

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 7th September, 2010

10.00 am

**Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall,
Maidstone**



AGENDA

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 7th September, 2010, at 10.00 am
Council Chamber, Sessions House, County
Hall, Maidstone

Ask for: **Andrew Tait**
Telephone: **01622 694342**

*Tea/Coffee will be available from 9:30 **outside the meeting room***

Membership (18)

Conservative (16): Mr R E King (Chairman), Mr J F London (Vice-Chairman),
Mr R Brookbank, Mr A R Chell, Mrs V J Dagger, Mr J A Davies,
Mr T Gates, Mr C Hibberd, Mr G A Horne MBE, Mr J D Kirby,
Mr R F Manning, Mr R J Parry, Mr R A Pascoe, Mr C P Smith,
Mr K Smith and Mr A T Willicombe

Liberal Democrat (1): Mr M Robertson

Independent (1) Mr R J Lees

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)

A. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

1. Substitutes
2. Declarations of Interests by Members in items on the Agenda for this meeting.
3. Minutes - 27 July 2010 (Pages 1 - 4)
4. Site Meetings and Other Meetings

B. GENERAL MATTERS

C. MINERALS AND WASTE DISPOSAL APPLICATIONS

1. Application GR/10/412 - Change of use to a waste transfer station with the demolition of the existing portacabin at Unit 4, Apex Business Park, Queens Farm Road, Shorne, Gravesend; R S Skips (Pages 5 - 18)

D. DEVELOPMENTS TO BE CARRIED OUT BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL

1. Proposal MA/10/123 - New Archbishop Courtenay CEP School including demolition of existing buildings and construction of two-storey school building, single-storey nursery building, vehicular access, drop-off zone, car parking, separate service and pedestrian access, sports pitches and play areas at Archbishop Courtenay CEP School, Beaconsfield Road, Maidstone; Diocesan Board of Education and KCC Children, Families and Education (Pages 19 - 44)

2. Proposal AS/10/380 - Extension of Wyvern Special School to form a new primary school wing, construction of a Multi-Agency Specialist Hub (MASH) for disabled children and the construction of a specialist early years centre nursery, together with associated access roads and car parking at The Wyvern School, Great Chart Bypass, Ashford; KCC Property Group (Pages 45 - 78)
3. Proposal MA/10/1209 - Refurbishment of schoolhouse into a proposed children's centre at Marden Primary School, Goudhurst Road, Marden; KCC Children, Families and Education (Pages 79 - 92)
4. Proposal TH/10/227 - Multi-Agency Specialist Hub (MASH) for disabled children, together with associated access roads and car parking at land annexed from Garlinge Primary School and Nursery, Westfield Road, Margate; KCC Property Group (Pages 93 - 118)
5. Proposal DO/10/637 - Detached single storey building for use as a children's centre and nursery at The Downs CEP School, Downs Road, Walmer, Deal; KCC Children, Families and Education (Pages 119 - 134)

E. COUNTY MATTERS DEALT WITH UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

1. County matter applications
2. Consultations on applications submitted by District Councils or Government Departments
3. County Council developments
4. Screening opinions under Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 1999
5. Scoping opinions under Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 1999 (None)

F. OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

EXEMPT ITEMS

(At the time of preparing the agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public)

Peter Sass
Head of Democratic Services and Local Leadership
(01622) 694002

(Please note that the background documents referred to in the accompanying papers may be inspected by arrangement with the Departments responsible for preparing the report. Draft conditions concerning applications being recommended for permission, reported in sections C and D, are available to Members in the Members' Lounge.)

Friday, 27 August 2010

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Planning Applications Committee held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Tuesday, 27 July 2010.

PRESENT: Mr R E King (Chairman), Mr J F London (Vice-Chairman), Mr R Brookbank, Mr A R Chell, Mr H J Craske (Substitute for Mrs V J Dagger), Mr J A Davies, Mr T Gates, Mr C Hibberd, Mr G A Horne MBE, Mr J D Kirby, Mr R J Lees, Mr R F Manning, Mr R A Pascoe, Mr M Robertson, Mr C P Smith, Mr K Smith and Mr A T Willicombe

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs S Thompson (Head of Planning Applications Group), Mr M Clifton (Team Leader - Waste Developments), Mr J Crossley (Team Leader - County Council Development), Mr R White (Transport and Development Business Manager) and Mr A Tait (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

48. Minutes - 15 June 2010

(Item 4)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2010 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

49. Meetings of the Committee in 2011:-

(Item A4)

The Committee noted the following meeting dates in 2011:-

Thursday, 20 January 2011;
 Tuesday, 15 February 2011;
 Tuesday, 15 March 2011;
 Tuesday, 12 April 2011;
 Tuesday, 10 May 2011;
 Tuesday, 14 June 2011;
 Tuesday, 26 July 2011;
 Tuesday, 16 August 2011 (provisional);
 Tuesday, 6 September 2011;
 Tuesday, 11 October 2011;
 Tuesday, 8 November 2011;
 Tuesday, 6 December 2011;

50. Site Meetings and Other Meetings

(Item A5)

The Committee agreed that there would be a training session on either Tuesday, 12 October 2011 or 2 November 2011. The free date would be provisionally set aside for a site visit and public meeting concerning a major application which had not yet been fully validated. The Committee also agreed to hold a site visit at Kemsley Mill on

Tuesday, 17 August 2011 for those Committee Members who had not yet visited the site. The Democratic Services Officer was also asked to arrange a tour of permitted development sites in October or November 2011.

51. Status of the South East Plan - Update

(Item B1)

(1) A letter from Bob Neill MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Communities and Local Government had been circulated to the Committee Members prior to the meeting. This letter contained the "Guidance for Local Planning Authorities following the revocation of Regional Strategies."

(2) Revised recommendations from the Head of Planning Applications Group were tabled. These were agreed subject to the authorisation to the Head of Planning Applications Group being in consultation with the Chairman.

(3) RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the report be noted and its contents taken into account in the delivery of Kent County Council's development control function; and
- (b) the Head of Planning Applications Group be authorised, in consultation with the Chairman, to review any application for which a resolution of the Committee has been made but where the decision has yet to be issued in the light of the Secretary of State's revocation of the South East Plan and of the Department for Communities and Local Government's "Guidance for Local Planning Authorities following the revocation of Regional Strategies" dated 6 July 2010 and (where she is satisfied that there is no reason to alter the decision) to determine the application in accordance with the Committee's resolution.

52. Application CA/10/285 - Section 73 application to amend Condition 18 of Permission CA/09/607 to vary opening hours at Units D and E, Lakesview Business Park, Canterbury; Ling (UK) Holdings Ltd

(Item C1)

RESOLVED that permission be granted to the variation of Condition 18 of Permission CA/09/607 subject to additional conditions restricting the hours during which abandoned vehicles may be delivered and off loaded at the site to between 0700 and 2300 hours together with a restriction on Bank Holiday working to only allow public access and delivery of Civic Amenity site waste to the site between 0800 and 1600 hours.

53. Application GR/10/412 - Change of use to a Waste transfer Station with demolition of existing portacabin at Unit 4, Apex Business Park, Queens Farm Road, Shorne, Gravesend; RS Skips

(Item C2)

The Committee deferred consideration of this application to enable consideration of the implications of the weight restriction on the access route to the site.

54. Proposal DA/10/347 - Conversion of existing air shelter to classroom space, replacement pitched roof and installation of windows at St Alban's Road Infant School, St Alban's Road, Dartford; Governors of St Alban's Road Infant School

(Item D1)

RESOLVED that permission be refused for the following reasons: -

- (a) by virtue of the proximity of the shelter to the neighbouring household, the raised elevation would reduce the natural sunlight and daylight enjoyed by the garden and the rear ground floor windows, and would be an oppressive and dominant feature over a residential property, and would therefore not be acceptable under policies H12, B1 and CF3 of the Dartford Local Plan; and
- (b) the development would be likely to result in the loss or reduction of a tree significant to the neighbouring amenity.

55. Proposal DO/10/414 - Covered link and awning including the installation of 1.8 metre high black bow top fencing at Worth Primary School, The Street, Worth; Governors of Worth Primary School and KCC Children, Families and Education

(Item D2)

RESOLVED that subject to the further details of the awning being acceptable, permission be granted to the proposal subject to conditions, including conditions covering the standard time limit; the development being carried out in accordance with the submitted details, plans and specifications; control over the roofing material and colour; and the fencing being finished in black.

56. Proposals GR/10/463 and GR/10/464 - Clarification of use (with particular regard to major events) and external lighting of the core activity park at The A2 Activity Park, Gravesend; KCC Communities

(Item D3)

(1) Mr H J Craske informed the Committee that one of the objectors to the proposals was a constituent with whom he had corresponded on a number of issues not involving the matter in hand. He did not therefore have a personal or prejudicial interest in the application.

(2) Resolved that:-

- (a) permission be granted to Proposal GR/10/463 subject to conditions, including conditions covering a 5 year time limit for implementation; the development being carried out in accordance with the permitted details; hours of use; all lighting on site, except security lighting, being extinguished by 10pm, or 15 minutes after last use of the facility if

earlier; the extinguishment of lighting when the pitch is not in use; the level of use of the facilities according with the submitted details; lighting being installed in accordance with the approved details, and checked on site; lighting levels not exceeding those specified within the application; no further lighting being installed without planning permission; hours of working during construction; and measures to prevent mud and debris on the highway; and

- (b) permission be granted to Proposal GR/10/464 subject to conditions covering: a 5 year time limit for implementation; the development being carried out in accordance with the permitted details; the mitigation, safeguards and commitments given within the 'Major Event Travel Plan and Traffic and Parking Management Strategy', including monitoring and, where necessary, a financial contribution to a Traffic Regulation Order being adhered to and implemented where necessary; the number of major events to be held per annum being limited to 22 (with a maximum of 3 "Case 6" events, i.e. major events with 20% additional competitors and 100% extra paying spectators); and restrictions on hours of use of the Core Activity Park and the pavilion and car park.

57. County matters dealt with under delegated powers *(Item E1)*

RESOLVED to note matters dealt with under delegated powers since the last meeting relating to:-

- (a) County matter applications;
- (b) consultations on applications submitted by District Councils and Government Departments (None);
- (c) County Council developments;
- (d) Screening opinions under Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 1999 (None); and
- (e) Scoping opinions under Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 1999 (None).

SECTION C
MINERALS AND WASTE DISPOSAL

Background Documents - the deposited documents, views and representations received as referred to in the reports and included in the development proposals dossier for each case and also as might be additionally indicated.

Item C1

Change of use of land from an industrial / warehousing use to that of a waste transfer station including removal of Portakabins, Unit 4, Apex Business Park, Queens Farm Road, Shorne, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 3HU. GR/10/412

A report by Head of Planning Applications Unit to Planning Applications Committee on 7 September 2010.

Application by RS Skips Ltd for proposed change of use of land to waste transfer station at Unit 4, Apex Business Park, Queens Farm Road, Shorne, Gravesend, kent, DA12 3HU.

Recommendation: Permission be granted Subject to conditions

Local Member: Michael Snelling

Classification: Unrestricted

Site description and background

1. The application site is located on the Apex Business Park which lies to the south of the Hoo Railway Junction. The site is approximately 2.5km north east of the urban fringe of Gravesend, 2km north of Shorne and 2km north west of Higham. The site is accessed from Queens Farm Road and the Lower Higham Road to the west towards the Lion Roundabout in Gravesend which accesses the A226. The site is also accessible via weight restricted routes along Green Farm Lane which connects to the A226.
2. The site is located on the existing Apex Business Park which contains a variety of small commercial businesses including skip hire businesses, a scaffolding yard and other industrial type uses. The application site consists of 0.44 Ha of concrete hardstanding. The site is bounded with security fencing and currently contains two curved roof buildings and several Portakabins.
3. Immediately to the north of the site is the Hoo Junction Railway siding. The Business Park is surrounded to the south, east and west by open agricultural fields. The nearest residential property to the site is approximately 320 metres to the south, at Queens Farm.
4. The site falls within the Metropolitan Green Belt. The site does not lie within any area specifically designated for nature conservation, however the South Thames Estuary & Marshes SSSI and Ramsar site is situated to the north of the Hoo Junction approximately 140 metres from the site.
5. The site currently benefits from planning permission for B2 (industrial) & B8 (storage) uses. The site which is currently vacant was last used as a specialised vehicle dismantling business involving the depollution of scrapped vehicles. Prior to this the site was a plant hire and storage yard. The site also has the benefit of an outline planning permission for the development of 12 industrial units; however this permission has not been implemented.

Change of use to waste transfer station at Unit 4 Apex Business Park, Queens Farm Road, Shorne, Gravesend, Kent – GR/10/412

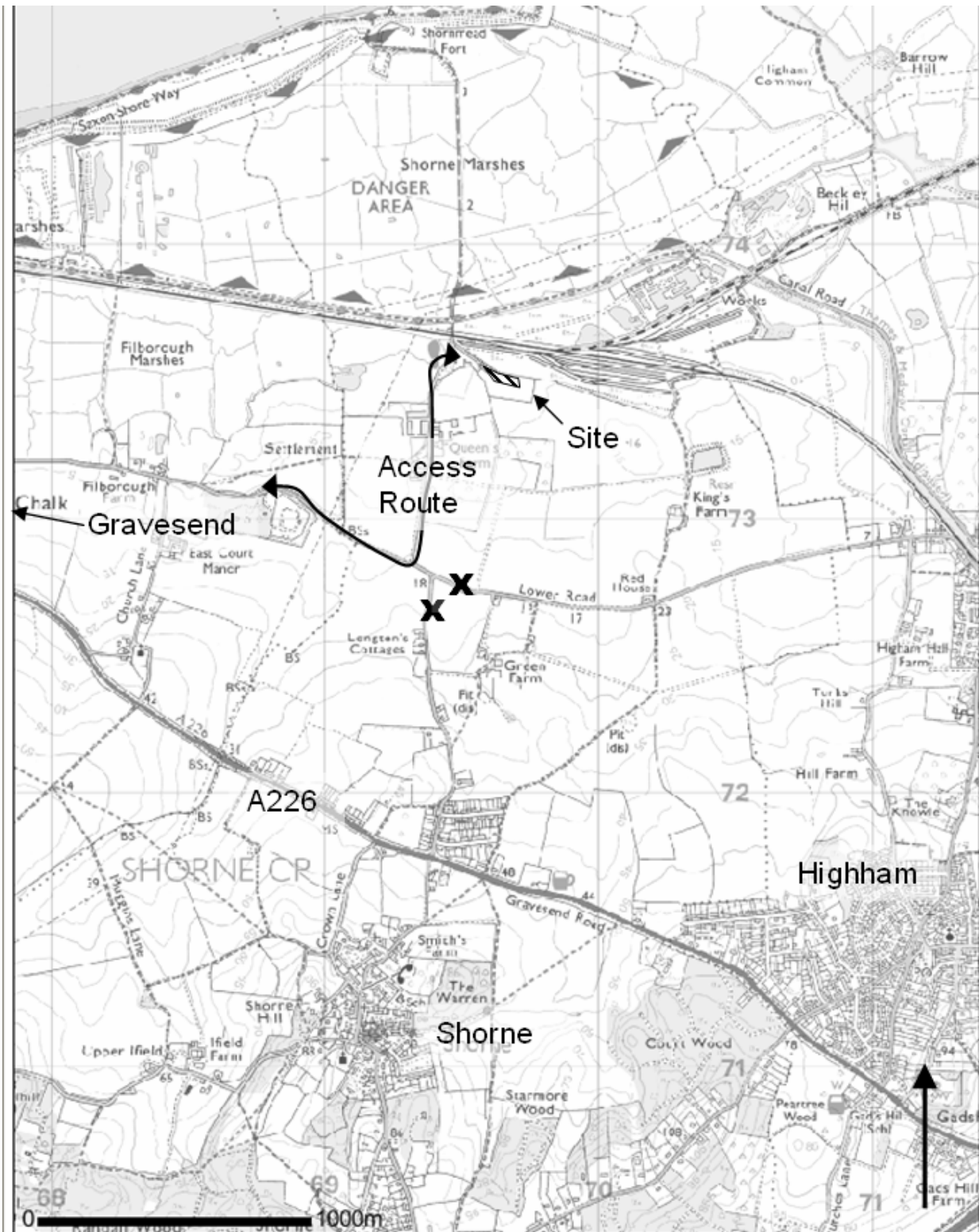


Figure 1: Site Location Plan

Change of use to waste transfer station at Unit 4 Apex Business Park, Queens Farm Road, Shorne, Gravesend, Kent – GR/10/412

Site Location Plan

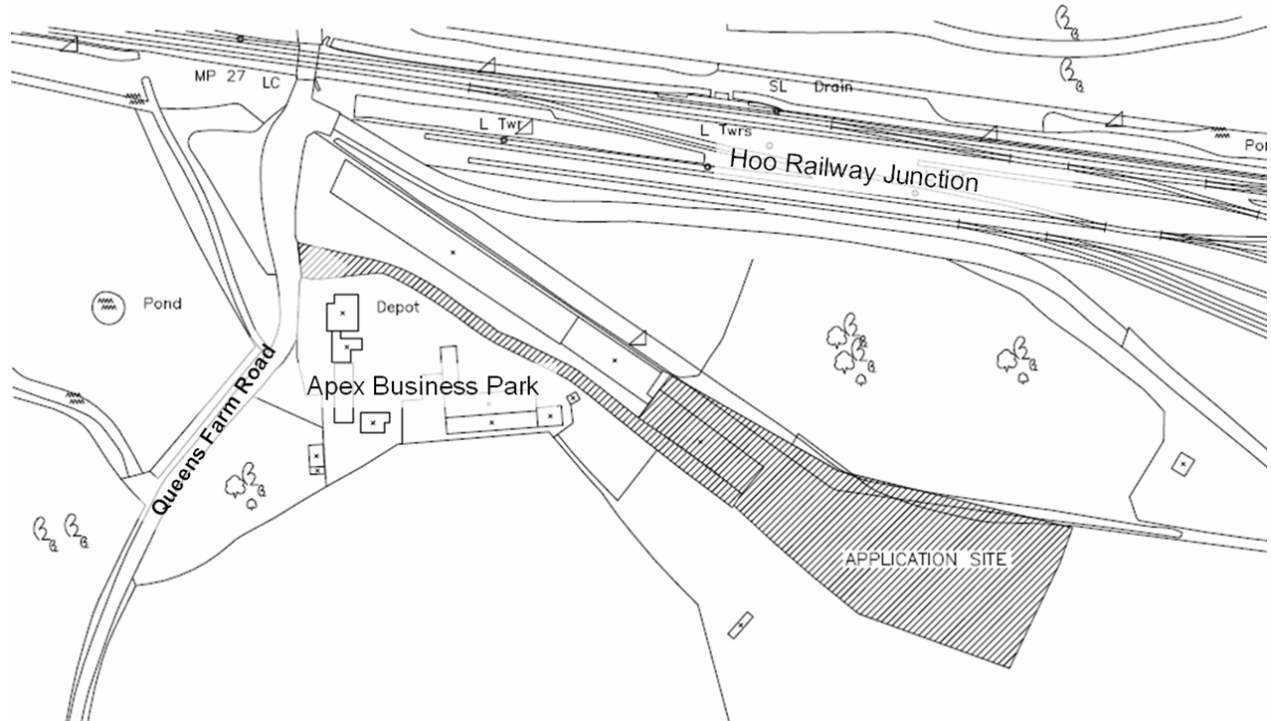


Figure 2. Site location Plan

Proposed Site Layout

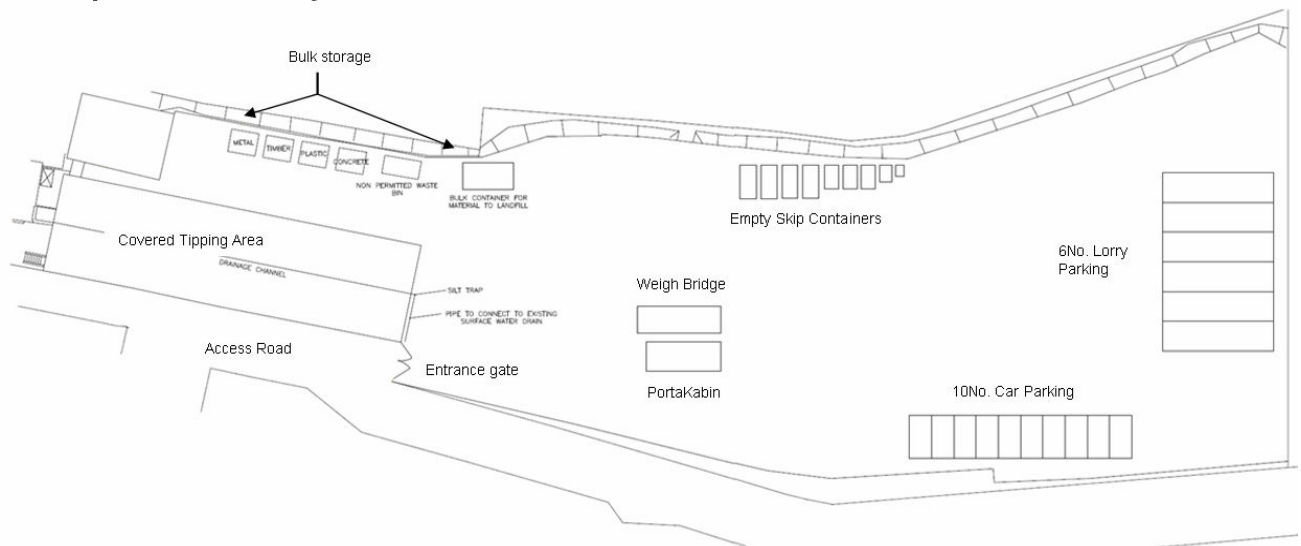


Figure 3. Proposed site layout

Change of use to waste transfer station at Unit 4 Apex Business Park, Queens Farm Road, Shorne, Gravesend, Kent – GR/10/412

Elevations of existing buildings with new entrance

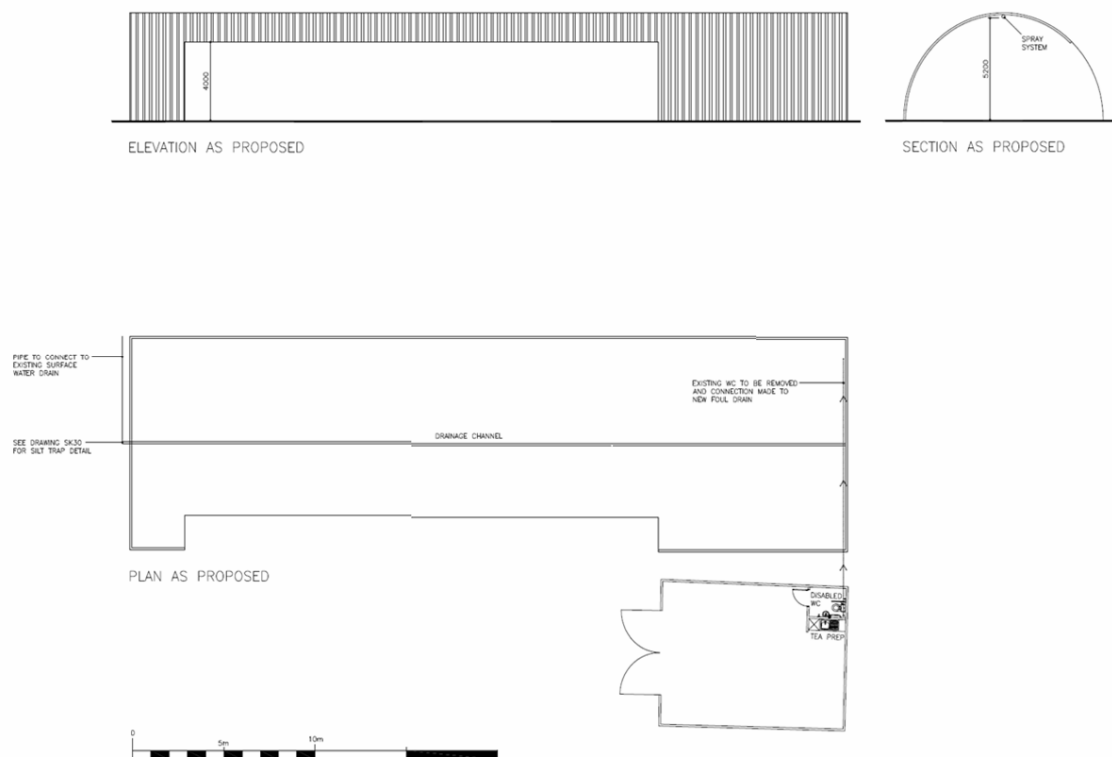


Figure 4. Existing elevations with new entrance

Proposal

6. This application proposes the change of use of a 0.44 Ha unit of land on the Apex Business Park, Shorne to a waste transfer station. The site is currently designated as being suitable for B2 (industrial) and B8 (storage) uses through a permission granted by Gravesham Borough Council. The proposed waste transfer station would be used for the separation of construction and demolition skip waste for onward recycling and for the disposal of non-recyclable materials to landfill.
7. The proposals would retain and reuse two existing permanent buildings (as shown in figure 4) on the site, and retain one existing Portakabin and remove other Portakabins currently on site. The larger building is approximately 10.7m (W) x 41m (L) x 5.6m (H) in height. The smaller building is approximately 7.5m (W) by 10m (L) X 5.6 (H). No additional built development would therefore take place on site. The site would be arranged, as illustrated in figure 3, in a layout suitable for a waste transfer station.
8. The large building to the west of the site, labelled covered tipping area in figure 3, would be modified slightly to incorporate an entrance to the north of the building. This would enable skip lorries to deposit their load within the building and would allow

Change of use to waste transfer station at Unit 4 Apex Business Park, Queens Farm Road, Shorne, Gravesend, Kent – GR/10/412

waste sorting to be contained entirely within the building. The building would be fitted with fine mist sprinkler system to suppress dust emissions within the building.

