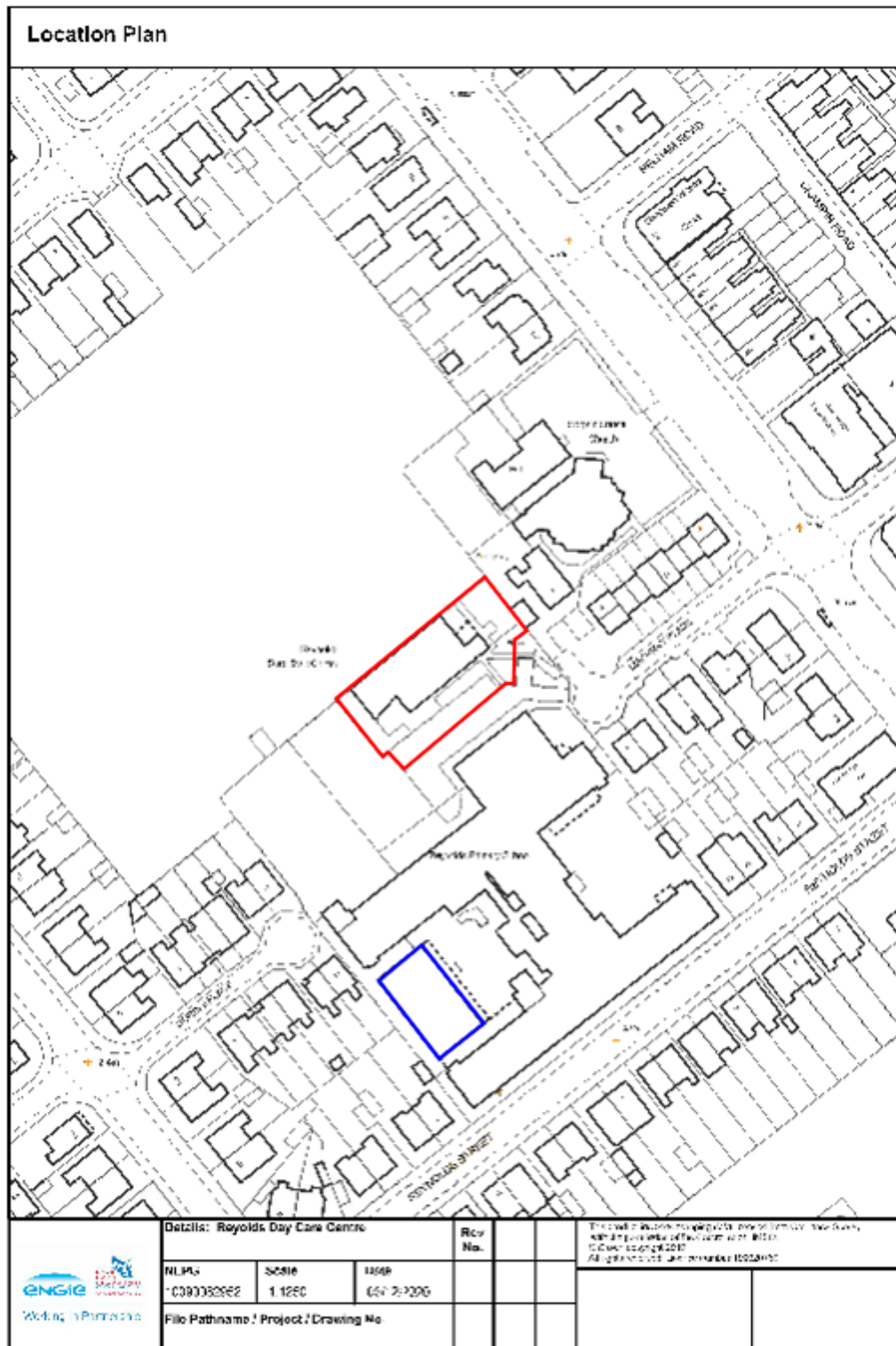


Queensway