9. The existing hardstanding floor would be re-laid to accommodate surface water from the facility which would be channelled via a gully and silt trap into the existing drainage system. Waste would only be deposited within the building on this hardstanding where it would be sorted using two 360° excavators. The remainder of the site would be used for the storage of empty skips and containers awaiting transportation, lorry and car parking and a small office.
10. Once the waste has been sorted into waste streams it would then be bulked up in containers waiting export for recycling. These containers would be placed to the north of the building in the bulk storage area (see figure 3) whilst awaiting export.
11. The proposed waste transfer station would have a maximum throughput of approximately 55,000 tonnes of waste per annum (TPA). This would be split into 40,000 TPA of construction, demolition and excavation waste and 15,000 TPA of commercial and industrial waste. This waste would be sourced from the applicant's existing skip hire business which services the Gravesend and Northfleet area. The proposed activity would require separate licensing from the Environment Agency.
12. The proposals would provide employment for approximately 10 site workers.

Operating Hours

13. The proposed hours of operation are as follows;

Monday to Friday	07:00 to 18.00 hours
Saturdays	07:00 to 13:30 hours
Sundays and Bank Holidays	Closed

Vehicle movements and traffic routes

14. The applicant predicts that the site would not generate more than 24 HGV movements per day (12 in / 12 out). Vehicle movements would only occur within the opening hours of the site. The applicant intends to service the site using their existing fleet of 6 skips lorries. In addition to the fleet of skip lorries one additional visit per week (2 movements) to the site would be made by a bulk HGV to collect sorted waste for recycling.
15. HGV Movements to and from the site would be accessing the site from Queens Farm Road onto the Lower Higham Road, which links to the A226 to the west at the Lion Roundabout. The applicant has made assurances that this would be the only route used and has confirmed that they would not be using the weight restricted Green Farm Lane to access the site, which extends further to the south entering onto the A226 towards Shorne.
16. The proposed site layout would provide 10 car parking spaces for staff and 6 parking spaces for the company's own skip lorries.

Change of use to waste transfer station at Unit 4 Apex Business Park, Queens Farm Road, Shorne, Gravesend, Kent – GR/10/412

Planning Policy Context

17. **National Planning:** Policies PPS1 (Delivering Sustainable Development), PPG2 (Green Belts), PPS10 (Planning and Waste Management), PPS23 (Planning and Pollution Control) and Waste Strategy for England 2007.
18. **Kent Waste Local Plan (March 1998):** W3 (Locational Criteria), W6 (Need), W18 (Noise, Dust and Odour), W19 (Groundwater), W20 (Land Drainage and Flood Control), W22 (Road Traffic and Access).
19. **Gravesham Borough Local Plan 1st review (1994):** GB1 (Definition of Green Belt area), GB2 (Presumption against new development in Green Belt), T0 (General transport policy), T1 (Impact on Highway Network), T2 (Access to primary routes)
20. **Gravesham Borough Council Local Plan 2nd review (deposit draft) (2000):** This document whilst not the adopted plan is a material consideration for planning purposes. The most relevant policies to this case are: T1 (Impact of location of development on highway network), NE16 (Air Quality), NE19 (Noise generation development), RA1 (Green Belt boundary), RA2 (Inappropriate development in Green Belt will not be permitted), RA4 (Re-use of buildings in the Green Belt not inappropriate provided certain conditions see paragraph 46 below.)

Consultations

21. **Gravesham Borough Council:** raise **objection** to the proposals on Green Belt and traffic generation grounds.
22. **Shorne Parish Council:** raise **objection** to the proposals. Shorne Parish Council note that this is a site with an established industrial use, previously the parish has not objected to other proposed uses on this site. The site is accessed via Queens Farm Road which is a narrow country lane. Shorne Parish Council claim that HGV's using this Road have caused damage to the highway verges and properties along the road. The Parish Council raise scepticism over the applicant's claim that the proposals would reduce traffic movements from the site.
23. The Parish Council therefore raise objections to the proposals on the following grounds;
 - a) The proposals are likely to cause an increase in HGV movements. The Parish feel this would exacerbate damage being caused to the local highway and properties of Green Farm Lane and Queens Farm Road. The Parish also highlight that Green Farm Lane has been made the subject of a Traffic Regulation Order.
 - b) Alternative access routes to the site are unsuitable for HGV traffic.
 - c) This type of development should be located with direct access onto the primary road network.
24. **Environment Agency:** raise **no objection** to the proposals subject to conditions. The EA offers advice to the applicant in regards to development and flood risk, drainage, contaminated land, fuel and chemical storage and waste management.

Change of use to waste transfer station at Unit 4 Apex Business Park, Queens Farm Road, Shorne, Gravesend, Kent – GR/10/412

25. **Natural England:** has **no objection** to the proposed development. Natural England confirms that the application site lies close to habitats which form part of the South Thames Estuary and Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). This SSSI is part of the Thames Estuary and Marshes Special Protection Area (SPA). It is Natural England's view that, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, this proposal would not be likely to have a significant effect on the above sites and the permission may be granted (subject to other planning considerations) under the terms of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations.
26. **Divisional Transportation Manager:** raises **no objection** to the proposals on highways grounds subject to a condition on any future permission restricting the number of HGV movements to that predicted by the applicant.
27. Local weight restrictions via a Traffic Regulation Order are in place to prevent HGV movements via Green Farm Lane and movements to and from the proposed site would therefore have no additional impact on the highway network over and above those which could be generated by the current permitted use.
28. In raising no objection the DTM has had regard to the current permitted use of the site which in his view could potentially generate as many movements if not more than that proposed. Therefore there would be no justification in raising an objection on highways grounds.
29. **KCC Noise, Dust and Odour Consultant (Jacobs):** raise **no objection** to the proposals. Jacobs state that as the site is located approximately 300 metres from the nearest residential receptor and all waste is to be processed within the existing building dust nor odour should cause detriment to the residential receptors or business park users. Best practice should be followed to ensure that if dust or odour issues were to arise they are dealt with swiftly and efficiently.
30. **Network Rail:** have no comments to make on the application.

Representations

31. The application was advertised in a local newspaper and a site notice was posted. 1 letter of objection has been received to date. The main areas of concern which these raise include;
 1. No drainage on site and surface water runs off to adjacent site
 2. Vehicle movements would increase.
 3. Access issues
 4. Noise, dust and smell would cause nuisance to businesses and estate users.

Local Members

32. The Local County Member for Gravesham Rural Mr Michael Snelling was consulted on the application on 4 May 2010. No response has been received to date.

Change of use to waste transfer station at Unit 4 Apex Business Park, Queens Farm Road, Shorne, Gravesend, Kent – GR/10/412

Discussion**Introduction**

33. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In the context of this application, the policies outlined in paragraphs (17 – 20) are of greatest relevance.
34. Until the Kent Minerals and Waste Development Framework has been adopted as a replacement for the Kent Waste Local Plan (1998), and any identified sites and locational criteria have been subjected to a Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment as part of that process, Planning Policy Statement 10 (PPS10) requires that planning authorities should ensure proposals are consistent with its policies.
35. PPS10 advocates a growth in waste management facilities reflecting the waste hierarchy, which prioritises reduction, re-use, recycling and recovery (in that order). The Statement seeks to reduce waste that is directed to landfill and states that a substantial increase in recovery of waste and reduction in waste to landfill is required across the Country. The proposed facility would therefore help contribute towards the Statement's objectives of reducing the amount of waste to landfill and improve waste recovery.
36. Whilst the need for this type of facility is clearly recognised in order to divert waste from going to landfill, this should be balanced against locational criteria and whether the proposed facility would result in harm to local amenity. There is policy protection for amenity in general and from waste operations specifically set out within Planning Policy Statement 10, the Gravesham Borough Local Plan and the Kent Waste Local Plan. It is generally recognised that for use classes B2 (industrial) & B8 (storage) industrial type locations such as this are acceptable in principle for this type of waste development. There is an acknowledged need for sites of this type of development, particularly on brownfield industrial sites. Such locations would usually have ready access to the primary route network. In this case the site does not have ready access to the primary route network and is accessed from the A226 via minor local unclassified roads from Queens Farm Road onto the Lower Higham Road towards Gravesend and the Lion Roundabout. Considering this, the acceptability of this development at this location should be considered with regard to the suitability of the site access and impacts on local amenity.
37. The nearest residential receptor to the site lies approximately 320 metres from the site. The site does however have a number of surrounding business uses on the business park itself, and 1 letter of objection has been received from a business located on the business park concerning the potential impacts from the proposals in terms of traffic, access, drainage and pollution impacts.
38. Given the policy background discussed above and taking into account the responses received during the consultation process, the main issues to be balanced against the need for additional recycling facilities relate to traffic and access, potential impacts on the green belt, noise, dust, odour and air quality, and drainage.

Change of use to waste transfer station at Unit 4 Apex Business Park, Queens Farm Road, Shorne, Gravesend, Kent – GR/10/412

Traffic and Access

39. In terms of impact on the local highway network the applicant is proposing to run a fleet of 6 skip lorries from the site and would have one bulk collection of waste per week. This would create on average 24 HGV movements per day (12 in, 12 out), made up of the 6 skips lorries leaving and coming back to the site twice per day. The applicant has produced a transport statement which compares the proposed site use and associated traffic generation with both the previous and potential permitted site uses. The site currently has permission for B2 (industrial) & B8 (storage) industrial type uses with no restrictions on vehicle movements. The previous use of the site was as an end of life vehicle facility. The most recent permission granted in March 2008 by Gravesham Borough Council allows for the development of 12 industrial units on the proposal site. Objections concerning traffic and access impacts from this proposal have been raised by Gravesham Borough Council, Shorne Parish Council and by a business on the industrial estate. These objections relate to the suitability of the site and associated access routes for HGV movements.
40. Transport policies within PPS 10, the Kent Waste Local Plan and the Gravesham Borough Local Plan aim to ensure that new development is appropriately located with ready access onto the primary route network, and does not cause detrimental impacts to highway safety. In this case the site is on an existing industrial estate which is serviced by minor non-primary routes, namely the Lower Higham Road and Queens Farm Road. As the business park is already in existence and is serviced by these minor roads the principle means of access to the site has become established. A Traffic Regulation Order is in place restricting access to Green Farm Lane to vehicles of less than 7.5 tonnes only. The applicant states that his vehicles would only use Queens Farm Road and the Lower Higham Road towards the Lion Roundabout in Gravesend to access and egress from the site. This route would take vehicles through Chalk which lies on the eastern periphery of Gravesend. Whilst this routing can not be easily enforced, it is recognised that the applicants business is primarily derived from the Gravesend, Northfleet and Dartford areas which are accessible from the A226 at the Lion Roundabout. The sites current planning permission's do not have any restrictions on access routes to the site. Whilst it is acknowledged that Shorne Parish Council have objected on the grounds of the use of the weight restricted Green Farm Lane and the width restricted route to the A2 through Shorne, it must be stressed that the applicant has made assurances that his lorries would not use these routes. Moreover it is a civil offence for vehicles contravening conditions of restricted routes leaving the driver and/or operators open to prosecution by the police if these routes were used.
41. The Divisional Transport Manager (DTM) was consulted on this application with regard the impacts on the local highway network. The DTM's comments have been made in response to the highway objections received and based on the Transport Statement (TS) supplied by the applicant with the application. The TS demonstrates the potential highway impacts of the proposed development in comparison with the potential highway impacts of the existing permitted use. The TS uses traffic data collected in 2007 when the site was last in operation as a baseline to compare the proposals against. The TS shows that over a 12 hour working day 30 vehicle movements were generated per day, of these 30 movements 16 were HGV movements and 14 were from light vans and cars. The TS states that the movements generated by the

Change of use to waste transfer station at Unit 4 Apex Business Park, Queens Farm Road, Shorne, Gravesend, Kent – GR/10/412

previous use were relatively minor compared with the potential movements which could be generated by typical B2 (industrial) or B8 (storage) uses. The TS goes on to use TRICS traffic data to analyse the potential movements which could be generated if a typical B2 or B8 industrial use were to take up operations at the site and also if the outline permission for 12 industrial units were to be taken up. The vehicle movements which could potentially be generated are displayed below in table 1.

Table 1. Potential totals of all vehicle traffic per day related to site use (with inclusive HGV movements in brackets)

Use	Arrivals	Departures	Totals
Recorded previous use	14 (7)	16 (9)	30 (16)
Potential B2 / B8 use	74 (10)	77 (11)	151 (21)
Potential permitted outline use	65 (9)	67 (10)	132 (19)
Proposed Waste use	22(12)	22(12)	44 (24)

42. Table 1 shows that whilst the number of overall vehicle movements associated with the proposed waste use would increase when compared to the previous use, potentially the overall vehicle movements would be significantly lower than those which could be generated through a permitted B2 (industrial) or B8 (storage) use of the site. The DTM when commenting on this application states that the potential existing use of the site very much limits what restrictions could be reasonably imposed on this proposal. The DTM states that the applicants TS demonstrates that this proposal would create similar daily movements of traffic to and from site as the currently permitted use with a significant decrease in overall traffic movements. In light of this information the DTM confirms that there can be no justifiable highway objection in terms of traffic generation.
43. The DTM whilst coming to this conclusion has considered fully the potential increase in peak hour HGV movements between the 2007 data and the proposals. The DTM notes that currently there are no restrictions on HGV movements at the site. Therefore the site at present could potentially generate as many if not more HGV movements than is proposed under this application. Furthermore the DTM acknowledges that whilst there have been discussions concerning lorry routing restrictions, the location of the site will always result in the need for lorry movements through adjacent narrow country lanes to access the primary route network. Restrictions on any of these routes would cause an increase in traffic using non-restricted routes which would be less desirable than the current spreading of movements across the network. The DTM states that he is not aware of any current restrictions on lorry routing from the business park which reinforces his opinion that the current proposals would have no greater potential impact than the current permitted use of the site.
44. The DTM concludes that the proposals, in his opinion, would not result in any significant increase in vehicle or HGV movements when compared to the current permitted use of the site and therefore no objection could be justifiably lodged. On this basis, considering the potential site use could generate over and above the

Change of use to waste transfer station at Unit 4 Apex Business Park, Queens Farm Road, Shorne, Gravesend, Kent – GR/10/412

potential vehicle movements proposed, I consider that with appropriate conditions limiting the hours of operation and number of vehicle movements the proposals would offer greater restriction and control which may be beneficial in highways terms. As such, with appropriate conditions I consider the proposed facility to be acceptable in terms of highway and traffic impacts.

Green Belt Issues

45. The site is situated within the Metropolitan Green Belt (MGB) where there is strong policy presumption against inappropriate development. Policy guidance for this area is set out within Planning Policy Guidance Note 2 (PPG2) and within the Gravesham Borough Local Plan 1st review policies GB1 and GB2 and Gravesham Borough Local Plan 2nd review policies RA1, RA2 and RA4. Gravesham Borough Council has objected to the application on Green Belt grounds. To test whether these proposals would indeed be contrary to Green Belt policy it is necessary to test the proposals against criteria set out within PPG2 and policy RA4 of the Gravesham Borough Local Plan 2nd review.
46. In this case the proposals relate to the change of use of a parcel of land on an industrial estate. The proposals are not for any additional buildings and would re-use the existing buildings on site, remove currently double stacked Portakabins and retain a single Portakabin for the weighbridge office. There would be some external storage proposed to the north of the main building for sorted materials in containers awaiting export and some storage of empty skips. Both PPG2 and Gravesham Borough Local Plan 2nd review policy RA4 advise that the re-use of buildings within the Green Belt is not inappropriate development providing that:
- (a) it does not have a materially greater impact than the present use on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in it;
 - (b) strict control is exercised over the extension of re-used buildings, and over any associated uses of land surrounding the building which might conflict with the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in it (e.g. because they involve extensive external storage, or extensive hardstanding, car parking, boundary walling or fencing);
 - (c) the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction, and are capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction; and
 - (d) the form, bulk and general design of the buildings are in keeping with their surroundings.
47. In this case the existing consent allows for open storage of plant, machinery, equipment, scaffolding and buildings of up to 6 metres in height. In addition under the approved outline consent there is permission for the development of 12 industrial units in 3 blocks. The applicant has stated within the application that they are willing to ensure that any open storage of skips, containers, stock piles, plant or machinery do not exceed 3 metres in height. In my opinion this would ensure that the proposed use has significantly less impact than the current permitted uses and would allow the openness of the Green Belt to be further protected through greater restriction.
48. The applicant is proposing to reuse the existing buildings with minor modifications which would not involve any extensions. The main sorting building would only be modified through the creation of an entrance to the side of the building. The existing

Change of use to waste transfer station at Unit 4 Apex Business Park, Queens Farm Road, Shorne, Gravesend, Kent – GR/10/412

buildings are of relatively low scale and generally are in keeping with the other buildings within the industrial estate. Considering this, subject to conditions limiting heights for the stacking of containers and of stockpiles, I am of the opinion that the proposals would not have any detrimental impact on the green belt and as such do not consider there to be overriding grounds for refusal on Green Belt grounds.

49. Notwithstanding my assessment that the proposal is not inappropriate development in the Green belt, the applicant has provided information to support very special circumstances required to demonstrate that the application is acceptable in the Green Belt.

Air Quality, Dust and Odour Impacts

50. Air quality impacts from the development could potentially be caused through the proposed operations at site and via an increase in general traffic using the site. An objection letter has been raised by a local business situated on the Apex Business Park in regards to detrimental air quality impacts from the proposed development. No objections have been raised from any other statutory consultee or KCC's Dust and Air Quality Consultant.
51. The main policy guidance on air quality, dust and odour impacts is set out within PPS10 and Kent Waste Local Plan policy W18. In general, guidance and policies within these documents require the planning authority to be satisfied in regards to the means of controlling dust, odours and other emissions. This should be considered particularly with regard to the effect of potential emissions on nearby sensitive receptors. In this case the nearest residential receptor is approximately 320m from the site. Whilst it is recognised that there are also nearby receptors on the business park itself, the proposals are not envisaged to cause any significant impact on air quality, sufficient to warrant refusal.
52. The applicant has made it clear in the application that all wastes would be sorted entirely within a building. This building would have a dust suppression system installed within it to ensure that all materials are adequately dampened down to ensure that nuisance is appropriately mitigated. Furthermore the proposed site layout is orientated to ensure that the open side of the building would be to the north, away from any other neighbouring uses. The County Council's Dust and Air Quality Advisor is satisfied that with good site management any impacts from dust could be adequately mitigated. In terms of odour the applicant is proposing to only collect construction and demolition wastes in skips which tend not to cause odour issues. With good site management and an appropriate protocol for the swift handling of any odour producing wastes the County Council's air quality advisor is satisfied that the proposals are unlikely to cause detriment to amenity through odour.
53. In the context of the above views and advice I am satisfied, subject to appropriate conditions ensuring that the dust mitigation system is appropriately designed and implemented before the commencement of waste management operations and suitably maintained, and with appropriate restrictions on the types of waste imported to the site, that the proposals would not cause any significant detrimental impact in terms air quality, odour or dust.

Change of use to waste transfer station at Unit 4 Apex Business Park, Queens Farm Road, Shorne, Gravesend, Kent – GR/10/412

Noise

54. In terms of noise impacts, the proposals would cause some noise impacts through general everyday operation of the site. These impacts would be caused by the tipping of materials and moving of skips and machinery. The main policies for noise control are set out within the Kent Waste Local Plan W18 and PPS 10. These policies generally afford protection to nearby sensitive receptors such as residential properties. In this case the site is approximately 320m from the nearest noise sensitive receptor. Considering this and the fact that all sorting operations would take place within the confines of a building, of which the opening is facing northwards away from any sensitive receptors, the County Council's noise advisor is satisfied that the proposals are unlikely to cause any detrimental impact to the nearest sensitive receptors in terms of noise.
55. It could be argued that there may also be some additional noise impacts from additional HGV traffic on properties along the access route to the site. However as previously explained HGV movements proposed are similar to those of the previous use and that potentially movements could be far greater under the currently unrestricted permission the noise impacts from traffic. On this basis I consider that these proposals would not be likely to result in any unacceptable impacts from noise.

Drainage

56. In terms of site drainage an adjacent business operator has raised the issue that at present the site suffers from surface water run off into his site. The applicant is proposing to install an enhanced drainage system within the site to ensure that any run off is caught and discharged to the existing industrial estate drainage system. The Environment Agency in their response to consultation, whilst not objecting to the proposals, has set out stringent pre-commencement conditions which would ensure that the drainage scheme on site would not pose a risk to the groundwater environment. Subject to these pre-commencement conditions to ensure that no risk to groundwater is posed I am satisfied that any drainage concerns can be satisfactorily addressed.

Conclusion

57. This is a brownfield site within an established industrial estate within the Green Belt. The re-use of the site provides an opportunity to provide small scale waste transfer facility enabling the recovery of construction and demolition waste and helps towards meeting diversion targets away from landfill.
58. Having assessed the proposal in conjunction with the supporting material provided in the application, the advice received from the DTM and other consultees and having regard to the relevant national guidance and Development Plan Policies, I consider the use of the site to be acceptable.
59. Whilst I note objections have been raised by Gravesend Borough Council, Shorne Parish Council and a local business on traffic and access, greenbelt, amenity and drainage issues, I am satisfied having regard to comments made by consultees that should permission be granted, provided appropriate conditions are imposed the

Change of use to waste transfer station at Unit 4 Apex Business Park, Queens Farm Road, Shorne, Gravesend, Kent – GR/10/412

proposed facility would not cause any significant adverse impact on these issues. Furthermore the proposals offer an opportunity to place further restrictions and controls on the site. These further controls would enable the impact of the site on the local highway network to be limited in terms of vehicle movements, enable the greenbelt to be protected by more restrictive limits on open storage, stockpile and building heights and enable enhancements to site drainage.

60. In conclusion, I am satisfied that the proposed use of the site would be acceptable and that provided appropriate conditions are imposed to control any potential adverse impacts there are no overriding issues that would reasonably warrant this application to be refused. Accordingly I recommend that planning permission be granted subject to conditions.

Recommendation

61. I RECOMMEND that PERMISSION BE GRANTED for the proposed change of use of land to a waste transfer station at Unit 4, Apex Business Park, Queens Farm Road, Shorne, Gravesend SUBJECT TO conditions including standard time condition, hours of use and operation; limit on vehicle movements; implementation and maintenance of dust suppression system; restrict open storage, stock pile, skip, container and machinery heights; drainage conditions; and other operational conditions.

Case Officer: Shaun Whyman

Tel. No. 01622 221055

Background Documents: see section heading.
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SECTION D
DEVELOPMENT TO BE CARRIED OUT BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL

Background Documents: the deposited documents; views and representations received as referred to in the reports and included in the development proposals dossier for each case; and other documents as might be additionally indicated.

Item D1

Construction of a new Archbishop Courtenay Primary School and nursery, Beaconsfield Road, Maidstone – MA/10/123

A report by Head of Planning Applications Group to Planning Applications Committee on 7 September 2010

Application by the Diocesan Board of Education and Kent County Council for construction of a new Archbishop Courtenay Primary School and Nursery Beaconsfield Road, Tovil, Maidstone, Kent, ME15 6RU - MA/10/123

Recommendation: Planning permission be granted subject to conditions.