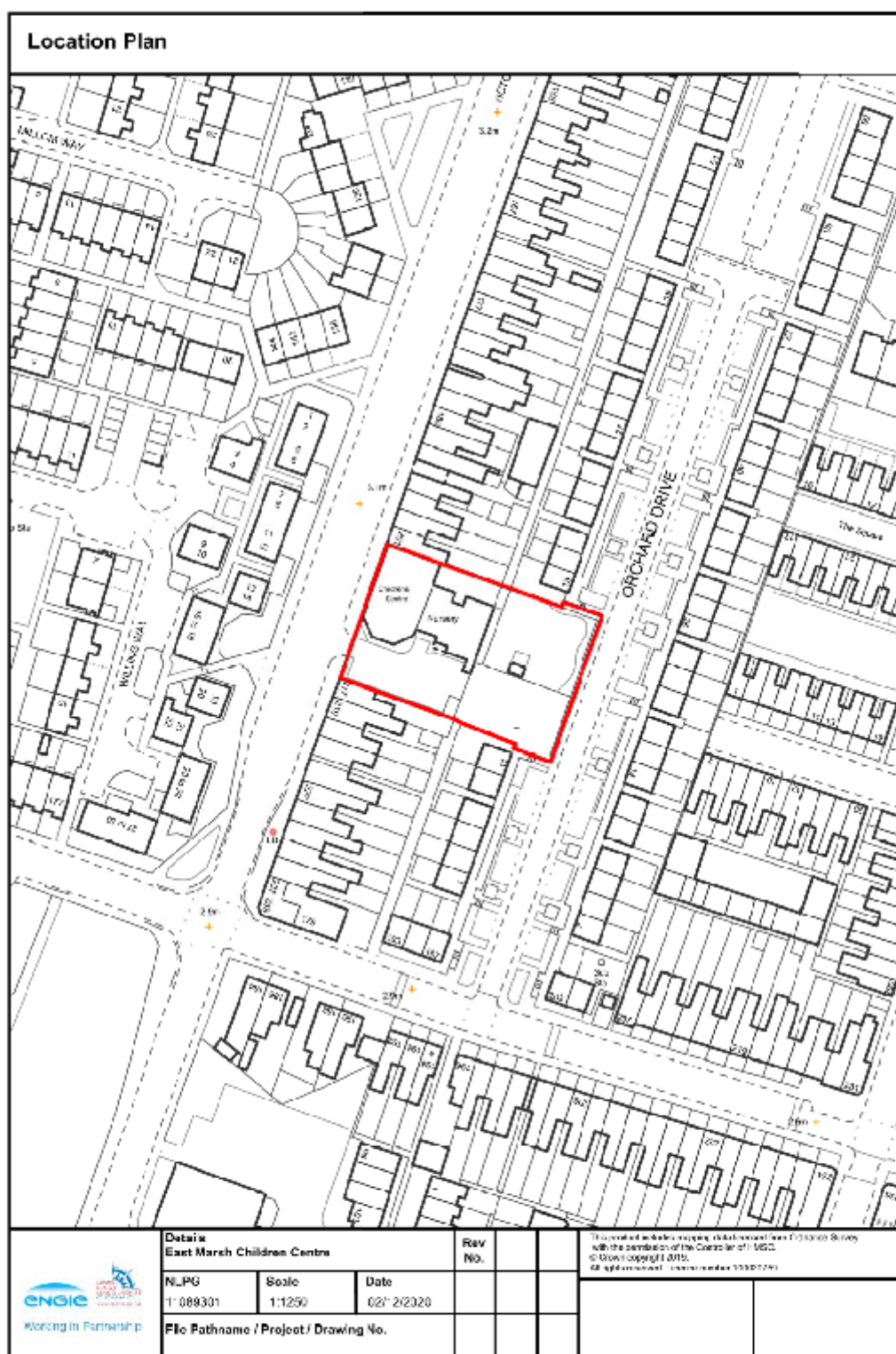


Reynolds

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