Local Member: Mr A Chell

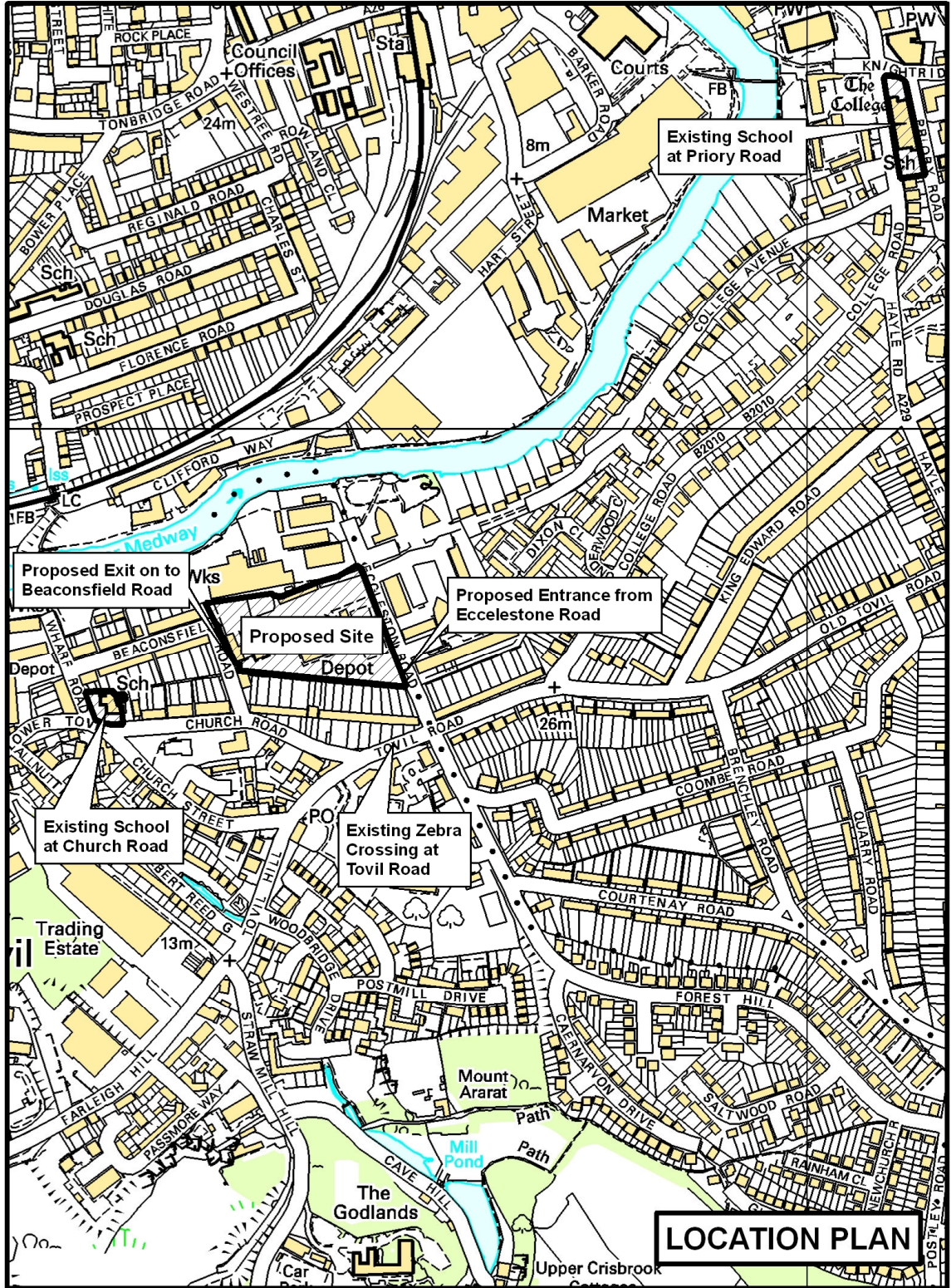
Classification: Unrestricted

Site

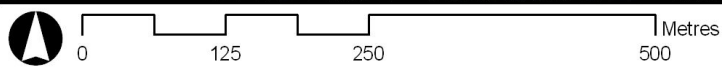
1. The new school is proposed on a 'brown field' site to the south west of Maidstone Town Centre allocated for redevelopment in the Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan as part of a larger area for housing. This 1.70 hectare site lies within a parcel of land between Eccleston Road and Beaconsfield Road, Tovil and was used previously by British Telecommunications PLC, as their vehicle and plant depot. Eccleston Road is accessed off the B2010 Tovil Road, whilst Beaconsfield Road is accessed off Church Road, which then joins the B2010 Tovil Road. A site location plan is attached. The site is now derelict and all the buildings that were on the site have now been demolished. Approximately half of the footprint of the site is concrete slab, flat or gently sloping down towards the north. The surrounding area is being redeveloped from industrial use to a high-rise residential use. The surrounding built development comprises some recent high-rise apartments to the east and northwest and some older terraced residential properties to the south and west. There are some flats in Eccleston Road, which are currently unoccupied, and there is a site below the school site, which is currently still used as an industrial site. However this industrial site is also shown within the Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan as being allocated for housing use. Eccleston Road is 5.5 metres in width and has traffic calming measures along the road in the form of table top side road junctions into the new residential areas and a chicane feature located half way down the road. The road is a cul-de-sac with no other means of access for the residents and businesses, living and working off Eccleston Road.
2. There are acute level changes across the site, circa 5 metres plus, dropping from south to north. Due to the sloping topography of the site, the original buildings (which have been demolished) and hard standing areas had been constructed by cutting into the embankment, which in some places is 4 metres in height, to create useable flat areas. Other than the hard standing areas that remain following demolition, there are small pockets of grassland (mainly to the south of the site), mature tree belts along the southern and eastern boundaries and some individual trees in the south eastern part of the site, with 11 of the trees (10 Sycamores and 1 Ash tree) being made the subject of Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) in 2009 by Maidstone Borough Council. The northern

Item D1

Construction of a new Archbishop Courtenay Primary School and nursery, Beaconsfield Road, Maidstone - MA/10/123



LOCATION PLAN



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Construction of a new Archbishop Courtenay Primary School and nursery, Beaconsfield Road, Maidstone - MA/10/123

NOTES:
 1. All work must be carried out in accordance with the Building Regulations. Current BS8100 standards will apply to all work.
 2. The architect is not responsible for the design of any structure which is not shown on the drawings.
 3. The architect is not responsible for the design of any structure which is not shown on the drawings.
 4. The architect is not responsible for the design of any structure which is not shown on the drawings.

DATE: 10/10/13
 DRAWN BY: [Name]
 CHECKED BY: [Name]
 APPROVED BY: [Name]

PROJECT: ARCHBISHOP COURTENAY C OF E CATHEDRAL PRIMARY SCHOOL NEW SCHOOL - 1001L
 DRAWING TITLE: ELEVATIONS - SHEET 1

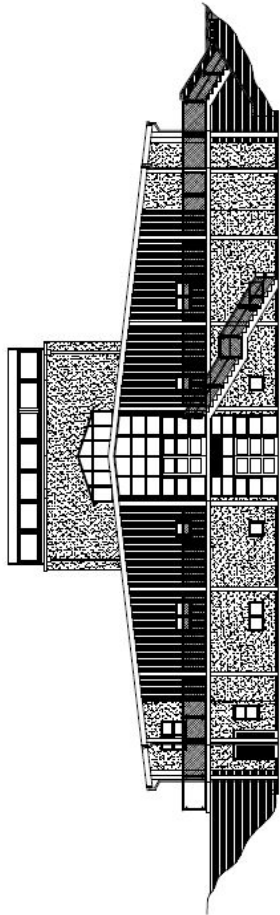
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PROJECT: ARCHBISHOP COURTENAY C OF E CATHEDRAL PRIMARY SCHOOL NEW SCHOOL - 1001L
 DRAWING TITLE: ELEVATIONS - SHEET 1

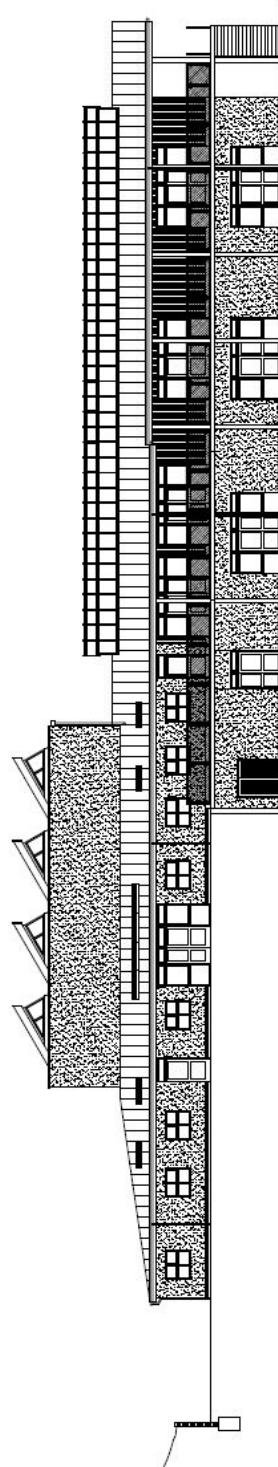
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- GUTTERING: ZINC GUTTERING
- FACIA AND SOFFIT: ZINC SOFFIT AND FACIA INCORPORATED INTO ROOF SYSTEM
- ROOFLIGHTS: VELUX - COLOUR DARK GREY
- BATH WATER GOODS: ZINC
- COLOUR: WEATHERED BLUE GREY
- PURIN BRICK: REDBROCK STAFFORDSHIRE SLATE BLUE
- BRICKS TO MAIN BUILDING: BRICKS COLOURED PERMAROCK - COLOUR SAPHIR BLUE
- BRICKS TO HALL: THROUGH COLOURED PERMAROCK COLOUR WHITE
- TIMBER CLADDING TO MAIN BUILDING: TYPE 10A, NATURAL FINISH
- WINDOWS AND DOORS: COMPOSITE TIMBERPOWDER COATED ALUMINIUM - COLOUR DUSKY BLUE. RAL: 5025



**NORTH ELEVATION
 MAIN SCHOOL**



**EAST ELEVATION
 MAIN SCHOOL**

Construction of a new Archbishop Courtenay Primary School and nursery, Beaconsfield Road, Maidstone - MA/10/123

NOTES:
 All work must be carried out in accordance with the Building Regulations.
 The contractor must verify all work and dimensions are correct, including the use of building levels.
 Use metric measurements only.
 All work must be carried out in accordance with the Building Regulations.
 The contractor must verify all work and dimensions are correct, including the use of building levels.
 Use metric measurements only.

NO.	REVISION	DATE	BY

DIOCESAN ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES LTD

Architect & Town Planner
 Suite 9.11, The Courtyard
 Thornaby Farm Farm
 Kent, ME13 0HT
 T: 01795 882228
 F: 01795 882135

ARCHBISHOP COURTENAY C OF E Primary School NEW SCHOOL - TOWN

PROJECT NO: 3461

DATE: 07/10/2007

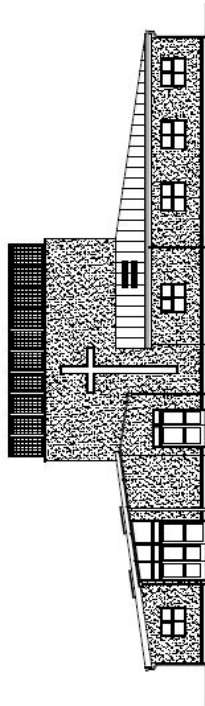
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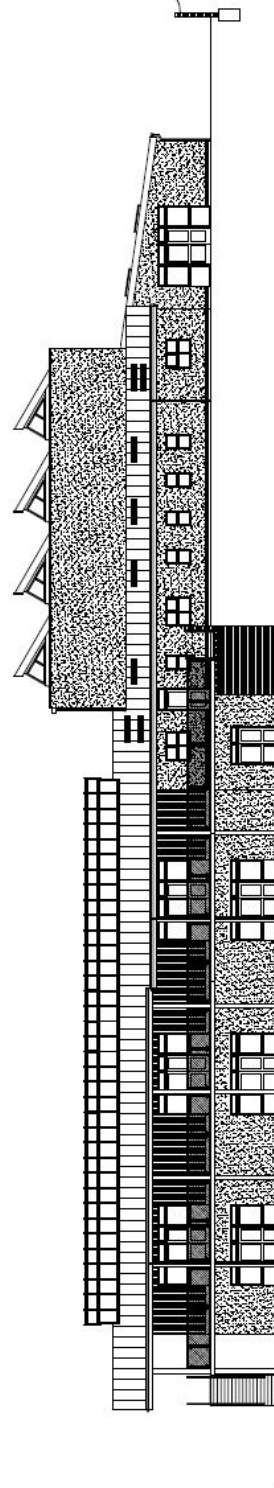
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MATERIALS

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- OUTERING: ZINC OUTERING
- FACIA AND SKELIT: ZINC SKELIT AND FACIA INCORPORATED INTO ROOF SYSTEM
- ROOF LIGHTS: VELUX - COLOUR DARK GREY
- BATH WATER GOODS: ZINC
- COLOUR: WEATHERED BLUE GRAY
- PAINT WORK: BESTOCK SERRAFORESHIRE SLATE BLUE
- BRICKS TO MAIN BUILDING: THROUGH COLOURED PERMAROCK - COLOUR SKIMP BLUE
- BRICKS TO HALL: THROUGH COLOURED PERMAROCK COLOUR WHITE
- TRIMMED CLADDING TO MAIN BUILDING TYPE 18A, NATURAL FINISH
- WINDOWS AND DOORS: COMPOSITE UNIMPREGNATED COATED ALUMINIUM - COLOUR DESIGNER BLUE. PA: 5525



**SOUTH ELEVATION
 MAIN SCHOOL**



**WEST ELEVATION
 MAIN SCHOOL**



Item D1

Construction of a new Archbishop Courtenay Primary School and nursery, Beaconsfield Road, Maidstone - MA/10/123

NOTES:
 All work must be carried out in accordance with the Building Regulations.
 The architect's contract is based on the information provided by the client and does not include any site visits.
 The architect is not responsible for any errors or omissions in the drawings.
 The drawings are the copyright of D.A.S. Ltd.

NO.	DATE	DESCRIPTION	BY	CHECKED
1	10/10/12	ISSUED FOR TENDER	DAVID SHERWOOD	DAVID SHERWOOD

DIOCESAN ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES LTD

Architects & Town Planners
 101 The Cornhill
 Canterbury, Kent, UK
 Tel: 01226 333333
 Fax: 01226 333333

ARCHBISHOP COURTENAY C OF E AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL NEW SCHOOL - T101L

Client: T101L
 Project No: 101L
 Date: 10/10/12

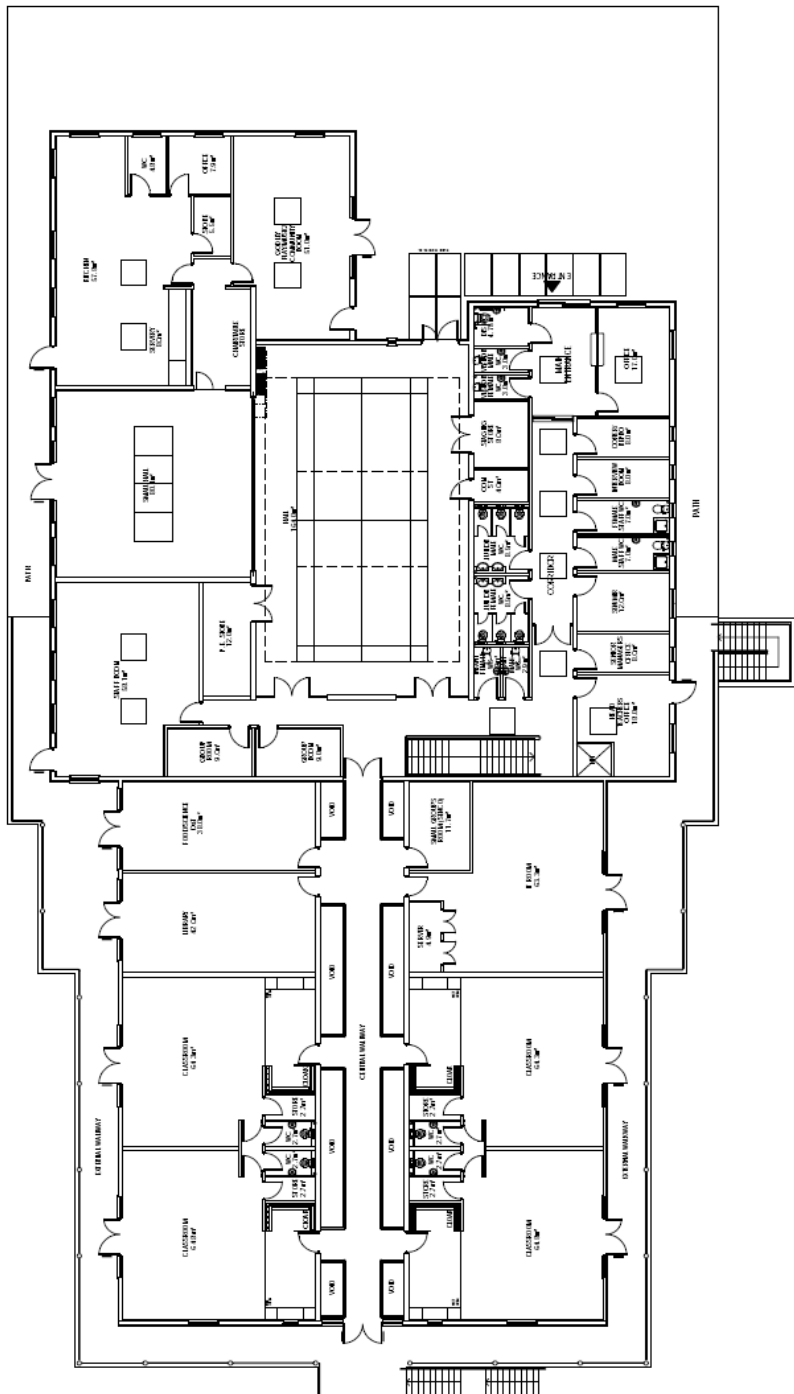
UPPER GROUND FLOOR PLAN

Scale: 1:100

DATE: 10/10/12

BY: DAVID SHERWOOD


CHECKED: DAVID SHERWOOD

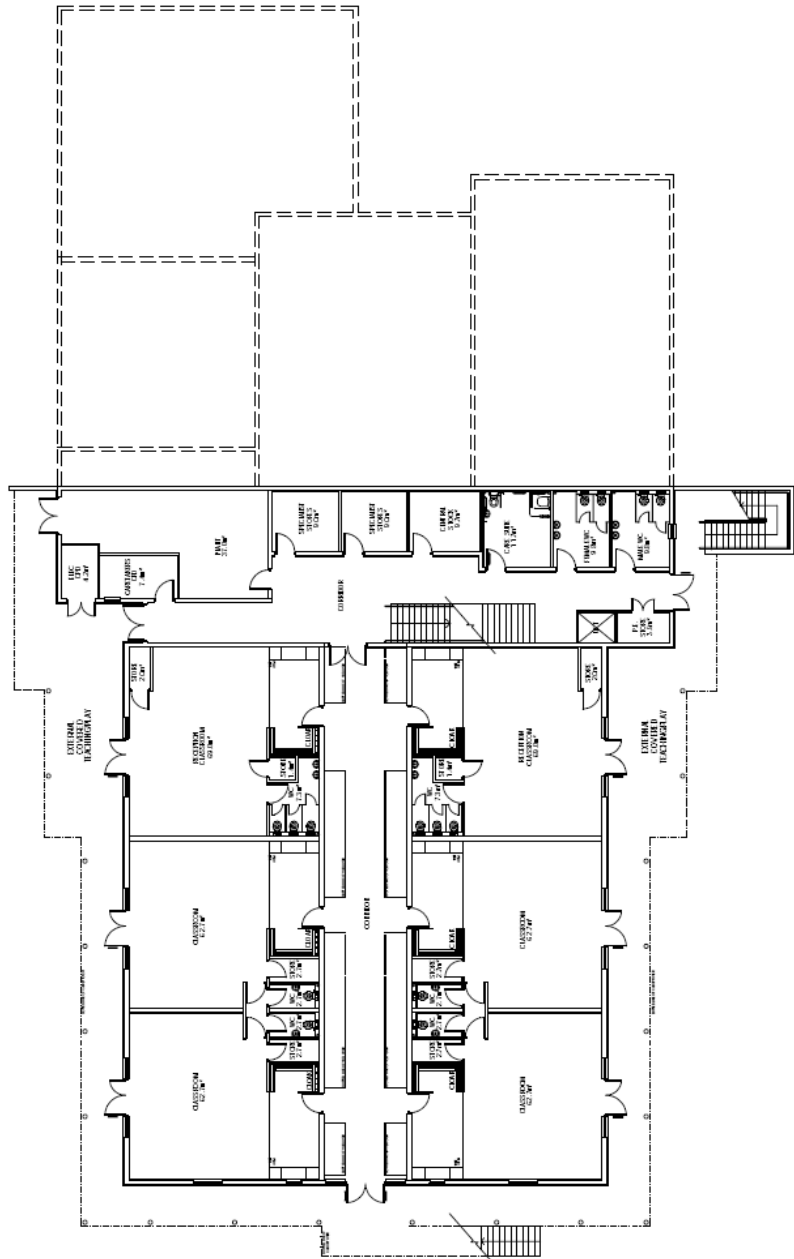


UPPER GROUND FLOOR PLAN
 MAIN SCHOOL

Item D1

Construction of a new Archbishop Courtenay Primary School and nursery, Beaconsfield Road, Maidstone - MA/10/123

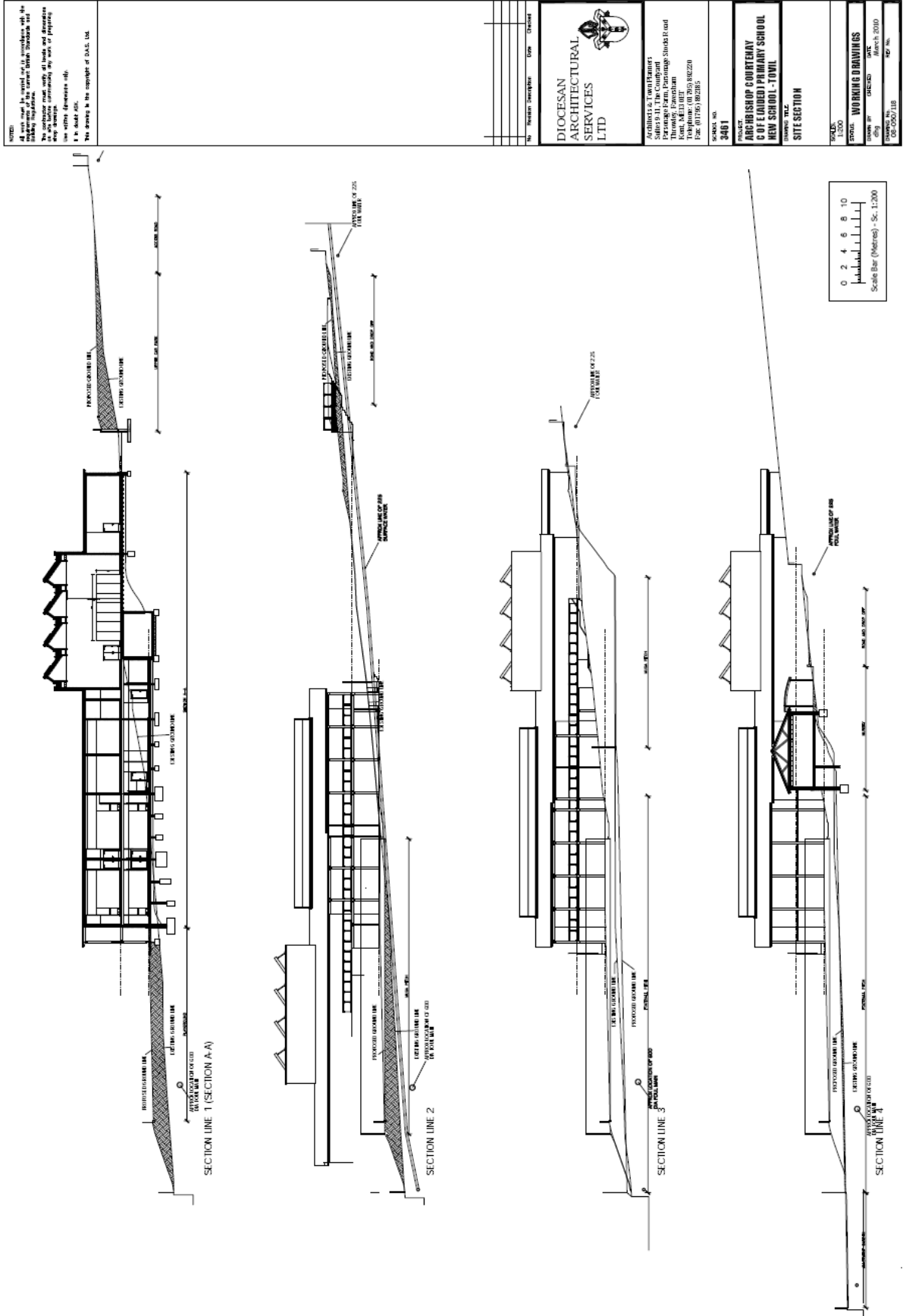
<p>NOTES:</p> <p>All work shall be carried out in accordance with the Building Regulations, Current British Standards and the manufacturer's instructions. All work shall be carried out in accordance with the Building Regulations, Current British Standards and the manufacturer's instructions. All work shall be carried out in accordance with the Building Regulations, Current British Standards and the manufacturer's instructions.</p> <p>This drawing is the copyright of D.A.S. Ltd.</p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <th>No.</th> <th>Description</th> <th>Date</th> <th>Checked</th> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </table>	No.	Description	Date	Checked					 <p>DIOCESAN ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES LTD</p>	<p>Architect: D.A.S. Ltd Suite 9.11, The Courtyard Parkgate Farm, Parkgate, Maidstone, Kent, ME13 8HT Telephone: (01753) 802230 Fax: (01753) 802115</p> <p>School No: 2461</p>	<p>PROJECT: ARCHBISHOP & COURTENAY C OF E CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL NEW SCHOOL - 100% LOWER GROUND FLOOR PLAN</p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>SCALE</td> <td>1:100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>DATE</td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td>DESIGNER</td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td>CHECKED</td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td>DATE</td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td>PROJECT NO.</td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td>REV. NO.</td> <td> </td> </tr> </table>	SCALE	1:100	DATE		DESIGNER		CHECKED		DATE		PROJECT NO.		REV. NO.	
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LOWER GROUND FLOOR PLAN
 - MAIN SCHOOL

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Construction of a new Archbishop Courtenay Primary School and nursery, Beaconsfield Road, Maidstone - MA/10/123



Construction of a new Archbishop Courtenay Primary School and nursery, Beaconsfield Road, Maidstone - MA/10/123



Construction of a new Archbishop Courtenay Primary School and nursery, Beaconsfield Road, Maidstone - MA/10/123

and western boundaries have the occasional tree specimen but are on the whole defined by fencing and existing development.

3. Currently, the only vehicular access to the site is via Beaconsfield Road, which is towards the northern end of the site, where the land is more level. The part of Beaconsfield Road where the current vehicular access joins is an unadopted road. However this section of road is due to be made up to adoptable standards shortly by the developer of the housing site at the corner of Beaconsfield Road.

Background

4. Archbishop Courtenay Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School is a popular Maidstone town school, currently located on two sites. One site is in Church Road, Tovil (Tovil site) and the other is in Priory Road, Maidstone (town centre site). The school was established in September 2005 following the closure of two voluntary controlled schools, St Stephen's Infant School, which was located in Church Road and the All Saints Primary School, which was located in Priory Road. The school children are currently accommodated in outdated Victorian buildings and mobile classrooms which are below the areas and standards required for modern teaching. The applicant advises that, health and safety and security are particularly compromised, as children have to pass out of the main building to mobile classrooms throughout the day and there are also the difficulties of operating a school on two sites, which are over a mile apart.
5. External play hard areas are again well below the standards required for ball games and amenity play. The soft play areas are currently at a distance away from the school and are not within the ownership of the Local Authority or the School, therefore restricting the potential for school use of these facilities. The town centre site also has no parking facilities with only 4 vehicles being accommodated in the local vicarage for a fee and the use of parking permits, which have been bought from Maidstone Borough Council. Visitors to the town centre site have limited waiting time, if they can get a parking space on the road. Parking is also difficult at the Tovil site.
6. The school roll was 151 pupils in June 2009. The school has 36 members of staff. Currently the juniors are located in the town centre site and there are 95 pupils and they are split over 4 classes. The infants are located in the Tovil site and there are 56 pupils, split between 2 infant classes and a Foundation class. There is also a pre-school at the Tovil site. The school day starts at 9.00am and finishes at 3.00pm at the Tovil site and 3.15pm at the town centre site. The school is open on both sites from 8.00am for breakfast club and there are various after school clubs at both school sites most afternoons of the week. There is currently a mini bus service run by the school between the two school sites.
7. A previous outline planning application was submitted for the school in 2004 (planning reference MA/04/1595) and was considered by at the 14 December 2004 meeting of Planning Applications Committee, when Members resolved that planning permission be granted, subject to conditions. This outline planning permission has now expired, as it was not implemented within the 3 year time limit.