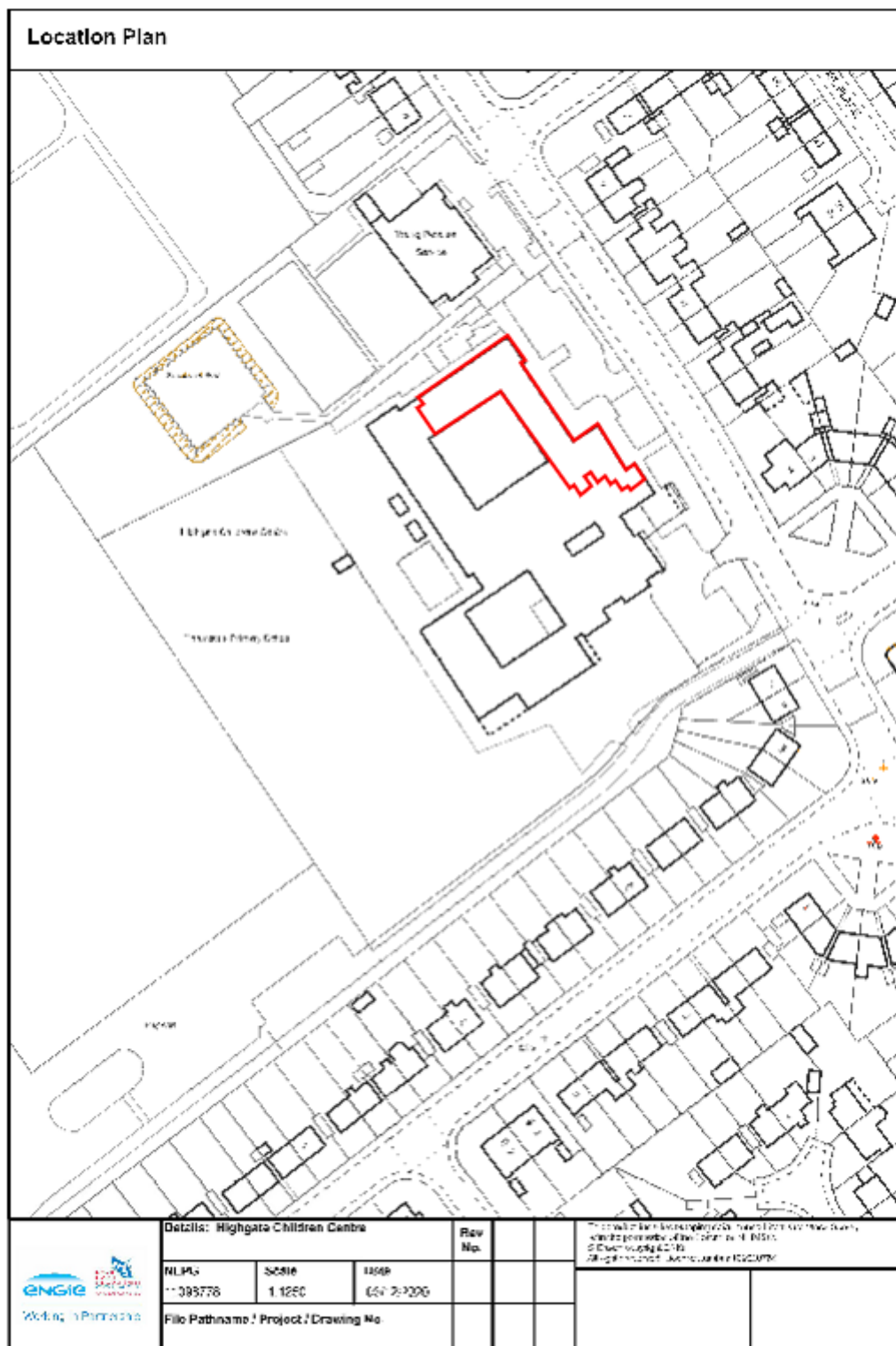
East Marsh

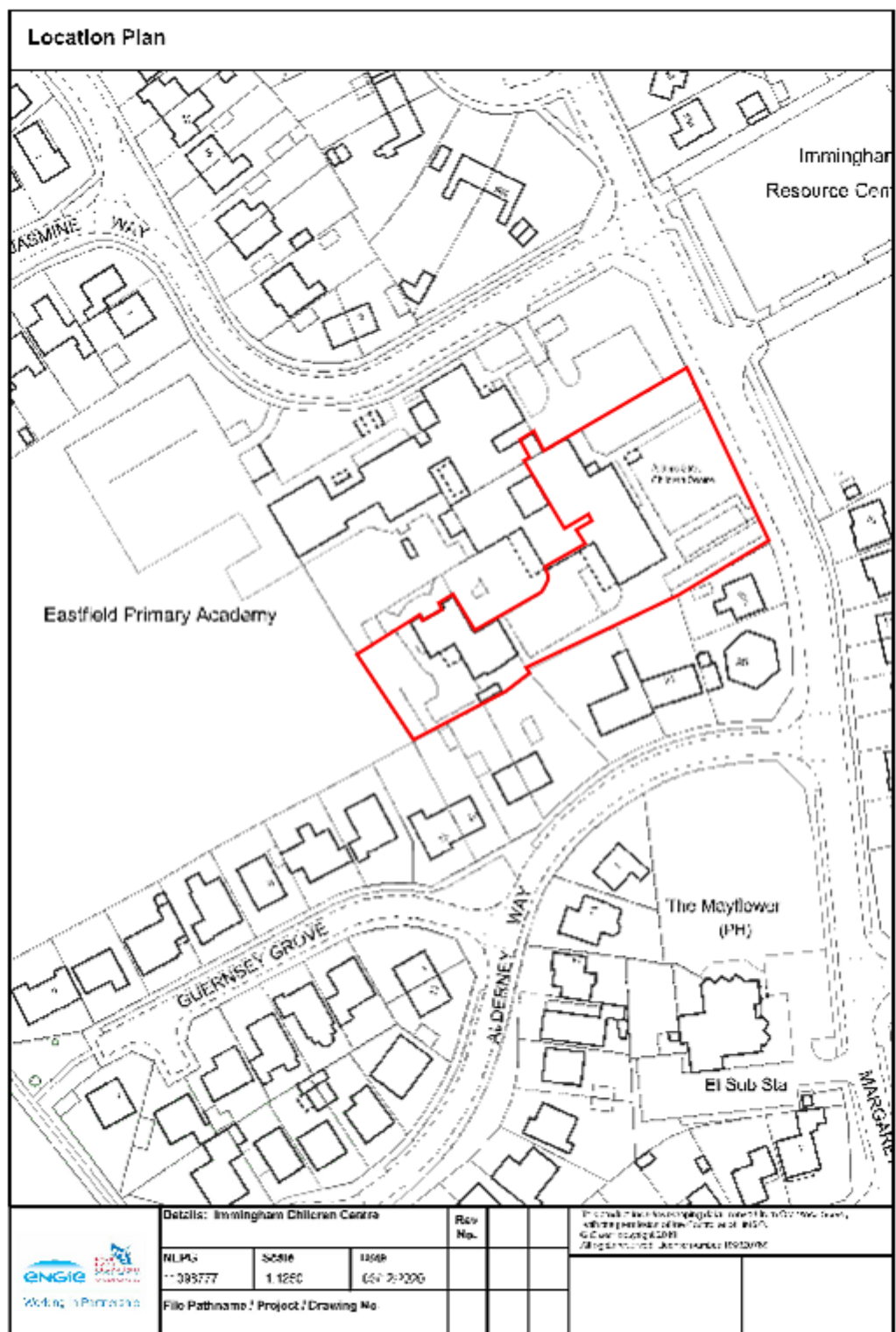


West Marsh