Construction of a new Archbishop Courtenay Primary School and nursery, Beaconsfield Road, Maidstone - MA/10/123

Proposal

8. The planning application is for a new 10 class primary school with a separate nursery building, a new one way vehicular access from Eccleston Road through to Beaconsfield Road with a drop off zone for parents, on-site operational car parking, separate service access and pedestrian access off Eccleston Road and sports pitches and play areas. It is proposed that the school will have an increased school roll of up to 300 pupils and 26 children at the nursery. An area has also been set aside for a future extension of the school, for 4 more classrooms, WC's and small group rooms. It is proposed that there would be a total number of 37 parking spaces on the site, which includes 4 disabled parking spaces; and 8 parking spaces within the school drop off area and a further 3 parking spaces within the nursery drop off area. The application is also proposing 20 cycle parking racks. The applicant indicates that the layout of the development has been influenced by the sloping nature of the site and the need to provide sporting facilities as well as an access road through the site, which means that most of the mature trees, including those subject to the Tree Preservation Order, cannot be retained. Proposals for new and replacement planting have been submitted with the application.
9. The school building has been designed taking the site considerations and surrounding areas into account. Particularly taking into account the contours of the site, the school has been designed as a single storey building at the front (and located on the highest part of the site), which then becomes a two-storey building due to the drop in land levels. The height of the roof therefore remains at a constant height, as one floor then drops down one storey following the slope.
10. The building has also been designed with sustainability in mind, using where possible maintenance free materials. The structure would be highly insulated and finished with sustainable timber panelling and Perma rock render. The design would also allow for a central lantern light running the length of the teaching block to facilitate natural ventilation and natural lighting to the classrooms below via a management system.
11. The school would have the statutory external spaces, namely an all weather football pitch, netball pitches, hard and soft play areas. This is a very restricted site especially due to the topography and much of the flat space needs to be retained for these functions, leaving the sloped area near to Eccleston Road for the building and the upper area for the access road. Normally a school of this size would require two full sized pitches but it has been accepted by Sport England that what is proposed is an improvement upon the current sporting provision. In addition to this, the existing site contours would be utilised to design an outdoor performance area/amphitheatre with informal/formal terraced play.
12. In relation to highway aspects of the application, a through road is proposed due to concerns about parking backing up towards Eccleston Road and Tovil Road junction, if there was only a single entrance and exit point off Eccleston Road. Also Eccleston Road is a cul-de-sac and so turning around within this road would have resulted in potentially dangerous manoeuvring movements within the existing road junctions. It was therefore decided that it would be more appropriate to separate the traffic flow to the site by creating an entrance in Eccleston Road and an exit in Beaconsfield Road. Due to the site topography, the only location where the road could be located was at the southern boundary. The access road through the site would be gated and parents would be allowed onto the site to use the drop off facility. There would also be

Construction of a new Archbishop Courtenay Primary School and nursery, Beaconsfield Road, Maidstone - MA/10/123

pedestrian routes into the site and a separate off road loading area is proposed off Eccleston Road due to the incline on the site, which was deemed too steep to safely load refuse bins.

13. The School intends to allow the wider community to use the school facilities, such as the hall and other communal spaces and the all weather play pitch, out of school hours. The applicant states that, the nursery would also provide a valuable facility for the local community by directly feeding pupils into the new school.
14. The application is accompanied by a Transport Assessment including a School Travel Plan, Flood Risk Assessment, Ground Investigation Report, Ecological Scoping Report and a Full Bat Survey. Since it was originally submitted the application has been amended as a result of value engineering detailed design considerations. *Copies of drawings showing the site layout, site sections and elevations of the proposed buildings, as amended, are attached.*

Planning Policy**15. Planning Policy Statement 1 – Delivering Sustainable Development (2006):**

- Making suitable land available for development in line with economic, social and environmental objectives to improve people's quality of life.
- Contributing to sustainable economic development.
- Protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment, the quality and character of the countryside and existing communities.
- Ensuring high quality development through good and inclusive design, and the efficient use of resources.
- Ensuring that development supports existing communities and contributes to the creation of safe, sustainable, liveable and mixed communities with good access to jobs and key services for all members of the community.

16. The Development Plan Policies summarised below are relevant to consideration of the application:

Maidstone Borough – Wide Local Plan (2000):

Policy ENV6 Landscaping, surfacing and boundary treatment.

Policy T13 Parking standards.

Policy H9 Housing development will be permitted on land at Beaconsfield Road/Eccleston Road/ Wharf Road, Tovil.

Consultations

17. **Maidstone Borough Council** – raises **objection**, as the proposed development would not have adequate regard to landscaping. The position of the access road would require the removal of a number of trees, including those covered by TPO 10 of 2009, and the site layout has not been considered in accordance with a tree survey or the recommendations of BS5837:2005 'Trees in Relation to Construction'. The proposed landscaping is not comprehensive enough to mitigate for the loss of the trees or to

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provide an adequate setting for the development. Therefore the proposal is contrary to policies ENV6 of the Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan (2000).

The Borough Council was subsequently consulted on the revised application details and confirmed that from a planning point of view in terms of scale, design and layout, the Borough Council had **no objections** to the scheme. However the Borough Council wishes to uphold its original **objection**, which was due to the proposed development not having adequate regard to landscaping.

The Borough Council's reasons are elaborated further, as follows:

"Having looked at the plans for this application (the revised application details) it would appear that it changes little from the previous scheme submitted under MA/10/123. Therefore from an arboricultural point of view our comments on the cramped nature of the development and loss of trees as explained previously remain unchanged.

Despite the landscape officer's previous advice there has been no attempt to try to retain any of the more prominent healthy tree within the scheme most of which are subject to TPO 10 of 2009. Therefore, our reasons for refusal under the previous scheme still stand.

Those trees have been shown for retention and protection toward the southwestern corner near the proposed exit onto Beaconsfield Road are all poor quality and not suitable for long-term retention. Consideration to their removal and replacement with better species should be seriously considered as part of a new landscaping for the site.

With regard to the new landscaping that is shown on the planting drawing, the scheme is much improved to that which was previously proposed although again due to the tight nature of the site, the planting space available will in no way mitigate the loss of the larger trees that are currently present. Nevertheless the Borough Council welcome the planting of native cultivars and would only add, that due again to the limited planting space the more fastigiated/compact form of Hornbeam (*Carpinus Betulus* 'Fastigiata') be planted along the southern boundary adjacent to the road/drop off zone."

18. **Tovil Parish Council** – recommends **approval** of this application.
19. **Divisional Transportation Manager** – raises **no objection** subject to the junction of Church Road and Tovil Road being 'squared off' to improve the safety of this junction and to allow better forward visibility for vehicles coming out of Church Road and into Tovil Road; the existing zebra crossing in Tovil Road being changed to a puffin crossing (the School have agreed to operate a School Crossing Patrol officer at the zebra crossing if the conversion does not go ahead, please refer to paragraph...for further discussion); the signing on the approach to the existing zebra crossing is regularised and that 'School Keep Clear' road markings are required by the school entrance in Eccleston Road and by the exit in Beaconsfield Road and parking restrictions are required in Eccleston Road around the service entrance.
20. **Environment Agency** – raises **no objection** to the proposed drainage details. A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) Report was produced upon request from the Environment Agency as a result of the original consultation. The FRA Report required the drainage system for the site to take into account a 100-year 30% rainfall event. The EA were satisfied with the contents of the report and raised no objection to the planning application.

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21. **Kent County Archaeologist** – raises **no objection**. Comments that the site has recently been archaeologically evaluated on behalf of the applicant and this work has demonstrated that modern terracing has disturbed the bulk of the site with only the southern edge retaining the original ground profile. Evidence of post-medieval activity was identified in the evaluation but the report suggests that the upper terrace of the site has remained undisturbed since before this period. This part of the site is mostly occupied by the proposed school access road and given the prehistoric potential of the site, it would be appropriate to maintain an archaeological watching brief on groundwork's taking place on the upper terrace.
22. **Natural England** – has suggested that Kent County Council's Biodiversity team is consulted.
23. **Kent County Council Biodiversity Team** – raises **no objection** subject to an assessment/report on the bat roost potential of the trees being conditioned. This assessment/report should include recommendations on the timing of works, the use of soft-felling techniques, provision for course of action should the workers come across any bats. Also a condition on the timing of shrub/tree removal needs to be attached which avoids the bird nesting season.
24. **Sport England** – wishes to lend its **support** in principle to this planning application, as it would appear that the proposed development would result in an improved level of sport and recreation provision in the area, subject to the pitch being constructed to the appropriate specification; the proposed MUGA being constructed in accordance with Sport England/NGB Technical Design Guidance Notes and that the School consider the opportunity of the use of the sporting facilities to the wider community.
25. **Jacobs Landscaping** – raises **no objection in principle**, subject to a condition detailing the extent of the native hedgerow along the northern boundary, which the applicant has agreed to extend but has not been illustrated to date on the Planting Plan, and confirmation of the steepest gradients of the planted slopes.

Jacobs Landscaping latest comments are as follows:

"The size of the proposed stock appears to be appropriate and I am pleased to acknowledge the details of the proposed native hedgerow mix, which are appropriate. I am also pleased to note that the native hedgerow will be extended along the southern and eastern boundaries, and I appreciate the impracticalities of extending it along the northern boundary. However the degree of extension has not been illustrated on the Planting Plan, and I suggest that this is amended accordingly. The External Works Specification considers the establishment and management of wildflower areas thoroughly.

I previously raised a query regarding excavation within root protection areas (RPAs) of retained trees and I suggested that the applicant sought confirmation from a qualified arboriculturalist regarding the acceptable extent of excavation within the RPAs. I acknowledge that for any root over 25mm, the arboriculturalist consultant would advise on whether it would be appropriate for the root to be cut. However I suggest an arboriculturalist is consulted prior to any planning permission being granted, on whether the proposed extent of excavation is acceptable before any construction begins. This is because if an arboriculturalist does not consider the trees are likely to survive the extent

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of excavation, more extensive tree loss may occur and the mitigation plans may not be adequate.”

26. **Jacobs – Street Lighting** – discussions are still ongoing, as the applicant has not provided details of what would happen to an existing lighting column in Eccleston Road that would be affected by the proposed service access. The outcome of these discussions will be reported verbally at the Committee meeting. The applicant has agreed to reduce the levels of lighting within the school site and the height of the lighting columns to 4m, which is the same of the surrounding roads.
27. **Kent Fire and Rescue** – has commented that the means of access is considered satisfactory.

Local Member(s)

28. The local County Member, Mr Chell, was notified of the application on the 25 January 2010 and revised application details on the 1 July 2010

Publicity

29. The application was advertised by the posting of a number of site notices and the notification of 304 neighbours of the original application and of the revised application details. A notice was also placed in the Kent Messenger on the 5 February 2010.

Representations

- 30 9 letters of representation have been received in response to the original application and 3 letters have been received in response to the revised application details. The main planning reasons for objection can be summarised as follows:
- Concern about the area being able to cope with the increased traffic and parking.
 - A section of Beaconsfield Road is an unadopted road and is in poor condition.
 - Concern about the provision of adequate parking for staff and visitors as well as the drop off area.
 - There is a lack of parking around the site and there is a lot of overspill parking which is already in existence in Eccleston Road due to inadequate parking provision at the flats in Eccleston Road.
 - Lack of road markings in the new housing development roads in Eccleston Road.
 - Concern that parents would drop school children off in Eccleston Road rather than driving into the site.
 - Current parking on both sides of Eccleston Road will need to be addressed.
 - Junction of Tovil Road is already very busy and concern about the extra traffic that will use it as a result of the new school.
 - The traffic calming in Eccleston Road would have to be removed and the road widened to accommodate all the extra school traffic.
 - There is not enough existing parking provision on the housing sites in Eccleston Road.
 - Should allow residents to park on the school site out of school hours.
 - Concern that parents would drop school children off in Tovil Road.
 - Residents currently park half on the footway and half in the carriageway in Eccleston Road.

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- At the junction of Tovil Road and Eccleston Road there needs to be a mini roundabout.
- The housing developments in Eccleston Road are not fully complete and when they are then the parking problem will be worse in Eccleston Road.
- Concern about large vehicles turning into the school site and using the whole road to turn.
- Concern about the loss of trees on the southern edge of the site, many of which are TPO.
- Using Beaconsfield Road as an entrance and exit to the school would solve the access and parking problems in Eccleston Road.
- Concerns about traffic turning from Tovil Road into Eccleston Road.
- Due to all the parking in Eccleston Road this road is usually only one vehicle wide.
- Should change existing zebra crossing to a pelican crossing.
- Introduce yellow lines on one side of Eccleston Road.
- Introduce a set of traffic lights at the junction of Tovil Road and Eccleston Road.
- Inconsiderate parking in Eccleston Road from the residents in the housing developments in Eccleston Road.
- Trees currently screen the school site and the industrial area around the site.
- Concern about the loss of wildlife living in the TPO trees if they are cut down.
- The trees are vital to the character of the area and to the visual amenity.
- The proposed revisions do not include any improvements to the original vehicular and pedestrian access proposals.
- The likely increase in traffic in Eccleston Road would jeopardise the safety of both pupils and residents alike.

Discussion

31. The application is required to be determined in accordance with the relevant Development Plan policies, unless other material considerations are of overriding importance. Therefore the proposal needs to be considered in the context of the Maidstone Borough Council Local Plan policies and Government Planning Policy Statements and Guidance Notes and other material considerations arising from consultation and neighbour notification responses. In this particular case, the determining issues would therefore include the relevant planning policies, design siting and layout, tree loss and landscaping issues, and transportation issues.

Policy Context

32. The site is identified for a housing use as part of the Borough Council's Local Plan, Policy H9 designation. The Local Plan also signalled the intention of preparing a development brief. The 'Lockmeadow and Eccleston Road Development Brief' was therefore subsequently prepared which included the Beaconsfield/Eccleston Road land, and stated that, '*Site F is allocated for the provision of community facilities. The Local Education Authority has identified a need for primary education facilities...*'. Whilst the Lockmeadow and Eccleston Road Development Brief is no longer an adopted document, as mentioned above outline planning permission was granted in 2005, which effectively established the principle of a new primary school and nursery on the application site. Although the outline permission expired in February 2008, it is still in my view, material to determination of this application. Nevertheless it is necessary to consider whether or not the details of the proposal that has now come forward are acceptable, as discussed below.

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Design, Siting and Layout

33. No objections have been raised to the actual design, siting and layout of the school and nursery and associated sport pitches and open spaces. The site is very challenging with significant level changes across the site, dropping from south to north as previously mentioned by 5 metres or more. The school building has been designed taking the sites contours into consideration, using the sloping nature of the site as part of the design of the building although necessarily involving some cutting and filling. The school has been designed as a single storey building at the front, which includes the school hall and ancillary accommodation (located on the highest part of the site), which then becomes a two-storey building providing the main classroom accommodation on the lower part of the site. The hall stands above the rest of the building and has large northern facing roof lights on a flat roof. The remainder of the building has shallow pitched roofs with a central atrium roof light over the two-storey part of the building. A playground area is to be provided to the north side of the building and would involve raising existing ground levels to be compatible with the building.
34. The form of the building, the elevational treatment including the arrangement of windows and doors will be noted from the attached drawings. In terms of external materials, a zinc roof is proposed and a mixture of render (blue to the main building and white to the hall) and timber cladding proposed to the walls on a brick plinth. Windows and doors would be blue powder coated aluminium. Final details could be reserved by condition.
35. There is the potential for overlooking the flatted developments on the opposite side of Eccleston Road, some of which have external balcony areas. However, the facades of these buildings would be between about 23 and 28 metres away which are slightly more than the widely recognised minimum separation distance of 21 metres for house to house windows of habitable rooms. In addition, landscaping is proposed to the eastern boundary of the site, which would provide some screening of the school building.
36. The nursery is a single storey building, with a shallow pitched roof and compatible elevational treatment and materials to the school building would be located at the western end of the site with a play area. It would be constructed at the higher level adjoining the access road. Although it is within 18 metres of no.38a Beaconsfield Road, given that it is single storey and that intervening boundary trees at this point are shown to be retained, I do not consider that there would be an issue of overlooking.
37. The site levels have also dictated the best location for the proposed access road through the site with adjoining drop off and parking areas. This is in the area immediately to the south of the site, which is also the highest part of the site, and is a relatively narrow strip of land, and was best used for the access road, so that the required sports pitches and play areas could be provided on the wider flat and/ or previously levelled areas of the site. The access road would be close to the boundary of the site and would involve removal of some of the boundary trees as discussed below. Immediately adjoining the boundary is a rear access path to the properties in Tovil Road. The rear gardens of these are between some 23 and 30 metres long and mostly enclosed at the end by fences, walls or sheds. No. 38a Beaconsfield Road to the western end is though within between about 3 and 9 metres of the access road although separated by trees to be retained and proposed shrub planting. Given its proximity it is likely that this property in particular would experience some disturbance from vehicles using the access road and exiting the site. However as the most

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significant and noticeable use would be at the beginning and end of the school day for a relatively short duration I do not consider that a planning objection would be justified on this particular issue per se.

38. Overall I consider that the siting and layout of the different elements of the proposed development are acceptable in planning terms taking into consideration the site levels, surrounding neighbours and adjacent roads. The layout of the school access road sports pitches and playgrounds together with the buildings is logical and makes best use of the land available. I also consider that proposed design of the buildings, including the scale, form, appearance and materials, would be appropriate and acceptable, bearing in mind the variety of building styles and materials throughout the surrounding townscape. I would not therefore raise a planning objection to the proposal on grounds of design, siting and layout subject to the considerations below.

Tree Loss and Landscaping Issues

39. There is currently limited vegetation across the site, with trees and shrubs focused mostly around the periphery of the site. Maidstone Borough Council has placed a Tree Preservation Order on 10 mature Sycamore trees and 1 Ash tree within the site, which are mostly concentrated along the southern boundary and adjacent to Eccleston Road. These trees are mostly assessed as being of high arboricultural value on the tree survey undertaken by the applicants Landscape Architect. These trees also filter views into the site from the south. There are also some other trees proposed to be removed, which are of lower arboricultural value, however collectively the vegetation belt provides a strong landscape feature within this urban context as well as visual buffering.
40. Discussions have taken place with the applicant to see whether any of the TPO trees could be retained as part of the proposal. That might have been achieved by moving the proposed access road or parking area(s), or by reviewing the ramped areas within the site. The applicant did review the possibility of retaining the TPO trees but, given the site levels and what needs to be accommodated within the site, has been unable to do so. Although it is regrettable, on balance, I accept that the trees in question, including those subject to the TPO, cannot be retained particularly as there is no other workable location for the one way access road without compromising other elements of the layout. The trees which are located along the eastern boundary including those subject to the TPO, along Eccleston Road, similarly cannot be retained as they are located in the area that is proposed for the service entrance to the school and/or affected by construction of the building. Again the applicant considered the possibility of retaining these trees but due to the proposed location of the school's kitchen, the gradient of the site and the location of the road narrowings in Eccleston Road, the service road could not be moved.
41. The applicant has proposed a landscaping scheme to compensate for the loss of trees including those subject to the TPO by the planting of over 60 trees as well as new soft landscaping including hedge and shrub planting on the site. That would improve the views from the site from the surrounding residential properties and improve the quality of the townscape. I consider therefore that these proposals are acceptable to compensate for the loss of the established trees and would generally increase the amount of vegetation that currently exists within the site.

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Transportation Issues

42. Concern has been raised by local residents over the lack of parking available in Eccleston Road and about whether the road would be able to cope with the increased traffic that the school would generate. The outline planning application for the school site indicated that the existing site access in Beaconsfield Road was likely to be retained. However no further details were given at that time and means of access was not dealt as a reserved matter at the outline planning application stage.
43. Mindful of the traffic levels that a primary school can generate, the applicants' current proposal is for a separate entrance off Eccleston Road and an exit into Beaconsfield Road with an internal one way access road, as a means of reducing the traffic numbers onto a single access point and to keep traffic moving. Also by providing an access road through the site, it would reduce the need for parents to park in either Eccleston Road or Beaconsfield Road as they could drive into the school site and use the parents drop off facility outside the school and nursery buildings.
44. Bearing this in mind, a Transportation Assessment was submitted with the planning application, giving information of the levels of traffic likely to be generated by the new school and its effect upon the surrounding highway. A capacity assessment has been completed on the Tovil Road/Eccleston Road/Courtenay Road junction and the results indicated that the junction would operate within capacity with the school traffic at peak times.
45. Eccleston Road is currently congested due to on-street parking that is occurring from the lack of car parking spaces within the flatted housing developments that are located off Eccleston Road. These developments have already been granted planning permission and have either already been constructed and are occupied, or some of the flats have been constructed but are still unoccupied. Unfortunately the school planning application cannot address the lack of parking that has been permitted as part of the flatted housing applications and whilst the applicant is sympathetic to the local residents, he has no duty to solve the parking issues that have been created by another developer. I do not therefore consider these existing problems would in themselves justify an objection to the proposed school or its access.
46. However the applicant is proposing 'School Keep Clear' road markings at both the entrance to the school in Eccleston Road and at the exit in Beaconsfield Road and parking restrictions around the school service access in Eccleston Road. A Traffic Regulation Order would have to be advertised and reported to the Joint Transportation Board. The 'School Keep Clear' road markings and parking restrictions would ensure that the school access points are kept clear of parked vehicles and ensure good visibility at these accesses. It would also create some much needed passing places for motorists travelling up and down Eccleston Road but it would probably push the overflow on-street parking that occurs in Eccleston Road onto other streets around the site. Kent Highway Services are aware of these parking problems and has confirmed that they would be looking into these issues at the same time as any work for the Traffic Regulation Order being pursued.
47. The issue of pedestrian safety has also been raised and the School has confirmed within its School Travel Plan, that currently the School has a higher than national level of pupils walking to school. This is something that would also be actively encouraged at the new joint school site. Also the high number of school pupils walking to school,

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should result in less vehicles travelling to the site, therefore the residents' concerns about increased number of traffic as a result of the new school should not actually materialise.

48. As mentioned in the paragraph above, the school currently experiences a high volume of pupils walking to the school. A Mosaic Profile (a social marketing tool which categorises people according to the areas in which they live in) has been produced that indicates that a significant number of school pupils live to the south west of the proposed new school site. A pedestrian count was undertaken at the existing zebra crossing in Tovil Road between 8.30am and 9.30am during term time. A total of 28 pedestrians crossed during this period. Given that the number of pupils would increase substantially and that a significant proportion live to the south of the school site and would therefore need to cross Tovil Road, it is clear that the pedestrian flows on the zebra crossing would increase significantly.
49. Traffic flows along Tovil Road are high, with 429 vehicles being recorded between 8.30am and 9.00am during a survey in 2008, along this section of road past the zebra crossing. It is estimated that this number would increase with traffic growth, committed development and the new school to 541 vehicles by the time the school opens. Kent Highway Services initially recommended that this zebra crossing be converted to a puffin crossing to help pupils cross the road safely. This conversion would be beneficial to pedestrian safety and would help to regularise the crossing movements, assisting traffic turning from the junctions of Tovil Road/Church Road and Tovil Road/Eccleston Road/Courtenay Road and allowing time for through traffic along Tovil Road and therefore reducing congestion during the peak periods.
50. However the cost of this conversion has been estimated at £40,000. As no design work has actually been carried out the final cost could be more than the estimate as a Safety Audit would be required for the work and there may be matters arising from this Audit, that are currently unforeseen. Neither the applicant nor the School has budgeted any money to carry out this work. However the School is concerned about the safety of its own pupils and has confirmed that it is willing to operate a School Crossing Patrol Officer at the zebra crossing, as an alternative to the recommended engineering measures. The Head Teacher currently employs personnel to operate the mini bus services between the existing two school sites and provide a chaperone service to the school pupils, and whom she would have to redeploy from their current roles. The School has offered to train up to 3 members of staff to ensure that there is enough people available to cover sickness and to ensure a continued level of service during school term time. This proposal would mean that the zebra crossing would stay as it currently is, apart from the regularisation of the signing on the approach to this crossing, which needs to go ahead regardless of whether the crossing is a zebra or a puffin crossing.
51. Kent Highway Services has acknowledged the School's offer to operate a School Crossing Patrol Officer at the crossing as an alternative to the recommended conversion to a puffin crossing, being the next best option if the conversion did not go ahead. However Kent Highway Services has expressed concern that whilst a puffin crossing is a permanent feature, which can be used at any time during the day, a School Crossing Patrol is subject to the availability of the post holder and there may be occasions when the post is not filled or the post holder is absent. Hence the School has offered to train up 3 members of staff to ensure that there is always cover. In addition to this, the School is to hold a breakfast club and after school clubs and the times of

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these clubs may not coincide with the working times of the School Crossing Patrol. It is also acknowledged that a School Crossing Patrol Officer is the safest way for pedestrians to cross a road as it only operates at the times when children are going to and from school. Whilst the Kent Highway Services has not raised a highway objection on the basis of the existing Zebra crossing being retained, subject to the School's proposals for a crossing patrol being implemented, Members should bear in mind the above disadvantages compared to it being converted to a puffin crossing.

52. Kent Highway Services have also expressed concern about the current road alignment of the Church Road/Tovil Road junction. This junction would be used by the majority of parents and staff leaving the school site. This junction is currently angled and the approach is not ideal for motorists exiting Church Road, as drivers need to look over their shoulders to see if their path is clear. The latest crash record indicates that there have been 2 personal injury crashes at this junction within the latest 3 year period, which both involved pedestrians. This is a cause for concern as the new school would increase pedestrian numbers at this junction and would also lead to an increase of traffic of approximately 51 movements during the morning peak hour. It is therefore proposed that this junction is 'squared up' to improve safety. The applicant has agreed to undertake this work and a condition could be attached to any planning permission, requiring that this work be carried out prior to the school opening.

Ecology.

53. An ecologist was employed by the applicant to assess the ecological potential of the site. The original surveys were carried out whilst there were still buildings on the site but did not discover any bats roosting in these buildings at the time of the survey. The ecologist noted the trees were checked for bat roost potential and whilst none were found, there is still some potential for impacts. That may not be in all trees, as some of the trees may be too young, however this would need to be checked out as soon as possible and prior to any work carried out to cutting down the trees on the site. Therefore the County Ecologist has requested conditions be included requiring the trees to be checked for bat roosting potential, and to include recommendations on timing of the works, the use of soft-felling techniques, and provision for course of action should the workers come across any bats. The County Ecologist also request a condition be imposed requiring that the timing of shrub/tree removal be carried out so that it avoids the bird-nesting season.

Construction.

54. The proposed new school is located in a residential area, and is surrounded by neighbours on all four boundaries of the site. Whilst no comments have been raised by the statutory consultees or neighbours about the proposed noise and general disturbance that the construction of the school and nursery and associated access road and school playground could generate, conditions could be attached to the planning consent that takes into consideration all these factors. Therefore a condition controlling hours and days of demolition and construction should ensure that any disturbance is kept to a minimum. In addition a condition could be included requiring measures to be taken to ensure that mud is not deposited on the public highway.

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Conclusion

55. Having regard to the relevant planning policies and guidance, in addition to material considerations raised by respondents, I consider that the creation of the new Archbishop Courtenay Primary School has been carefully considered and planned in accordance with the constraints and limitations of the site's layout and contours. It would provide much needed replacement accommodation and facilities for education within this locality and for the local community. The principle of a school has essentially already been established by the previous outline permission, and overall I consider that the detailed proposals for the school generally accords with planning policies and that the development would result in a significant enhancement to the site and locality. Objections have been raised to the impacts of various aspects of the proposed development, such as parking in Eccleston Road, increased traffic, the loss of trees including those subject to the TPO and landscaping, but having examined each of these aspects as discussed above, I am of the view that none would warrant a refusal of the application. I therefore see no overriding reason to raise an objection to the development and consider that it would generally accords with the aims and objectives of the relevant planning policies and guidance. I therefore recommend that planning permission is granted.

Recommendation

56. I RECOMMEND that PLANNING PERMISSION BE GRANTED, SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS, including conditions to cover the following aspects:

- the standard time limit;
- the development is carried out in accordance with the permitted details;
- control on hours of construction and demolition;
- a report/assessment on the bat roost potential of the trees is prepared and timing of shrub/tree removal;
- a junction improvement scheme is progressed for Church Road/Tovil Road junction
- a Traffic Regulation Order is progressed and advertised for the School Keep Clear road markings in Eccleston Road and Beaconsfield Road and parking restrictions around the school service access in Eccleston Road;
- the regularisation of the signing on the approach to the existing zebra crossing;
- a condition attached for the conversion of the zebra crossing to a puffin crossing/School Crossing Patrol Officer to operate at the existing zebra crossing, depending on Members' recommendation;
- that no mud is deposited on the public highway;
- an archaeological watching brief on groundwork on the upper terrace of the site.
- the proposed hedgerow extension is included in the Planting Plan for the site.
- a condition is attached on arboriculture, depending on the subsequent discussions with the applicant and the County's Landscape Architect; and.
- a condition is attached on street lighting, depending on the subsequent discussions with the applicant and the County's Street Lighting Engineer.

Case officer – Lidia Cook	01622 221063
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Background documents - See section heading
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Item D2

Extension of Wyvern Special School to form new Primary School wing, construction of a Multi Agency Specialist Hub (MASH) and construction of a specialist early years nursery at The Wyvern School, Ashford – AS/10/380

A report by Head of Planning Applications Group to Planning Applications Committee on 7 September 2010.

Application by Kent County Council Property Group for the extension to Wyvern Special School to form a new Primary School wing, the construction of a Multi Agency Specialist Hub (MASH) for disabled children and the construction of a specialist early years centre nursery together with associated access roads and car parking at The Wyvern School, Great Chart Bypass, Ashford (AS/10/380)

Recommendation: Planning permission be granted, subject to conditions.

Local Member(s): Mr. R. King and Mr. J. Wedgbury

Classification: Unrestricted

Site

1. The application site comprises of an area of approximately 5.9 hectares located generally on the western side of Ashford to the south of the A28 Great Chart Bypass and to the west of Brookfield Road. To the southern boundary of the school grounds Bucksford Lane runs along part of the boundary with some low density residential properties to the edges of the south western corner of the site. Beyond the adjacent two residential properties which share a boundary with the school site is a Grade II Listed Building, Buxford Mill. The Great Stour River is located to the western boundary and continues to the south of the application site. To the north eastern boundary of the site with Brookfield Road there is an electricity sub station and a smaller local sub station to the northern site boundary with the A28 Great Chart Bypass. The northern boundary of the school site is separated from the A28 by a substantial earth bund and dense tree and vegetation planting which was supplemented at the time of the school construction. A public footpath runs immediately to the south of the site from Brookfield Road on the eastern boundary through Bucksford Park to Bucksford Lane.
2. The application site is within the Ashford Green Corridor. The route of the Great Stour River to the west and south of the school site is designated as a Local Wildlife Site. The school site forms part of the flood plain of the Great Stour River and as such part of the application site falls within Flood Risk Zones 1, 2 and 3 as designated by the Environment Agency.
3. The existing built development on the site is of single storey traditional masonry construction under metal profiled roof coverings. The existing building footprint forms three 'wings' set at obtuse angles to each other. The external envelope of the school building is finished with a yellow stock brick with rain screen cladding to several gable walls around the school hall. To the front of the school is an existing car park and drop off area which leads off a dedicated left in – left out entry/exit slip road from the A28 Great Chart Bypass.
4. External play and sports provision is provided on the site to the western end of the main buildings. Just south of the existing school playing fields is an area of grassed terraced land constructed from spoil from the original school building development. The site

Extension to form new Primary School wing, construction of a Multi Agency Specialist Hub and construction of specialist early years nursery – The Wyvern School, Ashford – AS/10/380

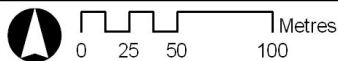
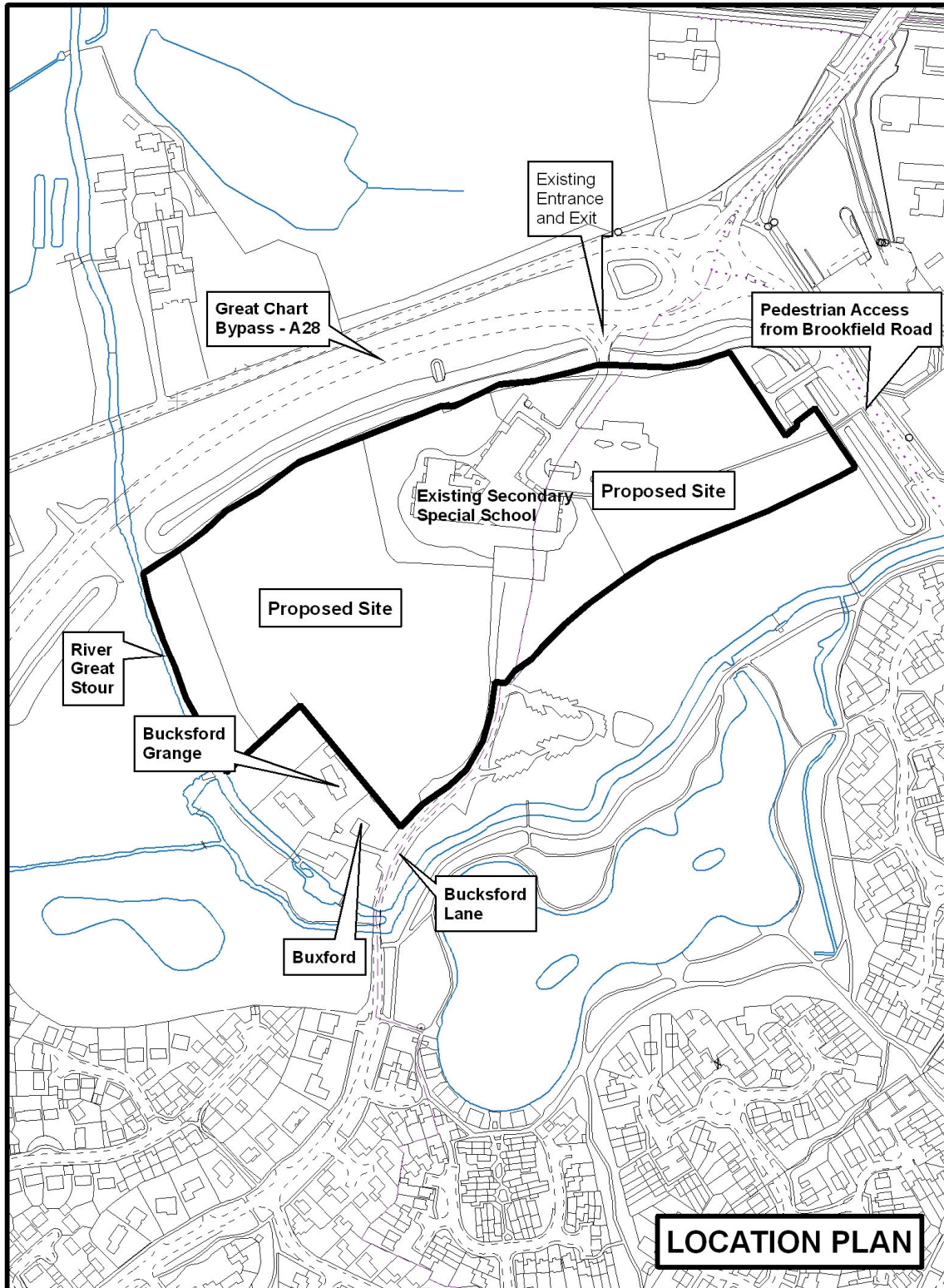
General Location Plan



General Location Plan
Scale 1:25000

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Site Location Plan



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Proposed Overall Site Layout Masterplan



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Proposed MASH and Early Years Nursery building



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Proposed MASH / Early Years South East (Rear) Elevation

Notes

- Do not scale from this drawing.
- Any dimensions or measurements commencing with 'R' are approximate.
- All areas of disconnection shall be reported to the appropriate authority.
- Dimensions are given in millimetres unless otherwise stated.
- Items are shown unless such items are an integral part of the structure.
- All materials, workmanship and components must comply with the relevant British Standards or other standards specified in any manufacturer's literature.

Construction should be in accordance with the conditions of any planning permission and any other relevant legislation. Any divergence from the contract shall be reported to the relevant authority of location and at least in writing.

Accidental details shown on site.

Note: Not all walls are marked with conditions should use Accredited Detail (Check with Contract Administrator, designer or surveyor if in doubt).

South East Elevation, Ashford M.A.S.H.

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Drawing No: 08601-10

Issue: Planning Application

Scale: 1:200@A3

Rev: * **Date:** * **Detail:** *

Title: South East Elevation

Project: Multi Agency Specialist Hub - Ashford

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Proposed Primary School Wing



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generally falls from the northern boundary to the southern boundary and laterally from the west to the east with an approximate difference in levels between 2.1 metres north to south and some 3.5 metres west to east.

5. Site boundaries are formed by a mixture of green powder coated weld mesh fencing and gates and wooden palisade fencing internally on the site separating differing use areas. *A general location plan is attached on page D2.2 and a site location plan on page D2.3.*

Background

6. The application sets out that this project is a joint venture between the National Health Service (NHS) and Kent County Council (Health, Education and Social Services) to provide a multi agency assessment, development and resource centre for disabled children, young people and their carers together with an extension to the existing Wyvern Secondary Special Educational Needs (SEN) school to provide a new primary element, replacing the existing primary school SEN provision currently located off-site.
7. Developing integrated processes for vulnerable groups of children and their families and promoting co-location of staff has been both a national and a Kent priority for a number of years. As a precursor, early work involved the development of Children's Centres and the strategic planning to implement the statutory duty within the Childcare Act 2006 to create local multi-agency early years networks. These networks bring a range of professionals together to improve outcomes for young children and their families. Since 2005, the NHS and KCC have worked on developing a Kent response to the Government's requirement to roll out Early Years Support, which focuses on disabled children aged 0-5 and their families.
8. The Kent Special School Review and the Kent Units and Designation Review seeks to lead towards the development of locally accessible SEN provision within Special Schools and mainstream primary and secondary schools with the intention of creating local multi-agency approaches to providing support, advice and training to promote inclusion.
9. A number of multi-agency specialist hubs (MASH) are being developed around the County, including at Sittingbourne, Thanet and this application in Ashford. It is intended that they will offer a range of services, including:
 - Provision of a single base for KCC, NHS and third sector staff;
 - Multi-agency approach to providing advice, training and outreach support for early years settings, schools and leisure providers on disabled children, young people and their families;
 - Joined up approach to providing assessments, interventions and reviews for disabled children, young people and their families;
 - Specialist centre to enable severely disabled children and young people to be able to access a short break programme;
 - Specialist centre to promote the transformation of short breaks within the local area; and
 - Local community venue for providing training, advice and support for parents and carers.

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10. In conjunction with the development of the MASH proposals at this site, the County Council has already agreed that Wyvern's Primary School and Nursery, currently located at Clockhouse in Ashford, is inadequate for the needs of the pupils and the growth predicted for their provision in the area. This has led to the concept of relocating the existing primary and nursery SEN provision onto the Wyvern School site to form an integrated and co-located site fit for purposes of 21st century education. It is the intention that the facility would provide for a total pupil roll, in terms of both the new primary and the existing secondary facilities at the site of some 194 pupils (131 existing secondary places, 41 existing primary places and 22 places for predicted growth).

Planning History

11. The planning site history dating back to 2001 is provided below:
- AS/01/1559 – Construction of new secondary special school granted planning permission by the County Council's Planning Applications Committee on 14 May 2001;
 - AS/03/150 – Revised access, re-orientation of school buildings and parking for new secondary school (*previously approved under consent AS/01/1559*) granted planning permission by the County Council's Planning Applications Committee on 8 April 2003. It is noted that this is the consent in which the new school development was carried out under;
 - AS/09/650 – Provision of two temporary mobile classroom units with associated external works. Granted temporary planning permission July 2009;
 - AS/09/709 – Enlargement of ball games enclosure including tarmac surface and perimeter fence. Granted planning permission August 2009;

Proposal

12. The application is made by Kent County Council Property Group and seeks planning permission for three main elements: a new primary school extension to the western end of the existing school with a gross internal floor area of approximately 2445 sq. metres, a Multi Agency Specialist Hub (MASH) with an internal floor area of approximately 1753 sq. metres and a Specialist Early Years Nursery with an internal floor area of approximately 182 sq. metres. Both the MASH and Specialist Early Years building would be located in a single new building to the eastern end of the existing school. Permission is therefore sought for two new purpose built community buildings within the existing Wyvern School site, together with a range of external facilities including fencing, children's play area, amenity space, landscaping and vehicle drop-off and parking facilities. Similar to other MASH proposals being developed around the County, this specific element of the proposal would be operated by Kent County Council and the local Primary Care Trust (PCT) and would incorporate a number of different health, education and social service roles all within one single centre.

New Primary School

13. The development proposes the relocation of the Wyvern Primary School facility from the Clockhouse site (located less than a quarter of a mile from the Wyvern Secondary School site) to land directly west of the existing secondary school building. This would allow both primary and secondary school children to use the same facilities which in turn would improve the level of facility provided, aid better coordination of educational functions and provide an integrated approach to schooling from early years through to secondary education. In order to facilitate the relocation of primary school pupils, the

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application proposes the construction of a purpose built single storey primary school building which would follow the lines of the existing school. The building design proposes an increased height space to the entrance and reception/common shared areas together with the dining hall and multi-function area adjacent to the reception to provide both visual interest to the external building elevations together with ensuring that internal spaces feel light and airy.

14. Pupil numbers are expected to increase, for both schools, from 173 to 194 pupils. Staff numbers would also increase by a similar proportion, from 114 to 129. It is proposed to serve the relocated Wyvern Primary School and MASH proposals from the existing left in/left out access onto the A28 Great Chart Bypass. Modifications to the internal road layout would be made including the construction of a mini roundabout within the existing school gate off which each of the different site elements would be served. Access to the relocated primary school would be via a newly constructed access way located to the north of the existing secondary school, leading to a car parking facility and drop off area specifically for primary school children and staff. The new primary school car parking area would consist of 72 car parking spaces, including the provision of 13 disabled spaces.

Multi Agency Specialist Hub and Nursery

15. The proposed MASH building and Nursery to the eastern end of the existing school building involves the construction of a part single storey and part two storey building. Most of the accommodation would be provided on the ground floor level due to the particular specialist needs of this sector of the community, although some administrative and staff facilities would be provided at first floor level. The ground floor level is raised by some 2 metres at its highest point above the existing external levels to accommodate any potential flooding under the building from the floodplain. It is noted that the location of the proposed MASH and Nursery are within Flood Risk Zone 3a with a high probability of fluvial flooding in any year of greater than 1 in 100 as defined by the Environment Agency. The elevation of the ground floor level would allow level access to be maintained from the existing school entrance and drop off point via a built up access to the nursery and main reception area of the MASH. The raised level of construction not only would allow for dry level access to and from the building but would also minimise the potential of increasing the flood risk elsewhere without hindering the ability of the land to drain or the capacity and integrity of the flood plan and any defence measures. It should be noted that the proposed Primary School wing is not located within any designated Flood Zone.
16. The specialist Nursery accommodation would be provided adjacent to the main school building, and would benefit from its own separate entrance and identity from the school and the MASH. This element of the proposal has been designed to reduce the association of the children that would attend the Nursery from children that are attending the MASH for clinical appointments. To the rear of the MASH and Nursery building a decked area would provide views across the river valley, providing space for informal play and break out areas.
17. Vehicle parking for the MASH and Nursery proposals would be provided on the north-west side of the proposed building, immediately east of the existing Wyvern Secondary School car park. A total of 90 car parking spaces would be provided, including the provision of 21 disabled spaces for the MASH and Nursery elements. In total, vehicle parking provision on site for use collectively by the Primary School, Secondary School,

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MASH and Specialist Nursery would total **162** parking spaces, including **34** disabled parking spaces. In addition, 48 new cycle parking spaces would be provided (20 for the MASH proposals and 28 for the combined schools) together with 9 new motorcycle parking spaces.

General Issues

18. The extent of proposed 'built' development footprint on the site would equate to 13 percent (7760 sq. metres) of the total site area (5.9 ha), with a further 12 percent (7005 sq. metres) allocated to internal service roads, vehicle parking and drop off areas. The applicant considers that the proposed 'built' development would not have any adverse impact upon the surrounding community in terms of the level of activity or noise as the separation between the two new buildings and the neighbouring residential properties is substantial.
19. In considering the proposed layout for the various elements of this proposal, the application details various consultation workshops which took place with key stakeholders including the users, professionals, staff and carers of children attending the facility to devise a schedule of accommodation and adjacencies which were key to designing a successful site masterplan. An initial site feasibility study had indicated the use of the land to the western side of the school as the most suitable location for all built development, away from the flood risk zone. However given the level of accommodation required for the various elements of the proposal, a significant proportion of the floor area would need to have been provided at first floor level, which once situated on this higher ground to the western side of the site, would provide a considerable mass of building which would dominate the local landscape.
20. Another key consideration which was borne out of the initial consultation workshops was the concept of the benefits of the MASH and primary school elements being linked to the existing secondary school building at nodal points where there could be a possibility to share resources and some accommodation. The proposed primary school element benefits from siting adjacent to the existing school building on the quieter western side, whilst the busier MASH element has been situated to the eastern side of the site where the existing school car parking and access provides an environment less suitable for the school accommodation.
21. The design approach has identified a quiet and noisy side to the existing development with the northern edge of the site bounded by the A28 Great Chart Bypass as the noisy side. By using the built form within the current development proposals, the applicant has been able to protect the quiet side of the building by placing the access road to the primary school staff car park and drop off area point to the north. Each classroom within the new primary school wing would have break out space to external areas which to the main would be protected by the built development from the access road and public area. Most of the classroom and educational spaces would lead directly out to the south facing playground and play space or to the western area facing the Great Stour River.
22. Although a final selection of building materials would be reserved for later consideration in the event of planning permission being granted, the application does set out an indicative external materials schedule. The design approach for both the MASH and primary school building would follow a similar nature with wall surfaces comprising a mix of panels of yellow/ochre stock brickwork, through colour render panels and hardwood timber cladding. The main building entrances would be accentuated through a change

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of materials giving them a distinctive appearance to aid wayfinding. The building roofs would be constructed of a standing seam steel sheet system with varying overhangs to the eaves to provide shading and emphasis to the roof form.

23. The proposal involves the relocation of the site's existing sports pitch area as part of the development. The existing sports provision at the site includes a team sports pitch and 6 lane 300 metre running track. The original spoil from the existing school development was used to form a raised earthwork area to the south adjoining Bucksford Lane. It is intended to recontour this plateau of land to accommodate a new compensatory sports area for the schools. A total of approximately 16,795 sq. metres of open space would be achieved as a result of the proposal, including sufficient space for the marking out of a number of the following elements: two team sports pitches (70 x 40m), two mini soccer pitches (45 x 27m) and a 300m six lane running track with 100m sprint track. In addition, a further 1100 sq. metres of new hard play space would be created adjacent to classroom areas. The application details that the external space provision exceeds that required under current Regulations.
24. The proposed development draws on the importance of external spaces as part of the scheme in terms of not only providing an attractive setting to the building, but also in terms of supporting both the education of the current and proposed school pupils, as well as the visitors, parents and carers of the MASH users. The application includes a landscape planting masterplan showing native tree and shrub planting. Reconfigured and new car parking areas are intended to be interspersed with low level shrub planting and individual architectural planting to soften the extent of these hard areas. Earthworks would also be provided to help isolate and separate the car parking provision from other areas on site.
25. The application is accompanied by an Ecological Scoping Report. The Report concluded that the proposed development is not expected to impact on any designated nature conservation sites, because the proposed works are entirely within the existing sports / playing field and not within any designated site. However, it noted that the Great Stour (Ashford to Fordwich) Local Wildlife Site is situated only 25 metres from the footprint of the works. Therefore, all necessary measures should be taken to ensure that there is no run-off during construction or operation of the new buildings into the stream. The Report also concluded that the following works or mitigation measures be undertaken:
 - Exclusion fencing be erected around the construction area prior to commencement of works to ensure that great crested newts and reptiles do not stray into the construction area and are not killed or injured as a result of the works;
 - There is no evidence of badger activity within the footprint of the works, however it may be possible that a badger set may be present within 30 metres of the construction. Therefore it is recommended that a survey be undertaken to establish the presence/likely absence or a sett within 30m of the footprint of the works;
 - No bat roosts or important foraging sites would be directly impacted by the proposed works, however bat foraging, commuting and roosting within the immediately surrounding areas may be impacted by new lighting. Therefore two activity surveys are recommended in order to inform current use of the area by bats, and any mitigation required as a result; and
 - Ecological enhancements should be incorporated into the scheme where possible to contribute towards the objectives of National Planning Policy Statement 9.

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26. The application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) which identifies that the application site spans Flood Zone 1, 2 and 3, with the area at low risk of fluvial flooding being to the west of the site and the high risk (Flood Zone 3a) being located to the east of the site. The Assessment recognises that the location of the MASH and Specialist Nursery is proposed to be located within the high probability flood risk area (Flood Zone 3a) comprising of land assessed as having a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding in any year. The Assessment also recognises that the proposed new primary school wing, together with the existing secondary school building, fall outside of Flood Risk Zones 2 and 3.
27. The FRA accompanying the application demonstrates that a sequential risk-based approach was used by the applicant in their decision to seek permission for the development of the MASH and Nursery within Flood Risk Zone 3a. The aim of the Sequential Test is to steer all new development to areas at the lowest possibility of flooding. The FRA details that alternative locations were examined for the proposed development within Flood Risk Zones 1 (low probability) and Zones 2 (medium probability) around Ashford, however due to costs, the nature, topography, availability and size of the alternative sites, they were rejected and the co-location onto the single Wyvern School site was considered by the applicant to be preferable. The FRA then goes on to identify that the proposed flood vulnerability category (as designated by PPS25) has to be taken into consideration in locating new development within Flood Zones 2 and 3. The flood vulnerability category for the proposed development in this instance falls within the 'more vulnerable' classification whereby National Planning Policy states that such uses should only be permitted in Flood Risk Zone 3a if the Exception Test is passed and that development is designed and constructed to remain operational and safe for users in times of flood.
28. In this instance, the application sets out the following Exception Test justification for locating part of the proposed development within Flood Risk Zone 3a as follows:
- *“The purpose of the MASH centre is to provide development and resource centre for disabled children, young people and their carers within the Ashford area, to develop integrated processes for vulnerable groups of children and their families. Promoting the co-location of staff has been a Kent priority for a number of years thus improving outcomes for young children and their families. Accordingly the MASH would provide a local community venue for providing training, advice and support for parents and carers. Co-location of the MASH services and the primary school at Wyvern School would provide a far wider community benefit in terms of sustainability and enable a form more efficient use of resources as a specialist site;*
 - *The site being within Wyvern Secondary Special School land is classified as developable previously-developed land and other developable previously-developed sites in the locality have been considered unsuitable;*
 - *The defended 1 in 100 year (1%) flood level, including for climate change is 39.577m AOD and an undefended level of 40.12m AOD. In order for the building to continue to function safely at times of flood, the finished floor level must be set above the undefended level, with a 300mm allowance for freeboard, so should be set no lower than 40.42m AOD in order to comply with PPS25. As this level is considerably higher than the existing ground levels either the ground would need to be raised, or the building raised on columns. In order to retain flood storage volumes and to avoid disrupting flood flows and the ability of the land to drain it is recommended that the building be raised on columns”.*

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29. Having considered that the proposal demonstrates compliance with all sections of the Exceptions Test, the FRA recommends that the MASH and Nursery building be constructed at a minimum finished floor level of 40.42m AOD. It is noted that the application actually details that the intended finished floor level of this part of the proposal would be constructed to 40.60 AOD. The application also proposes that the proposed Centre be constructed on columns to leave the area below the building open to retain as much flood storage capacity as possible and to limit the disturbance of flood flows and to excavate a flood storage compensatory area to a 100 year (20% climate change) standard the north of the site.