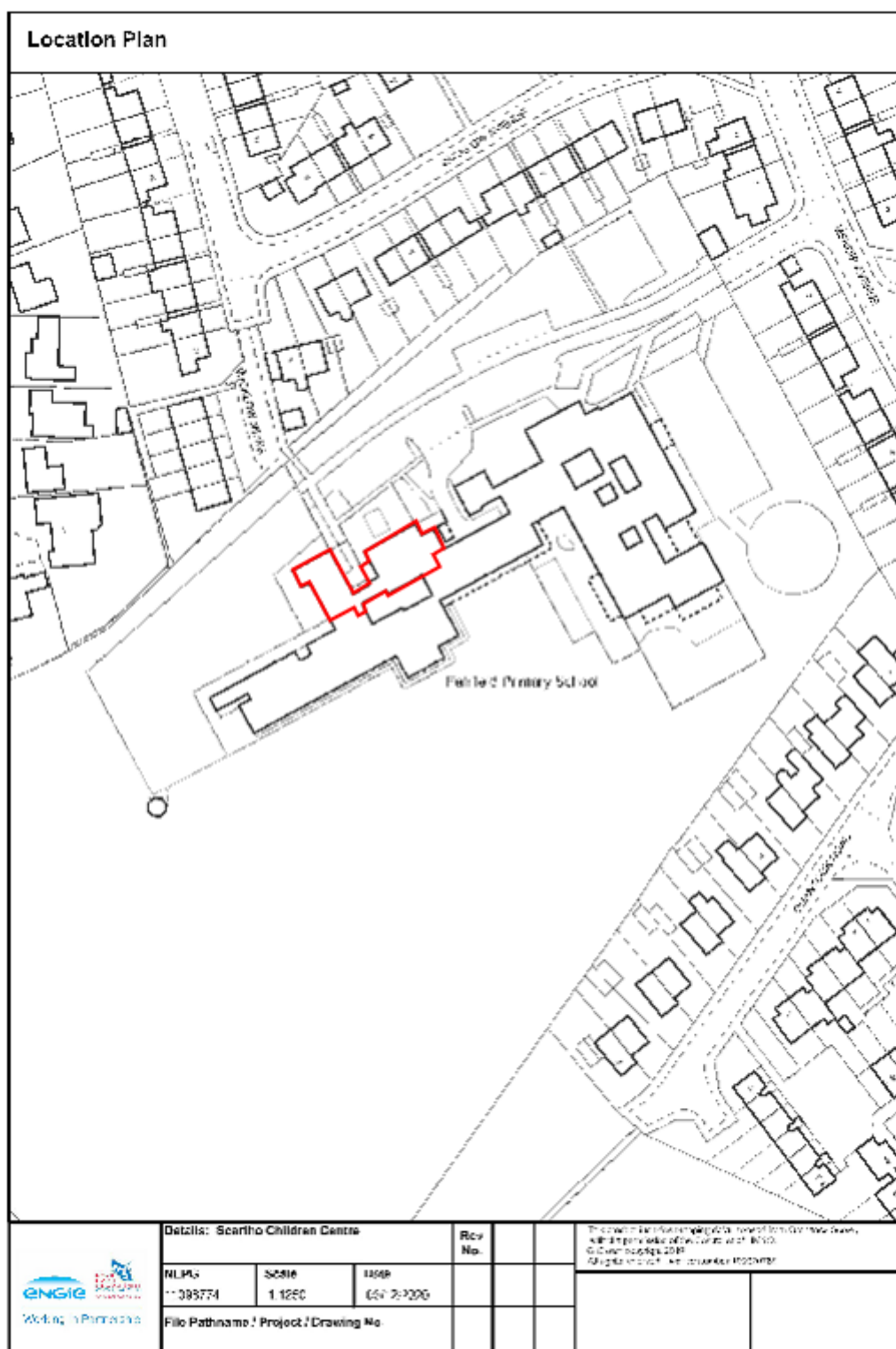


Highgate



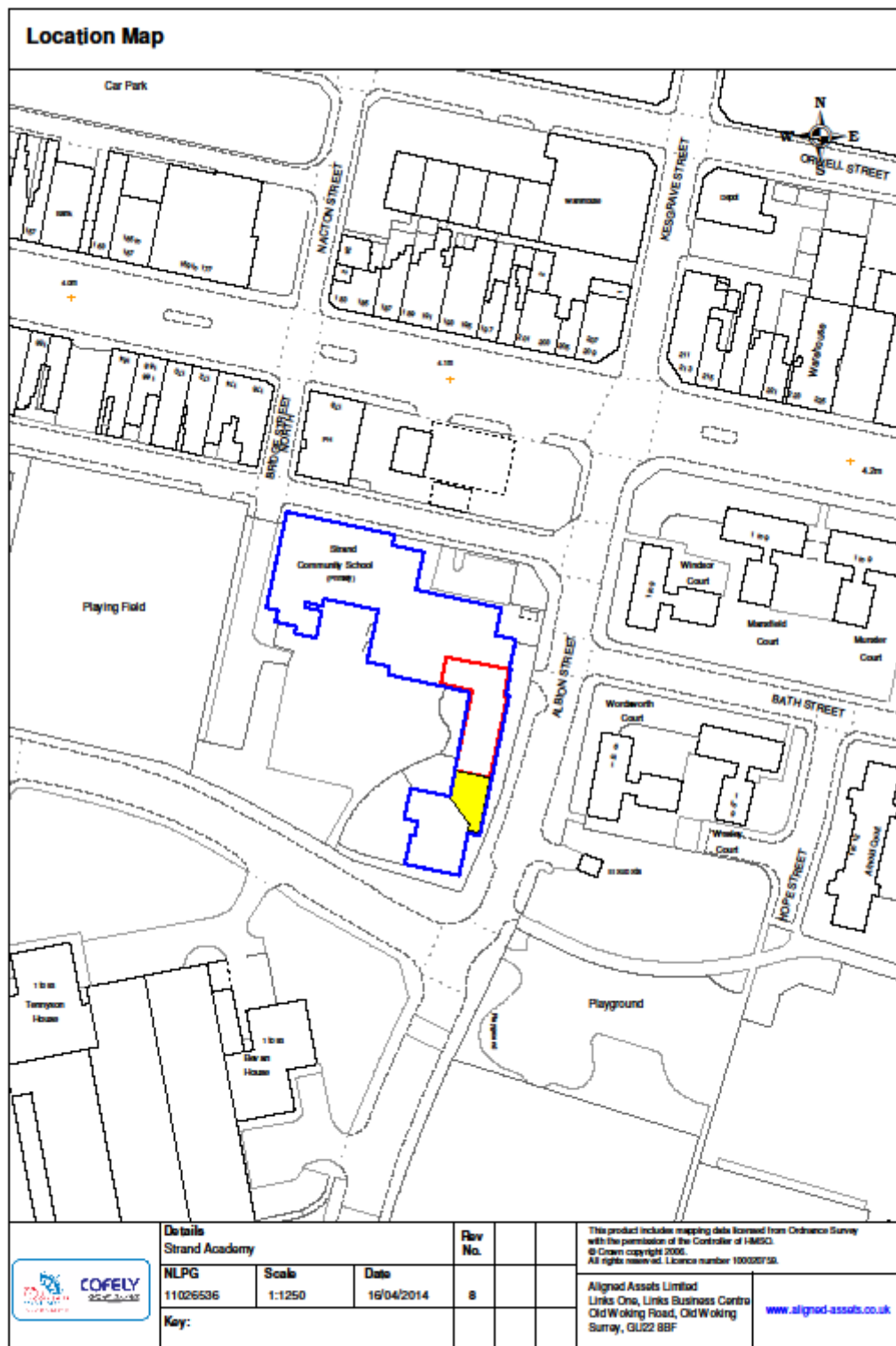