Transport Issues

30. The application is accompanied by a Transport Statement setting out anticipated travel details arising from the proposed developments. Firstly it details the existing combined school rolls (both the secondary school on site and primary school off-site) are 173 children and 114 teachers. As noted in paragraph (14) above, these figures are intended to increase as a result of predicted growth and the relocation of both schools on to the single site, to 194 pupils and 129 staff, an increase of around 12.8 percent. The Transport Statement notes the presence of a gated footpath entrance from the existing site between the school car park and Brookfield Road which joins the combined foot/cycle way that runs between Brookfield Road and Bucksford Lane. This link to Brookfield Road is intended to be enhanced as part of the proposals which would then link in with an upgraded pedestrian crossing facility to be provided in association with the new Victoria Way road link, thus allowing visitors and staff at the site excellent access to cycle and pedestrian networks in Ashford.
31. As noted above, the co-location of both primary and secondary SEN schools on to the single site would result in an increase of around 12.8 percent in staff and pupil numbers. However, unlike a conventional school, demand for school places is not dictated by relative school performance or local intake but the number of mentally and physically disabled children within the local authority area. In order to establish typical special school journey patterns, vehicle surveys were undertaken by the applicant at both the Clockhouse and Wyvern School to determine the number of inbound and outbound vehicles using the school access during morning (07:30 – 09:30) and afternoon (14:30 – 15:45) peak periods. Using the statistics from the vehicle surveys undertaken it should be noted that, as a result of the co-location of both schools on the one site, peak hour vehicle trips would increase from 120 vehicle movements (arrivals and departures) in the morning peak (08:00-09:00) to 181 vehicle movements during the same period, and from 106 vehicle movements (arrivals and departures) during the evening peak (14:30-15:30) to 181 vehicle movements during the same period. The Transport Statement details that overall traffic movements for the primary school are significantly lower than would be expected from a conventional primary school due on the whole to a greater use of minibus transport. With regard to minibus transport, it is noted that many of the mini buses that visit the secondary school also visit the existing primary school to pick up and drop off children.
32. In relation to the MASH proposals, the Transport Statement notes that the centre would provide specialist assessment and support for mentally and physically disabled children and their families. It details that the specialist children services which the centre would provide are currently being provided in a number of different centres around the Ashford District and east Kent area generally. That means that children and their parents currently have to travel to different locations, for example to undertake hearing tests,

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see a dentist, undertake education assessment, etc., which invariably results in a relatively high number of single trips being undertaken every year. By co-locating these KCC and PCT operated services into one single centre, it is intended to coordinate each of these different functions and reduce the number of child and parent visits required every year. Furthermore, by locating the MASH proposals on the same site as the Wyvern School, it would be the case that further disruption to children's daily routines would be reduced as many of the children within the school would use the MASH facilities, so reducing the need to travel and make a separate journey from their daily school trip. The Statement does however note that the bespoke nature of this specific element of the proposal means that there is no readily-available data available that can be used to forecast likely person and vehicle trip generations. Instead both KCC and the PCT have provided data on expected permanent and visiting staff attendance at the site, assuming the expected level of assessments and clinics being carried out every week.

33. The total number of staff visits per week is expected to be 374. It is proposed that only the Social Services element would operate 7 days per week, resulting in approximately 20 visits per day. The other specialist facilities would generate approximately 218 visits 5 days per week, equating to approximately 44 per day. Therefore the total daily visits are expected to number 64, but not all of these staff would be on site at the same time as many would be part time, occasional or visiting staff. In terms of children undergoing assessment, it is expected that 356 appointments would be made every week. The majority of these would comprise more than one assessment, thus reducing the need to travel for multiple assessments at different centres. Additionally, a large number of children who would undergo assessment would be expected to originate from Wyvern primary and secondary schools. KCC and the PCT have calculated that the co-location of assessment services and location on the Wyvern site would reduce external trips by 70 percent, a factor which is applied to visitors to the MASH only, and reduces daily visitor trips from 71 to 21. The applicant notes that the majority of these external trips would take place outside the morning and evening peaks with appointments being spread across the whole working day.
34. The applicant has then assumed that 75 percent of all the 64 daily staff trips coincide with the morning and evening peaks (i.e. 08:00-09:00 and 17:00-18:00). That has been derived by looking at the number of staff who would be permanently based on the site (66) and by the full and part time employment, giving a total peak hours staff trip generation of 47 people. That number was then factored from statistics taken from the Victoria Ward 2001 Census Workplace Statistics, which were used to determine both the likely mode share for the MASH proposal and the most likely route that vehicles would take to and from the site. The Census data for the Garlinge Ward indicates that 62 percent of employees travel to work by single cars. When the peak staff generation figure (47) has been factored by the modal share percentage (62%), the total peak hours trip forecast shows 29 cars per hour. A further 15 mobile visiting staff per day are expected to travel by car during the off-peak period, thus the total staff parking demand per day is expected to be 44 (29 permanent staff + 15 visiting staff). The applicant has indicated however that it is unlikely that all these staff would be on site at the same time, and therefore the demand for parking at any one time is expected to be 44.
35. Of the 21 external visitors (patients) expected at the site per day, 10 percent are expected to travel at peak times. These people would typically be the first and last appointments for the day. Given that most of this group would be bringing children with learning and physical disabilities, it is expected that most would drive. In summary, the

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potential daily car trip generation for the MASH could be up to 65 vehicles per day (44 staff + 21 patients).

36. The specialist nursery is expected to cater for no more than 12 pupils at any one time. Many of the pupils would have high demands for specialist teaching and resources, with the likely demand for places not dictated by a typical catchment area but instead by the number of disabled users in the Borough.
37. Transport modelling software has been used by the applicant to calculate the transport impact of the three elements of the proposed development on the local road network. The assessment of traffic capacity was carried out using worst case assumptions taken from KCC and PCT data and traffic surveys of existing school users. The analysis showed that following introduction of the proposals most of the local traffic network would operate within its capacity. The south bound approach to the A28/Brookfield Road/Chart Road roundabout is shown to be slightly over capacity, with a slight worsening of this situation following introduction of development traffic. However, that does assume a worst case development situation and no redistribution of traffic associated with the Victoria Way scheme, which is due to commence construction in March 2011, and no successful effect from the proposed staff and school travel plan. Traffic modelling carried out by Jacobs for the Loudon Way signalised junction (as part of the Victoria Way scheme) suggests that there will be a reduction in traffic on the A28 corridor following introduction of the scheme, by as much as 25 percent. It is therefore concluded by the Transport Statement that the current development proposals are unlikely to result in any significant additional delay.
38. As part of the proposals, the applicant has submitted an Interim Travel Plan which details a commitment to implement a full site Travel Plan, should the proposals be implemented. The Travel Plan contains a variety of initiatives, schemes and ideas of how travel concerned with the site could be made more sustainable, particularly through a reduction in the incidence of single-occupancy car journeys and raised levels of public transport use and staff commuting to the site on foot or by bike.
39. The applicant expects construction operations to last approximately 3-4 months. Site offices, staff parking and welfare facilities would be located on the construction site, with a compound provided on the western side of the site. Access would be obtained via a new mini roundabout junction located at the site access, with appropriate signage clearly indicating where construction and school traffic is to route. The existing left in/left out access onto the A28 Great Chart Bypass would be used, and it is expected that most of the construction phase would take place during the school summer holiday period in 2011. Delivery and construction HGV traffic would be accommodated on the construction site, with no requirement for waiting on the public highway or on side roads in the vicinity. Vehicles would be routed to and from the construction site via the A28, with the project management team ensuring that all deliveries and visiting traffic are aware of this requirement.

Planning Policy

40. The most relevant Government Guidance and adopted Development Plan Policies summarised below are relevant to the consideration of this application:
 - (i) **National Planning Policies** – the most relevant National Planning Policies are set out in PPS1 (Delivering Sustainable Development), PPS5 (Planning for the

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Historic Environment), PPS9 (Biodiversity and Geological Conservation), PPG13 (Transport), PPG17 (Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation), PPS23 (Planning and Pollution Control) and PPS25 (Development and Flood Risk)

(ii) The adopted 2000 **Ashford Borough Local Plan (Saved Policies)**:

Policy EN13 The Council will protect and enhance the ‘Green Corridors’ in Ashford. Measures to improve their appearance and nature conservation value will be permitted provided they do not damage the green corridor environment, including the rivers and other watercourses. Proposals for new buildings will not be permitted within the ‘Green Corridors’ in Ashford – except in accordance with Development Sites policies or where the development would be ancillary to the open space use or their existing uses within them.

Policy EN23 Archaeological investigation and any appropriate safeguarding shall take place.

Policy TP6 Proposals for any building used by the public should provide an appropriate level of secure parking spaces for cycles.

Policy LE12 Proposals involving the loss of playing fields will be permitted only where there would be no significant impact on the quality or character of the local environment and (amongst others) where an alternative playing field is provided of at least equal leisure value and located so that the local community can readily use it.

Policy CF19 The Council will seek the provision of new multi-practitioner centres in the Ashford urban area.

Policy CF20 Proposals for nurseries will be permitted if there would be no significant effect on nearby residential amenity, there would be no significant traffic flow or highway safety problems arising as a result of vehicle movements to and from the site and adequate parking is provided for staff, and, the property is within a town or village or at an existing school.

(iii) The adopted 2000 **Ashford Borough Council Green Corridor Action Plan (Supplementary Planning Guidance 1 to 2000 Ashford Borough Local Plan)**

This Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) identifies the site within part of Ashford’s ‘Green Corridor’ network where the overarching objective is to retain their open character and to enhance their contribution to the environment.

It identifies two sites in close proximity to the development site – Singleton Lake (to the south of the application site) and Bucksford Meadow (to the south west of the application site) which are important leisure and wildlife areas.

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The SPG is now largely superseded by the new Wyvern Secondary School development which took place around 2004, under planning consent AS/03150, granted by the County Planning Authority.

(iv) The adopted 2008 **Ashford Borough Council Local Development Framework Core Strategy**

Policy CS1 Recognises that sustainable development and high quality design are at the centre of the Council's approach to deciding planning applications.

Policy CS9 Development proposals must be of high quality

Policy CS10 All major developments must incorporate sustainable design features to reduce the consumption of natural resources and to help deliver the aim of zero carbon growth in Ashford.

Policy CS11 Development proposals should avoid harm to biodiversity and geological conservation interests, and seek to maintain and, where practicable, enhance and expand biodiversity by restoring or creating suitable semi-natural habitats and ecological networks to sustain wildlife.

Policy CS15 Development proposals must show that all highway, public transport, walking and cycling needs arising from the development will be satisfied. Developments that would generate significant traffic movements must be well related to the primary and secondary road network, and this should have adequate capacity to accommodate the development.

Policy CS19 Proposals for new development within the 100 year undefended river floodplain will not be permitted unless following a Flood Risk Assessment it can be demonstrated that:

- (i) it would not be at unacceptable risk of flooding itself, and,
- (ii) the development would not result in any increased risk of flooding elsewhere.

In exceptional circumstances, where the tests above cannot be met, other development on a brownfield site may be allowed if:

- (a) the development is designed to be compatible with potential flood conditions, and,
- (b) there are no alternative sites in a lower risk zone, and,
- (c) the development would make a significant contribution to the overall sustainability objectives of the LDF, such that the wider sustainability benefits of the development outweigh the flood risk, and,
- (d) it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council and the Environment Agency that any residual flood risks are adequately mitigated to avoid an increased risk of flooding either on site or elsewhere.

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In addition, development that would harm the effectiveness of existing flood defences or prejudice their maintenance or management will not be permitted.

Policy CS20 All development should include appropriate sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) for the disposal of surface water, in order to avoid any increase in flood risk or adverse impact on water quality.

Consultations

41. **Ashford Borough Council:** raises no objections to the application.
42. **Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council:** realises the benefits of having all facilities on a single site. They do raise concern about the exit from the school grounds which is supposed to be by turning left onto the A28 Great Chart Bypass only. The Parish Council has raised concerns that this restriction is not enforced and often not followed. They consider that during the construction work and when the facilities are fully operational there will be considerably more traffic entering and leaving the site and request that the left turn only on exit of the site be more rigorously enforced.
43. **Divisional Transportation Manager:** raises no objections to the proposals, subject to the imposition of conditions to secure construction operations; the permanent retention of vehicle and cycle parking spaces; and the provision, implementation and on-going review of a site Travel Plan within six months of first occupation of the buildings.
44. **Sport England:** raises no objection to the development, subject to conditions covering: a detailed assessment of ground conditions of the land proposed for replacement playing fields; a scheme to ensure that compensatory playing fields would be provided to an acceptable quality (including appropriate drainage where necessary); and that a Community Use Scheme be agreed to cover community use of the school facilities.
45. **Environment Agency:** raises no objections to the application subject to: (i) the development being carried out in accordance with the submitted Flood Risk Assessment; (ii) that provision of compensatory flood storage on/or in the vicinity of the site to a 100 year (20% climate change) standard; and (iii) finished floor levels are set no lower than 40.42m AOD.
46. **County Council's Archaeological Advisor:** notes that the site lies on the 3rd Terrace River Gravel deposits, as confirmed by the Ground Investigation Report accompanying the application. These gravel deposits have the potential for survival of rare and sensitive Palaeolithic remains, and the overlying Alluvial deposits could contain palaeoenvironmental remains. It would be preferable if pre-determination geoarchaeological test pitting could be undertaken to clarify the nature of the River Terrace Gravels on the site and to confirm whether the proposed groundwork's could potentially disturb sensitive archaeological remains.
47. **County Council's Biodiversity Officer:** is satisfied that the Ecological Scoping Report has adequately assessed the ecological value of the site. Recommendations are made for further surveys (bats and badgers) and measures to minimise the risk of harm to reptiles that may be using habitat adjacent to the proposed development areas.

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It is noted that in this instance it is not essential for the recommended bat and badger surveys to be carried out prior to the application being determined. This is on the basis that there are no/limited bat roosting opportunities on the development footprint itself and therefore the recommendations of the bat survey are not likely to lead to mitigation requirements beyond sympathetic lighting design. Similarly, the development footprint has limited suitability for badger use, although there is potential for a sett to be present around the edge of the site. Nevertheless, a badger survey needs to be undertaken and any mitigation implemented prior to and during construction works.

Supports the principle of ecological enhancements at the site, in accordance with the general principles of PPS9.

48. **Kent Wildlife Trust:** is satisfied that an experienced consultant has carried out appropriate ecological scoping of the site and its surroundings. The Trust however urges the Council to test the proposal against the standing advice from Natural England. The Trust has no objections to the development subject to planning conditions to secure the submission for approval of a survey to establish the presence/absence of a badger sett; the submission of a detailed external lighting specification; the implementation of ecological mitigation measures set out in the ecological scoping report; the submission of a biodiversity strategy and ecological management plan to realise the enhancements identified in the ecological scoping survey and the funding of the ecological management plan in turn leading to periodic key habitat and species monitoring.
49. **EDF Energy:** has raised no objections to the proposals.

Local Member

50. The local County Members, Mr. R. King and Mr. J. Wedgbury, were notified of the application on the 17 March 2010.

Publicity

51. The application was publicised by the posting of a site notices at the site entrance, a newspaper advertisement in the KM Extra, and the individual notification of 18 residential properties.

Representations

52. To date I have received two letters of representation in respect of this application. The letters set out various grounds of objection to the proposals, the key points of which are outlined below: -
- The proposed extensions have been set out to maximise the building size due to the amount of land available with little thought of the four private dwellings situated to the south west of the schools plot, namely along Bucksford Lane;
 - The senior school in the existing building caters for 130 pupils. The extension, in effect almost doubling the school size, is designed to hold the junior school. However, when viewed in pupil numbers, the proposed junior school is only to be for 8 full time pupils and 32 part-time pupils. Hence the obvious and unexplained question is, why does the extension need to be the same size as the senior school

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whilst only catering for a fraction of the pupils (in fact only 30% of the pupils at peak time, and only a ridiculous 6% of full time students)?

- The design of the proposed new primary school pushes the buildings and car park onto what are at present sports fields. The plans for the re-situated sports field, football pitches and new addition of the running track have then been forced deeper into the field right up to the southern boundary of the school grounds, which back onto 2 private dwellings;
- Re-contouring of land to provide the new sports pitches will, most likely, be at a height to the ground that backs onto land with 2 private dwellings, resulting in overlooking of residential gardens and dwellings being achieved;
- In addition to sport activities during school time, during weekends, school holidays and summer evenings a number of local youths climb over the fence in Bucksford Lane to use the football pitch in the school ground. The football pitch at present is currently located approximately 100m from residential boundaries, yet as part of the proposals it would be located only yards from residential boundaries. Add this situation to an elevated position of the pitch, and all this constitutes a complete loss of amenity through a loss of privacy and a dramatic increase in noise and people levels. This all results from the over development of the new junior school and the knock on consequences of moving the sports area;
- Concerns raised over noise from players and spectators using the new sports pitches, particularly if the frequency of the field use is opened up to other outside organisations for community use;
- Seek assurances that the proposed 5-a-side football pitches with goal posts would be constructed on sites furthest away from residential properties;
- Concerns raised over potential balls flying into nearby residential properties causing damage to property;
- Disappointed to see that the planners, whilst investigating environmental, traffic and numerous other potential impacts of the development, decided to ignore or simply bypass local residents when setting out these proposals. If planners had liaised with residents at the end of Bucksford Lane who would be directly impacted by the proposals, issues could have been discussed and potentially allayed before they hit the drawing board;
- Concerns raised relating to proposed earthworks proposed to screen new buildings;
- Raises the question as to whether the proposed new junior school wing could be placed where the new sports pitches are intended to be located (i.e. in close proximity to residential dwellings) and the existing sports fields stay where they are at present;
- An electricity pole currently situated in the school grounds appears to be, on the proposed plan, in the middle of a football pitch.

DiscussionIntroduction

53. The application seeks planning permission for the construction of a new primary school wing to the western end of the existing secondary school to house the relocate Wyvern Primary School provision currently located off-site at the Clockhouse, the construction of a Multi Agency Specialist Hub (MASH) and Specialist Nursery for disabled children at the eastern end of the existing school, together with new and re-configured car parks, a new internal service road and the provision of new playing fields through the re-contour of currently unusable grassed land. The application is being reported to the Planning Applications Committee as a result of the two residential objections received (as

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outlined in paragraph 52 above). In considering this proposal, regard must be had to the Development Plan Policies and National Planning Policy Guidance as outlined in paragraph (40) above. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan and National Planning Policy Guidance unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Therefore the proposal needs to be considered in the context of the Development Plan Policies, Government Guidance and other material planning considerations arising from consultation and publicity. In my opinion, the key material planning considerations in this particular case can be categorised under the following headings:

- the impact of the proposals on local residential amenity, particularly relating to the construction and use of replacement playing field provision;
- the nature of the proposed development in terms of conformity with national planning policy relating to flood risk;
- highway issues;
- ecological and archaeological interests; and
- any other issues arising from consultation and publicity.

Impact on residential amenity

54. There are a number of amenity considerations to take into account when determining this proposal. First, Members will note from the concerns expressed by several nearby residential properties located immediately adjacent to the south-western boundary of the school site, and adjacent to an area of undulating ground which is proposed to be re-contoured to provide replacement playing field provision, that they remain concerned that this element of the proposal would lead to a complete loss of their amenity. As can be seen from the residential concerns outlined in paragraph (52) above, there are a number of related issues centred around the creation of new playing fields within this area closest to private dwellings, the most fundamental being the ability of users of the new playing field pitches to achieve an elevated view into residential gardens and dwellings beyond. Whilst I note and support the concerns of the local residents in this instance, the key to the degree of impact upon private dwellings in this locality would be dependent on the final ground level height to which the re-contoured playing pitch surface would be constructed. To this effect, whilst the applicant has been able to provide indicative cross sections through the re-contoured playing field, I propose that the pitch level be reserved out for later consideration should planning permission be granted. That way further discussion could take place between the applicant, the County Planning Authority, Sport England and the two adjoining properties in order to ensure that a reasonable ground level is achieved, safeguarding, as far as is possible, residential amenity. Furthermore, discussions would also need to take place with the Environment Agency, given the nature of part of the site within the Great Stour floodplain, in order to ensure that any new playing field ground level was appropriate and would not lead to an increased risk of flooding to the existing school, any new development constructed on the site, or on any existing surrounding development. The latter requirement being consistent with both PPS25 and Core Strategy Policy CS19 in terms of ensuring new development does not propose a significant flood risk danger.
55. Typical concerns have been raised relating to noise emanating from players and spectators using the new school playing fields on nearby residential properties, particularly if the frequency of the field use is opened up to other outside organisations for community use outside of traditional school core hours. Conversely I note that it is

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the desire of Sport England, through Community Use Schemes, to encourage Schools to open up both indoor and outdoor sporting provisions to local teams/clubs for wider community usage and sporting benefits. In this instance I note that Sport England has requested that the applicant enters into a Community Use Scheme, which would cover aspects such as hours of use of the playing field for community usage. Clearly an increase in community use of the playing fields in this locality would have an impact on nearby residential amenity and therefore it would need to be a careful balancing act between achieving appropriate hours of use which would allow a local wider sporting benefit, whilst maintaining residential amenity as far as is reasonably possible. I note that physical constraints on the hours of use of the proposed grass playing field pitches would, to a certain extent, be determined by external factors such as the weather and daylight hours. Whilst the applicant has not been able to provide details of any intended community hours of use of the new playing fields in this instance, I propose that this issue be secured through planning condition within a Community Use Scheme in the event of planning permission being granted. I consider that this approach is consistent with the general principles contained in PPG17 and that the proposed development accords with the principles of Local Plan Policy LE12 in terms of providing alternative playing field land of at least equal leisure value and located so that the community can use it.

56. Another related concern which has been raised in this instance is with regard to the possibility of balls flying into nearby residential properties causing damage as a result of the relocated playing pitch locations. This issue is largely a school management issue, but it is anticipated that by achieving an appropriate ground level on the new playing field pitch that this problem should not occur to any significant extent. Another school management, and potentially Police matter, which has been raised by local residents in this case is that of youths entering the site and using the playing fields on an unauthorised basis out of school hours. Whilst I sympathise with the residents concerns, particularly in respect of locating playing pitches closer to their boundaries, the carrying out of activities on site in an unauthorised manner is not specifically an issue I can afford significant weight to in the decision making process, since it is a management and site security issue, and arguably no more likely to occur than it could do at present.
57. Members will note that the question of building location for the proposed primary school wing has been raised by a local resident, to the effect that they consider that a swap of the proposed new primary school wing and proposed new playing field area would be preferable. The applicant has confirmed that there is no intention to move the proposed primary school wing to the south-western corner of the school grounds, adjacent to nearby residential dwellings, on the basis that it would compromise the wider setting of Bucksford Grange and potential a Grade II Listed Building, Buxford Mill, slightly further south-west. Furthermore, a new primary school building in this part of the site would neither be practical given the length of new access road required to access it, nor would it be easily accessible or physically connectable to the main secondary school building which the current proposals seek to achieve. I am satisfied that this suggestion is neither practical nor would be supported in general terms from a planning perspective.

Flood risk

58. A key factor in the determination of this application has been the issue surrounding flood risk. Members will note that the application site spans Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3, with part of the new built development (the MASH and Specialist Nursery) falling within

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land designated as high risk from fluvial flooding within Flood Zone 3a. A Flood Risk Assessment which accompanied the application detailed the Sequential Test in which the applicant undertook in terms of identifying suitable development sites within the broad Ashford locality, for which all other development sites were rejected on the basis of cost, nature, topography, availability and size of plot. The FRA then identified the classification of the proposed development within the 'more vulnerable' classification whereby National Planning Policy states that such uses should only be permitted in Flood Risk Zone 3a if the Exception Test is passed and that development is designed and constructed to remain operational and safe for users in times of flood.

59. Justification was submitted with the application, for which the applicant considered that demonstrated that the application was compliant with the requirements of the Exception Test, as set out in PPS25. Following detailed discussions with the Environment Agency, and the submission of further information by the applicant in respect of flooding issues, it is noted that the Environment Agency has not raised an objection to the development (see paragraph 45 above) subject to a number of conditions. These conditions include that the development must be carried out in accordance with the submitted FRA, that provision is made on-site for compensatory flood storage capacity to a 100 year (20% climate change) standard and that finished floor levels of the MASH/Specialist Nursery building be constructed to no lower than 40.42m AOD. The applicant has accepted all conditions imposed by the Environment Agency and confirmed their intention to excavate an area of land north of the re-configured secondary school and MASH car park to create additional on-site flood storage capacity to the requirements dictated by the Agency. They have also confirmed that the finished floor level of the MASH and Specialist Nursery building would be constructed to a level of 40.60m AOD, above that level set down by the Environment Agency (40.42m AOD). Furthermore, the applicant has given a commitment to sign up to the Agency's Flood Warning System.
60. I am therefore satisfied that the proposed development accords with the guiding principles of PPS25, together with the requirements of Ashford Core Strategy Policy CS19. In the absence of a statutory objection on flooding grounds from the Environment Agency, I do not raise objection to the various elements of the proposed development on the Wyvern Secondary School site in this instance.