Immingham

Scartho

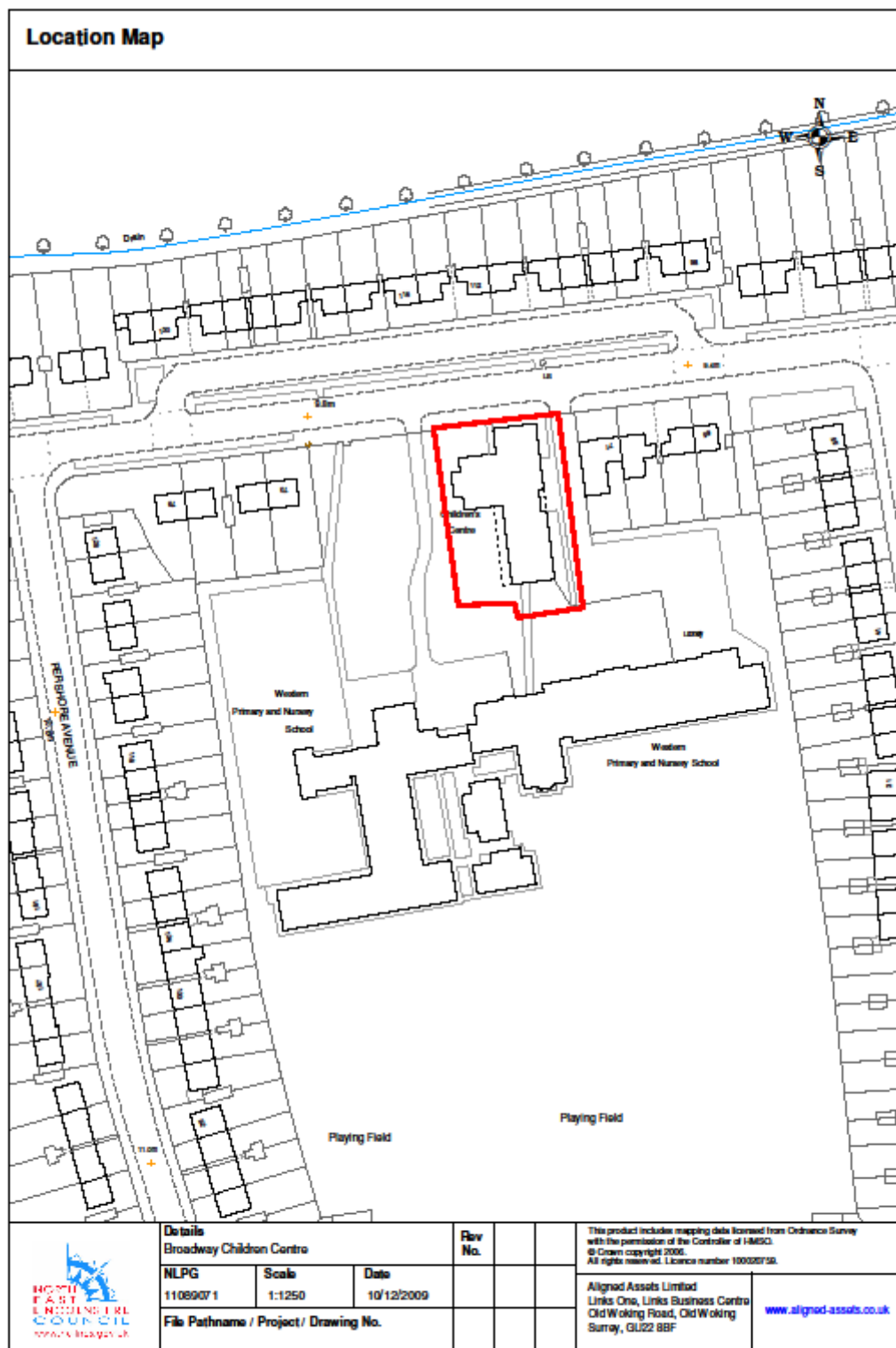


Strand

N.B. shared space shaded yellow



Broadway



Riverside