Highway issues

61. As discussed in paragraphs (30) to (39) above the highway impacts associated with this development have been well documented and discussed in detail with the Divisional Transportation Manager. In summary, the co-location of Wyvern Primary School and Secondary School onto the single site is intended to result in a pupil and staff increase as a result of predicted growth within the Ashford area by some 12.8 percent from a combined total of 173 children and 114 teachers (based on existing primary and secondary school rolls) to 194 pupils and 129 staff. Clearly the bringing together of two schools onto a single site would result in a higher proportion of site traffic, for which Transport Statement accompanying the application details that peak hour vehicle trips would increase from 120 vehicle movements (arrivals and departures) in the morning peak (08:00-09:00) to 181 vehicle movements during the same period, and from 106 vehicle movements (arrivals and departures) during the evening peak (14:30-15:30) to 181 vehicle movements during the same period. The Transport Statement does however point out that overall traffic movement generally to and from the site would be significant lower than would be expected from a conventional school due on the whole to a greater user of minibus transport.

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62. In considering the highway impacts from the MASH element of the proposal, it is noted that the centre would provide specialist assessment and support for mentally and physically disabled children, the existing services of which are currently being provided around Ashford District and the east Kent area generally. Paragraphs (33) to (35) outline associated vehicle movements in connection with this element of the proposal, however in summary the MASH is expected to generate potential up to 65 vehicles per day (44 staff and 21 patients). The Transport Statement accompanying the application does however detail that many of the Centre's clients are likely to be those pupils attending either the Primary or Secondary Special Education Needs Schools on site, thus cutting down the time, vehicle movements and the need to travel around the District to clinical appointments.
63. Paragraph (36) above details that the Specialist Nursery is expected to cater for no more than 12 pupils at any one time. This is largely constrained by the size of the nursery building and the high demands and specialist teaching requirements of the users of the nursery.
64. The applicant has used transport modelling software to calculate the highway impact of the three elements of the proposed development on the local road network. That analysis demonstrated that following the introduction of the proposals most of the local traffic network would operate within its capacity. It did note that the south bound approach to the A28/Brookfield Road/Chart Road roundabout is shown to be slightly over capacity, with a slight worsening of this situation following the introduction of the development traffic. However, this assumes worst case scenario and does not take into account the redistribution of traffic associated with the Victoria Way road scheme, due to commence construction in March 2011, which is expected to result in a general reduction of traffic in the local area by as much as 25 percent. The Transport Statement accompanying the application therefore concluded that the development proposals are unlikely to result in any significant delay to the local road network.
65. In terms of on-site parking provision the application details that a total of 162 vehicle parking spaces would be provided, including the provision of 34 disabled spaces. The applicant considers that this would be ample provision to cater for the needs of the various elements on site – the new primary school, the existing secondary school, the MASH and the Specialist Nursery facility. In addition, 48 new cycle parking spaces would be provided, together with 9 new motorcycle parking spaces. I consider this approach to be consistent with the general principles set out in PPG15, together with Local Plan Policy TP6 which requires proposals for any new public buildings to include appropriate levels of secure parking spaces for cycles. Together with the submission of a site Travel Plan within six months of the first occupation of the buildings, I consider that the proposed development would balance the need for parking provision against the overarching target to encourage staff to travel to and from work in a more sustainable pattern.
66. The application details that construction operations would be expected to last approximately 3-4 months. All activities, including offices, parking and welfare facilities would be located within the application site as to minimise potential disturbance to the local area. Access would be obtained via a new mini roundabout junction located at the site access, with appropriate access indicating where construction and school traffic should route. Furthermore, it is expected that most of the construction phase would take place during the school summer holiday period in 2011. I am satisfied that the measures proposed by the applicant in respect of construction activities are appropriate

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and proportionate to the level of the proposed development in this instance and would seek to reduce, as far as practicable, impact on local amenity. Furthermore, in order to ensure that construction activities are carried out during appropriate periods and therefore to safeguard local amenity, I would propose to impose a condition to restrict all construction activities to between the hours of 08:00 and 18:00 Monday to Friday, 09:00 and 13:00 on Saturday and no operations taking place on Sundays, Bank and Public Holidays.

67. In considering the impact of the various elements of the proposals on the local highway network, the professional advice of the Divisional Transportation Manager was sought. He considered that subject to the imposition of planning conditions to secure a number of matters (as set out in paragraph 43) there are no overriding grounds to substantiate a highway objection to these proposals. He is satisfied that the proposed development is acceptable in terms of highway capacity issues, on-site parking provision and in terms of highway safety issues.
68. Based on the professional advice received from the Divisional Transportation Manager in this instance, I am satisfied that the various elements of the proposals could be accommodated on this single site without a significant adverse impact on the local highway network. Subject to the imposition of conditions to cover a number of highway-related aspects, I do not raise objection to this proposal on the basis of highway matters and consider the proposals to be broadly in line with both national and local transport policy namely PPG15, Local Plan Policy TP6 and Ashford Core Strategy Policy CS15.

Impact on ecological and archaeological interests

69. The application is accompanied by an Ecological Scoping Report which identified that the proposed development is not expected to impact on any designated nature conservation sites, however the development would be located within 25 metres of the Great Stour (Ashford to Fordwich) Local Wildlife Site. The Report concluded that a number of mitigation measures and further survey work be undertaken including the erection of newt and reptile exclusion fencing around the construction area prior to commencement of works, badger and bat activity surveys be undertaken and ecological enhancement measures be incorporated into the scheme where possible to contribute towards objectives of PPS9. It is noted that the County Council's Biodiversity Officer is satisfied with the conclusions of the Report and notes that further survey need to be undertaken and any necessary mitigation measures put in place prior to and during construction works. I note that the required badger and bat surveys are currently being progressed by the applicant and should be available to the County Planning Authority in due course. I propose to ensure that any relevant mitigation measures be imposed on the development arising from the findings of these surveys by planning condition in the event of permission being granted.
70. Kent Wildlife Trust (see paragraph 48) has requested that a number of additional measures be secured by planning condition in the event of permission being granted, including the submission of an external lighting scheme and a site biodiversity strategy and management regime including periodic key habitat and species monitoring. I support the request for an external lighting scheme to be submitted to the Planning Authority for approval, but consider that the submission of a site biodiversity strategy and management regime, including periodic habitat and species monitoring, is not proportionate to the scale and nature of the development in this instance. I am satisfied that subject to conditions to secure the submission of badger and bat surveys together

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with any necessary mitigation measures prior to and during construction activities, the submission of an external lighting scheme, and the submission of details of site biodiversity enhancement measures that the proposal accords with general principles contained in PPS9 and Ashford Core Strategy Policy CS11. I also consider that the proposed development would not contradict with the wider objectives and principles of Ashford 'Green Corridors', as detailed in Local Plan Policy EN13 and Supplementary Planning Guidance 1 [Ashford Borough Council Green Corridor Action Plan] which accompanies the 2000 Ashford Borough Local Plan.

71. Members will note that the County Council's Archaeological Advisor has highlighted that the development site lies on an area which has potential for the survival of rare and sensitive Palaeolithic remains, such that they have requested that pre-determination geoarchaeological test pitting be carried. It is noted that these pre-determination archaeological test pitting are currently being undertaken on site and are likely to take around a week starting from the 23 August 2010. The findings of the archaeological examination will then be used to agree a specification for groundwork's, together with any further necessary archaeological excavation or mitigation measures. I therefore propose that a condition be placed on any forthcoming consent to ensure that there is scope to agree any reasonably appropriate archaeological works and mitigation as necessary. I am satisfied that this approach is consistent with the objectives of PPS5 and Local Plan Policy EN23.

Other issues arising from consultation and publicity

72. Members will note that Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council (see paragraph 42) has expressed concerns relating to the use of the left hand turn only exit onto the A28 Great Chart Bypass. They express concern that quite often traffic leaving the school site does not follow this instruction and instead attempts to cross the carriageway, turning right when leaving the site. I note that at present the entrance/exit way is clearly signposted to indicate that users should turn left only. Unfortunately it is directly outside of the jurisdiction of the County Planning Authority to specifically enforce this matter, other than to ensure that the exit layout is appropriately designed and that it is well signposted. In terms of construction traffic and ultimately as a result of final occupation of the development, it is accepted that the use of this entrance/exit slip road would inevitably increase. To this effect I propose that the applicant be reminded of correct entry/exit procedures for the site by way of an appropriately worded informative on any forthcoming positive decision.
73. Members will note that residential concerns have been expressed relating to an existing electricity pole currently located on part of the undulating school grounds, which would, as part of the proposals, form part the new sports playing pitches. Quite clearly an electricity pole in this locality would compromise the ability of the new fields to be used to their full intended capacity. I understand that the applicant is involved with ongoing discussions with the Electricity Company regarding the reposition of this pole to an appropriate location.
74. Residential concerns have been expressed relating to the lack of consultation with local neighbours, particularly by 'Planners' during the design stages of the current proposals. This concern is a little misleading as full notification was undertaken by the County Planning Authority with neighbouring properties at the end of Bucksford Lane at the point when the planning application was received. The concerns expressed by the resident here however actually relate to a lack of pre-application discussion/consultation

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undertaken by the applicant with any nearby neighbours concerning the applicant's proposals. Whilst the County Planning Authority encourages pre-application discussions and consultations with key stakeholders, including any potentially affected residents, it is ultimately down to the applicant should they wish to undertake this prior to the application being formally submitted for consideration by the Planning Authority. Nevertheless, discussions are now underway between the neighbouring properties, the County Planning Authority and the applicant relating to technical aspects of this project, particularly in relation to issues surrounding the re-contouring of the new playing field area.

75. A question has been raised by one local resident relating to the need for such a substantial sized primary school for a relatively small number of pupils. It is important to consider the special education needs of the pupils attending both the primary school and secondary school elements of this proposal in this instance, particularly given that larger space requirements and smaller teaching sizes are more akin to this type of school as opposed to mainstream schools in general. The applicant has identified a local need in this instance, taken account of projected growth for both primary and secondary school SEN pupils within the Ashford Borough and east Kent area generally, and drawn up proposals for an appropriately sized new primary school wing. Furthermore, the nature of the catchment area for the schools is largely different from traditional mainstream schools as pupils often come from further afield to attend specialist schools. In this instance I see no reason to question the specific space requirements of the proposed new primary school wing.

Conclusion

76. The proposal seeks to provide a new primary school wing, a Multi Agency Specialist Hub and Specialist Nursery within the grounds of the existing Wyvern Secondary School. The concept driving the various elements of the proposed development is the co-location of special educational needs services onto a single site, thereby providing a number of efficiency savings to both the end users of the site, the County Council and Primary Care Trust alike. Having fully considered the potential environmental, highway and amenity impacts of the proposals, together with other concerns expressed as a result of consultation and publicity, I am satisfied that there are no overriding grounds for object to the proposed development in this instance. I am satisfied that the proposed MASH and Specialist Nursery building has been designed in such a way to avoid any significant flood risk to either users of the building, the school site generally or other sites along the Great Stour River in the general locality. To this effect I note that no statutory objection has been raised to the proposals by the Environment Agency, subject to a number of conditions as set out in paragraph (45) above. Furthermore, I note that highway impacts have been fully considered in this instance and subject to a number of conditions as set out in paragraph (43), the Divisional Transportation Manager raises no objections to the proposals in terms of local capacity, highway safety and parking provision issues.
77. Whilst I note the concerns raised by several residential dwellings to the south west of the application site in this instance, for the reasons discussed I am confident that the vast majority of their concerns can be overcome through further consideration of playing field ground levels and the hours of community use of the new playing fields following a decision on the general principles of the development. Furthermore, I note that individual discussions are taking place with these neighbours, the County Planning Authority and the applicant to address their concerns as far as is reasonably possible.

Extension to form new Primary School wing, construction of a Multi Agency Specialist Hub and construction of specialist early years nursery – The Wyvern School, Ashford – AS/10/380

78. For the reasons set out and discussed throughout this report I therefore recommend accordingly.

Recommendation

79. I RECOMMEND that PLANNING PERMISSION BE GRANTED, SUBJECT TO conditions, including conditions to cover the following aspects:

- 5 year implementation period;
- the development to be carried out in accordance with the permitted details;
- development be carried out in accordance with submitted Flood Risk Assessment;
- provision of compensatory flood storage capacity on site to a 100 year (20% climate change) standard;
- finished floor level within MASH / Specialist Nursery set no lower than 40.42m AOD;
- Community Use Agreement to include hours of community use of the new playing fields;
- assessment of ground conditions of land proposed for replacement playing fields;
- scheme to ensure that new playing fields are provided to an acceptable quality (including appropriate drainage where necessary);
- playing field ground level to be agreed;
- external materials to be agreed;
- submission of detailed landscaping scheme and implementation with first planting season following construction activities;
- measures to prevent mud and debris being tracked out onto the public highway;
- parking being made on site for construction operatives and construction vehicles during construction works;
- vehicle and cycle parking (as proposed in the application) being provided prior to the first occupation of building and permanently retained on site thereafter;
- submission of a site Travel Plan within six months of the first occupation of either and/or both the two buildings (whichever date occurs first), and on-going monitoring and review thereafter;
- submission of badger and bat surveys, together with any necessary mitigation measures to be provided prior to commencement and during construction activities;
- erection of newt and reptile fencing around the construction site prior to and during all construction activities;
- submission of biodiversity enhancement measures to be incorporated on site;
- external lighting to be agreed;
- hours of construction limited;
- further archaeological works and mitigation to be agreed with Planning Authority following findings from pre-determination trial trenching; and
- surface water drainage measures to be agreed.

I FURTHER RECOMMEND that the applicant be reminded by way of INFORMATIVE of the following matters:

- requirement to sign up to the Environment Agency's Flood Warning System;
- requirement for vehicles to observe left hand turn in and out of the site entrance/exit slip road with the A28 Great Chart Bypass at all times; and
- requirement to ensure that electricity pole is relocated to suitable location

Item D2

Extension to form new Primary School wing, construction of a Multi Agency Specialist Hub and construction of specialist early years nursery – The Wyvern School, Ashford – AS/10/380

Case officer – Julian Moat	01622 696978
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Background documents - See section heading
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Proposed Children's Centre, Marden Primary School – MA/10/1209

A report by Head of Planning Applications Group to Planning Applications Committee on 7 September 2010.

Application by Kent County Council for the refurbishment of the existing school house located within the boundary of Marden Primary School, and conversion into a self-contained children's centre, with parking to the front and steel fire escape to the rear, Marden Primary School, Goudhurst Road, Marden, Near Tonbridge (Ref: MA/10/1209)

Recommendation: Permission be granted subject to conditions.

Local Member(s): Mrs. P Stockell

Classification: Unrestricted

Site

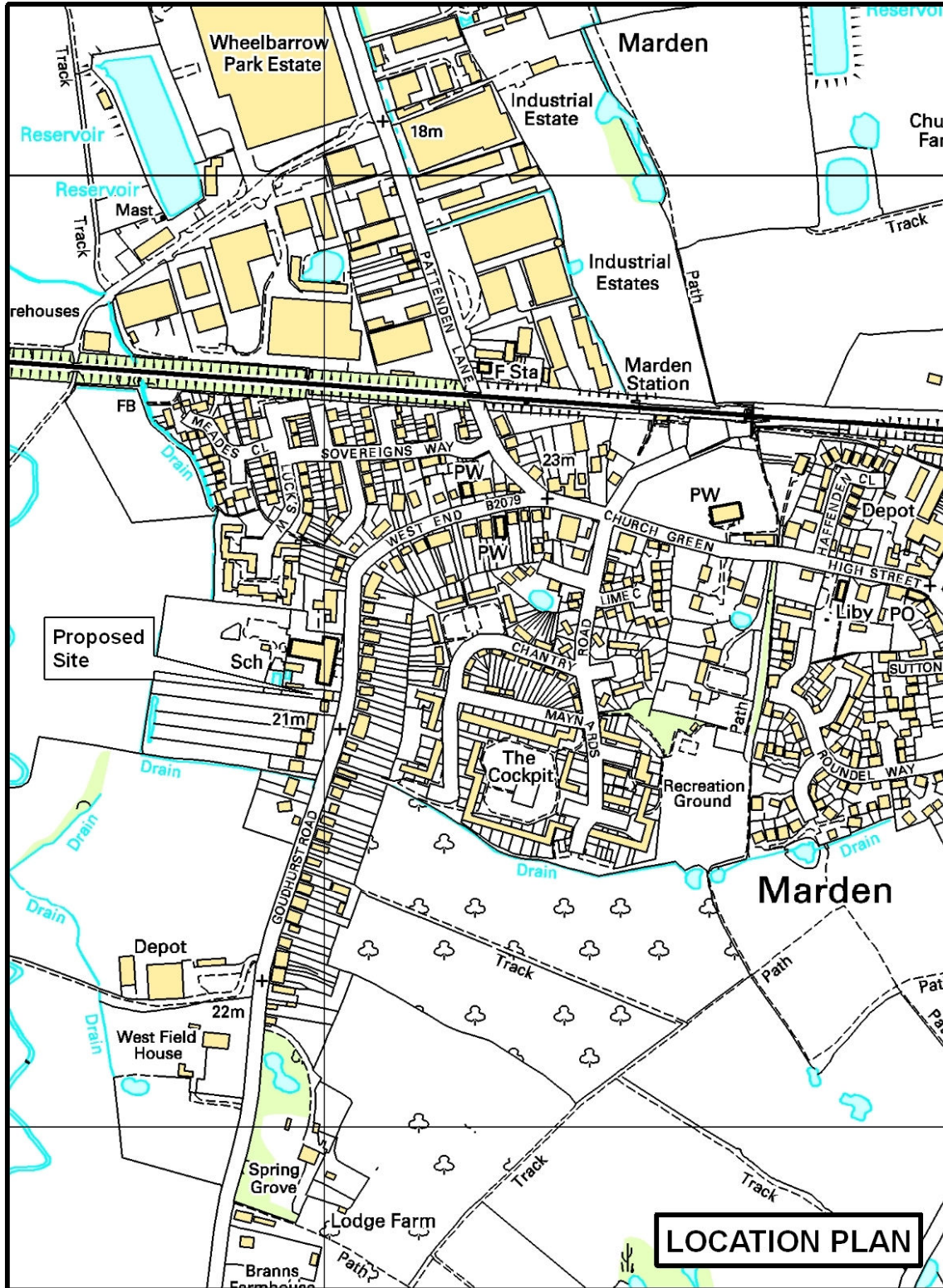
1. The application site forms part of an existing village primary school, and comprises the former school house on the school's road frontage. The property is a detached house and its last stated use is residential, albeit in County Council rather than private ownership.
2. The school site as a whole is included within the built confines of Marden village, fronting the B2079 Goudhurst Road, which is the main road through the village but which increasingly becomes residential away from the village centre. The site is therefore bordered by residential properties, apart from the school itself on the north side (see Site Location Plan). There are no specific Development Plan notations relating to this part of the settlement.

Background

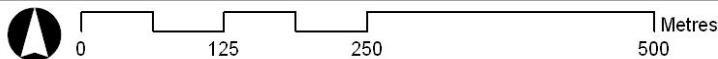
3. This proposal is part of Phase 3 of the national programme of delivering Sure Start Children's Centres, of which 102 are planned to be provided across Kent. These centres aim to provide a range of parent and child services in a more integrated and accessible way than otherwise available. The services include:
 - outreach services for isolated parents/carers and children at risk of social exclusion;
 - information and advice to parents/carers on a range of subjects;
 - support to child minders via a quality assured, coordinated network;
 - activities for children and parents/carers at the Centre;
 - links with Jobcentre Plus; and
 - access to community health services.

The applicants advise that in the main, the Centres build on existing private, voluntary or independent or statutory services for children and families, such as schools, health centres, nurseries and family centres.

Proposed Children's Centre, Marden Primary School – MA/10/1209



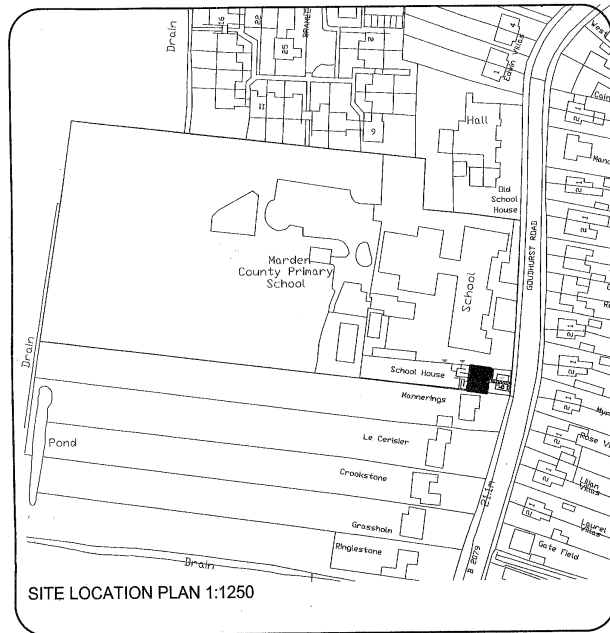
LOCATION PLAN



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Proposed Children's Centre, Marden Primary School – MA/10/1209

SITE PLAN AND PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT PLANS (Do not scale)



BLOCK PLAN 1:500

- NEW GARDEN GATES
- NEW BOUNDARY FENCE
- EXTING GATE REMOVED
- NEW RAMP
- NEW STEEL FIRE ESCAPE
- SINGLE PARKING SPACE
- DISABLED PARKING BAY
- DROP KERB

Rev	Date	Drawn	Modf	Check	Appr'd
Client: KENT COUNTY COUNCIL					
Project: MARDEN PRIMARY SCHOOL CARETAKERS HOUSE MARDEN TONBRIDGE TN12 9JX					
Title: EXISTING AND PROPOSED PLANS AND ELEVATIONS					
Reason for Issue: PLANNING					
Design: JB			CAD: JB		
Check: SF			Appr'd: SF		
Date: APRIL 2010			Scale: 1:100 UNLESS STATED		

AECOM

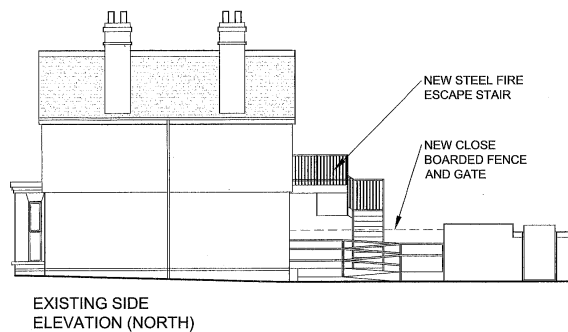
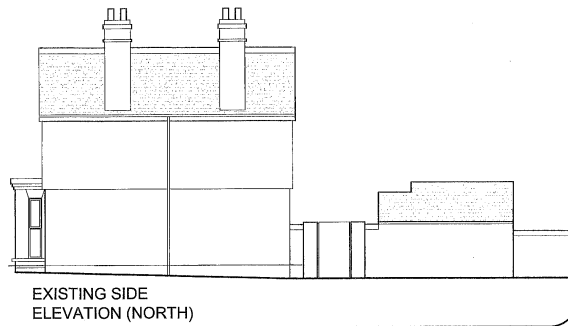
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East Malling
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Tel: +44 (0) 1732 221340
Fax: +44 (0) 1732 221389
www.aecom.com

No. 60098914-116 / 001

Proposed Children's Centre, Marden Primary School – MA/10/1209

PROPOSED ELEVATIONAL CHANGES



Proposal

4. The application seeks full planning consent for the refurbishment of the existing school house to provide a self-contained children's centre, with parking to the front, a fire escape to the rear and the erection of 1.8 metre high close boarded timber fencing to the garden area. The ground and first floors would be remodeled, involving the removal of some internal walls and repositioning of the internal staircase with a new platform lift. New internal walls would be adequately insulated to provide both thermal and sound insulation. Although not directly applicable, the design ethics would aim to correspond with the BREEAM 'Very Good' rating.
5. Externally, the front garden wall and railings would be removed with a hardstanding created to provide off-street parking for staff and a disabled parking space. Since an external play area is not required for this Children's Centre, the existing rear garden area would be retained for use by the School, with a close boarded fence erected along the full width of the property to provide a rear courtyard for the Centre, for fire escape, bin store and a ramped rear access into the school grounds. A new galvanised steel fire escape staircase is proposed to the rear of the property, to meet current Fire Safety Regulations, with some external emergency lighting.
6. The external alterations to the school house would include the widening of the front and rear doorways to provide the required 1 metre wide accesses for wheelchair users, whilst retaining the existing lintel detailing, the bricking up of two rear windows to allow the internal lift to be provided, and one rear window to be converted into a replacement rear doorway and vice versa. The intentions are to use matching brickwork and to retain existing features as far as practicable, including restoring and replacing where necessary the cast iron rainwater goods
7. The proposed Children's Centre would be required to be open 2 hours per day, on five days per week, with the flexibility to open outside these hours to meet local demand and needs. The opening hours are designed to prevent any disruption or increase in visitors to the site during peak school drop-off and pick-up times, given that some of likely extra needs could be provided from other venues in the Centre's catchment area, albeit under the Centre's overall management.
8. The Children's Centre would employ a Centre Manager, a Community Involvement Worker and an Administrator/Receptionist, together with a cleaner/caretaker. These posts are not necessarily full-time or indeed dedicated to this one Centre, with the core staff expected to be working within other venues within the catchment area as well. Staff employed within the surrounding area would be expected to walk and any required to drive would use the space provided at the Centre. The proposed car parking includes one staff parking space and one disabled parking space.
9. Visitors to the Centre are expected to drop in when necessary on an individual basis, but in the event of a pre-arranged activity there could be no more than 8-10 parents at the centre at any one time. Since the parents and children that would attend such activities would only be those from the local community, it is fully expected that they would walk to the Centre. Parents from the wider catchment would be expected to use the other venues in the catchment area, including medical surgeries, village halls, etc. Only when occasional events such as a seminar are being provided would there be several people arriving at the same time, but close coordination with the School would ensure that such events do not coincide with any school activities or drop-off/pick-up times.

Proposed Children's Centre, Marden Primary School – MA/10/1209

Planning Policy

10. The Development Plan Policies summarised below are relevant to the consideration of the application:

The adopted **Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan (2000)**:

Policy ENV2 Requires all proposals for new developments in village settlements to relate sympathetically to the context of their setting and adjoining buildings, with regard to scale, height, proportion, detailing and materials, building frontages, highways and car parking, etc. with due regard given to the reasonable enjoyment of their properties by neighbouring occupiers.

Policy CF2 In considering the change of use of existing redundant community facilities, the Borough Council will need to be satisfied that an identified need for community facilities, that could be met on the site, does not exist.

Policy T13 All proposed development should comply with the adopted parking standards

Consultations

11. The following views have been received from consultees:

Maidstone Malling Borough Council: raises no objections to the proposal.

Marden Parish Council: had raised the following queries in response to this application:

- could the fire escape be moved to the opposite side of the building to reduce the adverse impact on the neighbouring property to the south, and could it be conditioned for emergency use only?

- could the southern boundary fence be raised to 1.8 metres, should the garden area be a separate application for change of use, and why is it all included in the application site boundary?

- part of the street scene would be lost if the existing wall and railings were removed for parking, and the parking is not considered adequate for what is proposed, with some parents still driving to the Centre. Alternative on-site parking should be explored.

In response to further information on these aspects, the Parish Council has not objected in principle, but has asked for the following to be considered:

- the need for the fire escape is understood, but they wish to see it moved to the opposite side of the building;

- the use of the garden area by the School as a nature area and outdoor classroom is noted; and

- they feel strongly that the parking arrangement could lead to additional traffic congestion and the street scene would be altered if the wrought iron railings were removed (which have been identified in The Marden Society's *Register of Historic Street Furniture*).

The Divisional Transportation Manager: has commented as follows:

"Whilst I have objections to the current proposals in respect of highway matters it may be possible to overcome these objections if amendments were made.

Kent Highway Services has concerns regarding accessibility to the site and the location is deemed unsafe to consistently reverse in and out of the site. Given the size and dimensions of vehicles carrying disabled personnel, it is deemed unsafe for drivers to reverse out of the site, given the following concerns from my observations:-

- Zebra Crossing guard railing would cause hindrance for visibility when reversing*
- Foliage from neighbouring properties would also cause a lack of visibility when reversing out of the site*
- Safety is the key issue, therefore vehicles must enter and leave the site in a forwards facing gear.*

For the application to proceed, Kent Highway Services would like to see a turning area fronting the 'Old School House' allowing a vehicle to enter and leave the site in a forward facing gear to maximise highway safety. Alternatively, the applicant could seek permission from the School regarding vehicular parking."

The Environment Agency: has no comments to make on the application.

Local Member

12. The local Member, Mrs. P Stockell, has been notified of the application and at the time of writing has submitted no written views on the application.

Publicity

13. The application was publicised by the posting of a site notice and the individual notification of 19 nearby residential properties.

Representations

14. In response to neighbour notification, 3 letters of representation have been received, from adjacent addresses in Goudhurst Road. The key points of concerns and objections can be summarised as follows:
 - We have no problem in general with the proposed children's centre use, but are concerned over parking impacts, the proposed fire escape and the use of the rear garden.
 - The proposed parking to the front of the property would have no turning facility, meaning vehicles would either have to reverse in or reverse out onto a busy road on the apex of a bend, where commuters' cars are parked during the day and where school parents park at arrival and departure times. The proposed parking spaces and the on-street parking by visitors to the centre would greatly add to the current congestion.

Proposed Children's Centre, Marden Primary School – MA/10/1209

- We strongly object to the positioning of the proposed fire escape, which seems particularly large and ugly, and would practically overhang our conservatory and be clearly visible to us and our neighbours. If it was moved to the other side of the rear elevation it would be a little less invasive.
- The proposed use of the rear garden area by the School could bring school noise considerably closer to our rear garden, separated by only a low brick wall. If the area became a play area, then balls and other objects might get thrown over damaging the flowers and shrub borders.
- Living opposite the site, we already have trouble with people parking across our driveway, so are concerned about the parking arrangements, the hours of use, numbers of adults and children attending and whether the house will look aesthetically in keeping.
- Given the daily congestion outside the School House with school parents and children waiting for the school gates to be opened, the parking at the School House would only exacerbate an already potentially dangerous situation on a narrow pavement with very limited space.
- Parking in the vicinity of the school is a nightmare at the beginning and end of the school day, with parents parking across residents' driveways creating considerable road safety hazards with their selfish parking. The application states that the Centre would be used by local residents able to walk to the facility, but the same could be said of the school which also serves local children and who do not walk. However, my biggest concern is where the additional Children's Centre traffic would park.
- A previous proposal to remove the front fence was refused because the property is on a blind bend in the road and would be an accident waiting to happen. The pelican crossing cause enough problems and the footway on the school side has already been widened, thereby narrowing the road and visibility when leaving driveways. If the development was to proceed all cars should back into their drives and no cars should be left on the road.
- The site would become an accident 'black spot' and where would the contractor's vehicles park? They should park in the school car park and not in front of our houses.
- The development would be a waste of money given the limited opening hours, and a site meeting would be a good idea for local residents to air their views.

Discussion

15. The application is required to be determined in accordance with the relevant Development Plan policies, unless other material considerations are of overriding importance. Therefore, the proposal needs to be considered in the context of the Approved Local Plan and other material considerations, including those arising from consultation and neighbour notification responses. In this particular case, the determining issues would therefore include relevant planning policies, parking, access and traffic aspects, external alterations and residential amenity aspects.

Policy Context

16. Current Development Plan policies do not generally presume against the proposed development, as long as it is compatible in design terms with its context and surroundings, accord with highway and parking requirements and has acceptable impacts on neighbouring properties. There is a Local Plan policy presumption against the loss of community facilities by changes of use, but in this particular case the

Proposed Children's Centre, Marden Primary School – MA/10/1209

proposed change involves a change from one community use to another. Under the circumstances, I see no objection in principle from a planning policy viewpoint, but the detailed considerations below on design, parking and amenity will inform the consideration as to whether there is any substantive conflict with the Development Plan policies.

Parking, Access and Traffic Impacts

17. The parking provision for the proposed Children's Centre has provoked concerns over its adequacy, its suitability in road safety terms and its impact on the streetscape. Additionally the Centre itself is a concern to neighbouring residents in terms of potential traffic generation. The provision of parking space at the Children's Centres across the County is based on the operational parking needs, ie. the numbers of staff based at the Centre, on the understanding that some staff would be peripatetic and not there all the time the Centre is open, whilst others would live locally and be expected to walk to there. Visitors to the Centre would also be those living in close proximity, given that those from further afield would be expected to visit other satellite facilities closer to where they live. Under the circumstances, there is no need to provide more than the two spaces provided in the application and the Divisional Transportation Manager has accepted this level of provision as being appropriate.
18. The suitability of the proposed front parking area is however of concern, given the need for vehicles to either reverse off or onto the road, as well as the visual impact of the loss of the front boundary treatment. With regard to road safety aspects, the Divisional Transportation Manager is objecting to the proposal in its current form and has indicated that there either should be space for vehicles to turn around within the site, or else spaces should be made available elsewhere within the school site, as also suggested by the Parish Council. Since the front garden is of limited size (10 metres wide by 7-9 metres deep), I do not consider that there is sufficient space to include a turning area as well, unless only one space was provided. I also consider that it would be impracticable to improve the sightlines at the access point for emerging vehicles without impacting on the neighbouring property to the south, which is outside the control of the applicant. Notwithstanding the highway safety objections, there are also visual amenity concerns regarding the proposed frontage parking area.
19. In order to create the parking spaces to the front, it would be necessary to remove the whole of the existing dwarf walling and ornamental iron railings. I agree with consultees and objectors that the loss of the front walling and railings would be regrettable, because it is one of the few remaining frontages in Goudhurst Road with original railings that has not been removed/replaced to create off-road parking. Moreover the brick walling corresponds with the school house and is a characteristic feature of the remnant historic streetscape here, and continues along the entire frontage of the school site. Nevertheless, the school house is not Listed nor within the Conservation Area, and it is entirely possible that were the building sold as a private house then its new owners could readily replace the attractive garden, walling and railings and create a front parking area with very little intervention of planning control. Given that the removal of the front boundary would only provide space for two vehicles, and with no safe turning space, on balance I consider that the removal of the frontage walling should be resisted and that alternative arrangements should be agreed with the School. In particular, there is a recently extended car park within the school site which could be used by the Centre Manager by arrangement with the School, but Members should be aware that it might not be possible to provide the required disabled parking space within the expected 50 metres of the premises.

Proposed Children's Centre, Marden Primary School – MA/10/1209



20. The Parish Council and some neighbouring residents are also concerned about the wider traffic impacts of the Children's Centre, whilst not objecting to the principle of this particular use of the school house. As mentioned above, the use of the Centre is such that there would not be many visitors during its opening hours and only very rarely at any one time. In the main, visitors would attend pre-arranged appointments throughout the working day, and specifically to avoid the peak times for the delivery and collection of school pupils. The objections voiced tend to reflect an existing school traffic congestion issue, which the current application would scarcely contribute to, because of the Centre's more sporadic activity and the fact that its visitors would either be able to readily walk there or would already be visiting the school. The applicants have also advised me as follows in this regard:

"We do not envisage the proposed children's centre to increase the current congestion and volume of traffic. The provision of the Children's Centre aims to support families with children under 5 years in the local area and families living in Marden will be encouraged to walk to the new children's centre. Although, as with all round 3 centres, this children's centre has a large catchment area, the children and families that live outside of Marden are not expected to travel to the centre to access the services. In order to reach those families further a field, the Children's Centre team is currently delivering a range of outreach services in local venues such as village halls and community centres, this outreach service is part of the Children's Centre Core Offer and will continue once the Centre is built.

In order to further avoid any increase in traffic/disruption, Children's Centre services are planned and delivered at times after and before School drop offs and collections, eg morning groups usually run 9:30am - 11:30am and afternoon sessions run 12:30 - 2:30pm. Any groups that will be run in the new centre will be small. It is anticipated to

Proposed Children’s Centre, Marden Primary School – MA/10/1209

only have groups of 6-10 children, with their carer, and any larger groups will be held in alternative venues such as village halls. Car parking is proposed as indicated on the submitted drawing and is for a member of staff and disabled bay only: No further cars are proposed to be parked on the front drive of the property.”

External Alterations and Residential Amenity Impacts

21. The proposed alterations to the school house to accommodate the Children’s Centre are largely internal and beyond the scope of planning control, but some of these have ramifications for the external appearance and arrangements. The proposed alteration to the front doorway to accommodate wheelchair users has the unfortunate effect of distorting the precise proportions of the door and window openings which are all of equally slenderness and correspond with the original house proportions. However, this is a minor and otherwise unavoidable adulteration to meet current equal access requirements, and the sort of alteration that could be introduced to any (unlisted) property without planning consent. Of more concern is the removal of the front wall and railings to accommodate the car parking area, as discussed above (*para. 19*).



22. The proposed alterations to the rear door and windows of the school house are more extensive but not in themselves significant to the overall appearance of the rear of the building. Of more concern is the introduction of the steel fire escape staircase and the opening up of the rear garden area for more regular use by the School. The

Parish Council and the neighbours are concerned about the visual intrusion and the potential for overlooking from the external staircase. The adjacent house extends further back than the school house, and has a blank side elevation at this point, but it has a glass conservatory extending into its rear garden area which potentially would be overlooked. Whilst the need for the staircase is also unfortunate for such a small building and operation, bearing in mind that for most of the time it will be less used/occupied than any of the neighbouring private houses, I would agree that it would have less impact on the neighbouring property if it could be sited further way to the north. However, the practicalities of achieving that are such that there is very little option beyond the currently proposed arrangement, and the applicants have advised me as follows:

“From a design perspective, by repositioning the staircase to the left it will create a clash with the position of the new stair stringer, therefore causing a height clearance issue to the ground floor exit door. The suggested reposition will also compromise the ramps for the DDA secondary means of escape to the rear of the property. The current design has had to reposition an entire door entrance on the ground floor so that anyone entering or exiting would not hit their head against the new fire escape, by switching it to the left we would face a similar issue and the internal layout could not accommodate a new door position. More importantly if positioned on the left instead of the right it would mean the fire escape would be right outside the children's toilet which is not acceptable.”

23. The fire escape egress has to be via the southernmost window opening of the first floor landing, because the other windows are to toilet areas and not communal space. Reversing the direction of the external staircase is also hampered by space restrictions, and would still mean the upper landing area is close to the neighbouring property. The applicant has offered to reduce the visual impact with some additional screening or planting, but that would need to be high to have any beneficial effect. Nevertheless, it needs to be borne in mind that the fire escape is intended for emergency use only, and hopefully would never need to be used, and if it was the users would be unlikely to be loitering to take in the view. Should planning consent be granted therefore, I would recommend that its use should be strictly confined by planning condition to emergency use only, and that the visual intrusion should be offset by the further conditional requirement for some additional screening as suggested by the applicants.
24. The rear garden would be subdivided under the proposals by new timber fencing to provide a separate service courtyard for the Centre with the larger part retained by the School as a nature garden and an occasional outdoor classroom space. Neighbouring residents are also concerned about potential noise nuisance, visual intrusion and litter arising from the proposed use of this area. Given that the use would be limited, and for most of the time not in any active use, and when used it would always be part of structured and supervised activity, I do not consider that the impacts on the neighbouring residents would be unduly detrimental. In particular, the proposed use of the school house garden area is unlikely to be any more intrusive than the use of any other (private) garden spaces that are adjacent to each other, and over which there is ordinarily very little planning control. In the event that planning consent is granted, a condition could also be imposed governing the use and activities relating to this part of the site, and it being managed in a sensitive and neighbourly manner by the School.

Conclusion

25. Whilst I see no objection to the *principle* of the proposed development, I consider that the proposed car parking arrangements need to be re-thought, together with some more neighbourly treatment of the proposed fire escape staircase. The latter is a matter that could be addressed by the imposition of a condition on any planning consent, but the car parking is a matter that needs to be addressed prior to issuing any planning consent, since that aspect alone might not be deliverable. On the assumption that these matters are capable of being satisfactorily addressed, I consider that the proposed development otherwise generally accords with the relevant Development Plan Policies, in terms of compatible building design aspects and impacts on neighbouring amenities. Whilst objections have also been raised to the impacts of the proposed development on road traffic conditions, I am of the view that the proposal would only marginally add to the existing vehicle movements and so that is not in itself a reason to withhold planning consent. Under the circumstances, I would advise that the proposed development does not significantly conflict with relevant Development Plan Policies and, subject to appropriate conditions to mitigate the areas of concern, I recommend that permission be granted.

Recommendation

26. SUBJECT TO the receipt of an amended plan showing an alternative provision of the proposed car parking spaces, I RECOMMEND that PERMISSION BE GRANTED, SUBJECT to conditions, including conditions covering:
- the standard 3 year time limit for implementation;
 - the specifications for external building materials to match the existing materials;
 - the use of the fire escape staircase being restricted to emergency use only;
 - the provision of additional screening between the proposed fire escape staircase and the adjacent residential property;
 - the use of the premises to be restricted to between 0800 and 1800 hours, Mondays to Fridays;
 - the use of the rear garden area by the school pupils to be restricted to supervised activities only; and
 - the use of the premises to be restricted solely to the uses applied for and development to be carried out in accordance with the permitted details.

Case Officer – Jerry Crossley	01622 221052
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Background documents –See section heading

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Item D4**Construction of a Multi Agency Specialist Hub (MASH) at land annexed from Garlinge Primary School & Nursery, Westfield Road, Margate – TH/10/227**

A report by Head of Planning Applications Group to Planning Applications Committee on 7 September 2010.

Application by Kent County Council Property Group for the construction of a Multi Agency Specialist Hub (MASH) for disabled children together with associated access roads and car parking at land annexed from Garlinge Primary School & Nursery, Westfield Road, Margate (TH/10/227)

Recommendation: Planning permission be granted, subject to conditions.

Local Member(s): Mr. R. Burgess

Classification: Unrestricted

Site

1. The application site comprises an area of approximately 0.65 hectares located within land currently forming part of the Garlinge Primary School and Nursery grounds. The site is generally flat with a slight rise of approximately 1 metre from north to south, laid with a grass surface, and has a variety of boundary treatments with nearby residential properties consisting of a mixture of steel palisade fencing and timber close boarded fencing. The application site in principle forms part of the School's playing field / open space provision, although the land is claimed to be surplus to the requirements of the School needs and therefore is not utilised during day-to-day operations. The buildings of the Primary School and Nursery are located to the south-west of the application site and have their own vehicular entrances leading off Caxton Road and Westfield Road. There is an existing playing field which separates between the application site and the existing primary school and nursery buildings.
2. The application site fronts on to and has an existing vehicular access point off Westfield Road. It is located within a predominantly residential area with traditional two storey early Twentieth Century terrace housing fronting Westfield Road to the north and north-west, a residential estate built in the 1990's of mixed two-storey residential dwellings to the east and south, and a public recreation ground and playing fields owned and maintained by the District Council to the south. Ridge heights of adjacent residential dwellings are between 7 and 8 metres above adjacent ground level. To the east of the residential estate is Hartsdown Technology College, a mixed ability secondary school. The application site is accessed from the A28 (Canterbury Road) via George V Avenue.
3. The application site lies outside of the identified urban confines as defined by Local Plan Policy CC1. The site also lies within an area designated as a Chalk Plateau Landscape Character Area (Policy CC2), characterised by a generally flat or gently undulating landscape with extensive, unenclosed fields under intensive arable cultivation. Having visited the site several times, I note that the particular parcel of land in question is surrounded almost entirely by existing residential development and there are no ground level long distance views towards the coast. As the application site consists of land capable of forming a playing field there is a policy presumption against development in this locality, as set out in National Planning Policy Guidance Note 17, unless there are exceptional overriding circumstances. This policy presumption is reflected by Sport England's adopted Playing Fields Policy and by Policy SR12 of the Adopted Local Plan.

Construction of a Multi Agency Specialist Hub and associated access roads and car parking, Westfield Road, Margate – TH/10/227

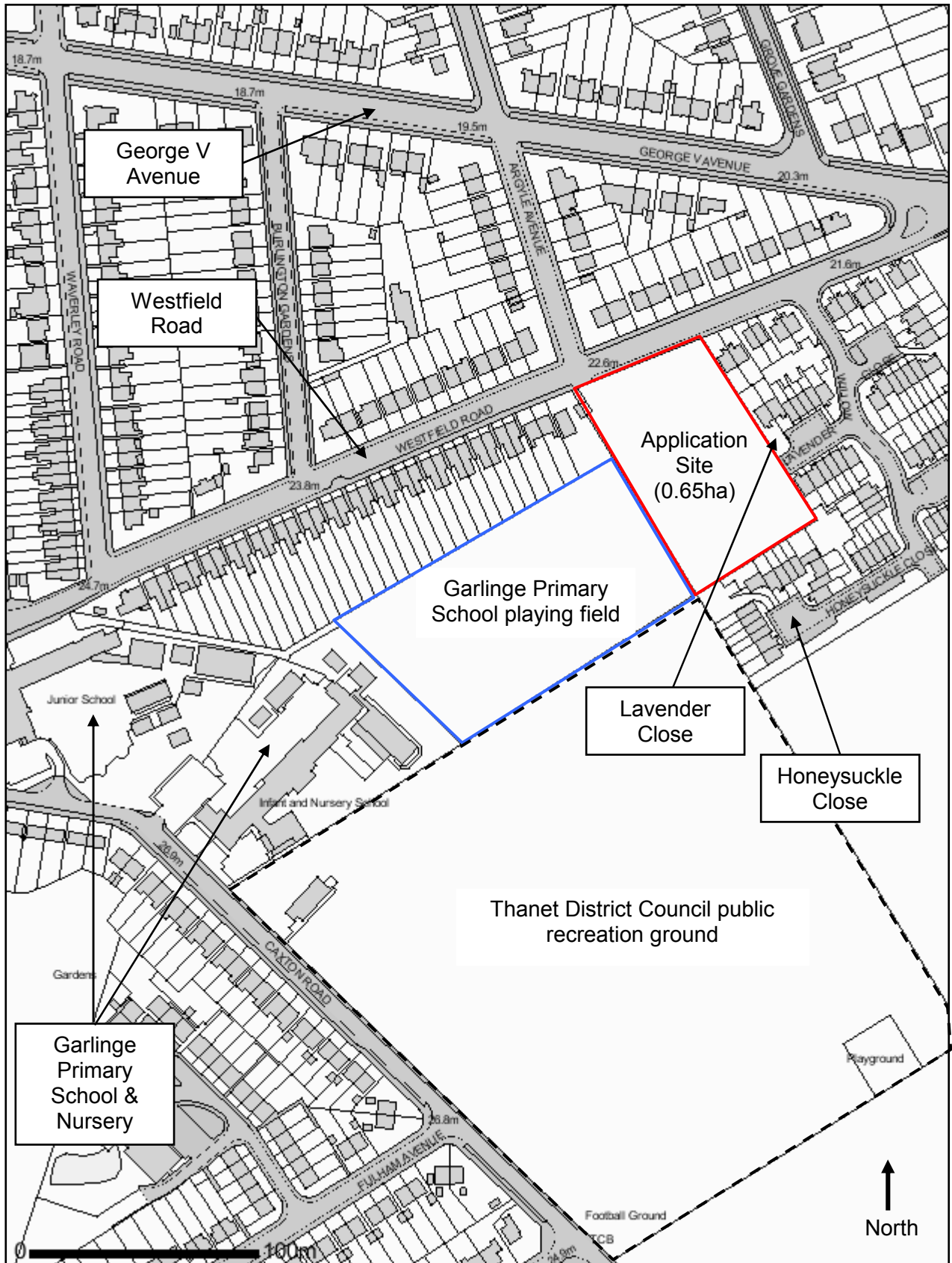
General Location Plan



General Location Plan
Scale 1:40000

Construction of a Multi Agency Specialist Hub and associated access roads and car parking, Westfield Road, Margate – TH/10/227

Site Location Plan



Construction of a Multi Agency Specialist Hub and associated access roads and car parking, Westfield Road, Margate – TH/10/227

Proposed Block Plan



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Proposed North West (Front) Elevation

Notes

- Do not scale from this drawing.
- Verify all dimensions on site. Before commencing any work, the contractor shall refer to the approved drawings and specifications. Any errors or omissions shall be reported to the designer or contract administrator immediately on discovery.
- The drawing remains the sole copyright of building information systems ltd. It is not to be used in any other project without the written consent of building information systems ltd. It is to be used in accordance with the relevant British Standards, codes of practice and any manufacturer's instructions.

Contractors should make themselves aware of the current building regulations and any amendments thereto. Any increase in the number of storeys or any other modification to the building shall be subject to the approval of the local authority. Approved details shown on site must be used. Approved details shown on site must be used.

Note: (Drawn as a condition of the contract) The contractor shall be responsible for the design and construction of the building and any associated access roads and car parking.

North West Elevation, Themed M.A.S.H.

Client: Kent County Council

Drawing No: 08/03-06

Issue: Planning Application

Scale: 1:200@A3

Rev: * **Date:** * **Desk:** *

Title: North West Elevation

Project: Multi Agency Specialist Hub - Thapet

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A general location plan is attached on page D4.2 and a site location plan on page D4.3.

Background

4. The application sets out that this project is a joint venture between the National Health Service (NHS) and Kent County Council (Health, Education and Social Services) to provide a multi agency assessment, development and resource centre for disabled children, young people and their carers.
5. Developing integrated processes for vulnerable groups of children and their families and promoting co-location of staff has been both a national and a Kent priority for a number of years. As a precursor, early work involved the development of Children's Centres and the strategic planning to implement the statutory duty within the Childcare Act 2006 to create local multi-agency early year's networks. These networks bring a range of professionals together to improve outcomes for young children and their families. Since 2005, the NHS and KCC have worked on developing a Kent response to the Government's requirement to roll out Early Years Support, which focuses on disabled children aged 0-5 and their families.
6. A number of multi-agency specialist hubs (MASH) are being developed around the County, including at Ashford, Sittingbourne and this application in Thanet. It is intended that they will offer a range of services, including:
 - Provision of a single base for KCC, NHS and third sector staff;
 - Multi-agency approach to providing advice, training and outreach support for early years settings, schools and leisure providers on disabled children, young people and their families;
 - Joined up approach to providing assessments, interventions and reviews for disabled children, young people and their families;
 - Specialist centre to enable severely disabled children and young people to be able to access a short break programme;
 - Specialist centre to promote the transformation of short breaks within the local area; and
 - Local community venue for providing training, advice and support for parents and carers.

Planning History

7. The application site itself has not been the subject of any known previous planning application proposals. Garlinge Primary School has had several minor applications for extended buildings and the development of a Children's Centre in recent years, the details of which are summarised below:
 - TH/08/1378 - Installation of a six-bay mobile classroom to provide additional staff room accommodation. Granted temporary planning permission February 2009;
 - TH/07/1315 – Refurbishment and extension works to create a Children's Centre. Granted planning permission November 2007;
 - TH/07/679 – Pathway linking Garlinge Infant and Junior Schools. Granted planning permission August 2007;
 - TH/05/496 – New 3 classroom extension, 1 multi-purpose teaching room, office and toilet extensions. Granted planning permission June 2005;

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Proposal

8. The application is made by Kent County Council Property Group and seeks planning permission for the construction of a Multi Agency Specialist Hub (MASH) for disabled children together with associated access roads and car parking on land currently forming part of Garlinge Primary School and Nursery grounds. Permission is sought for the construction of a new purpose-build community building together with external facilities, including boundary fencing, children's play area, amenity space, landscaping and vehicle drop-off and parking facilities. The centre would be operated by Kent County Council and the local Primary Care Trust (PCT) and would incorporate a number of different health, education and social service roles all within one single centre.
9. The proposal involves the construction of a part single and part two storey building with three "spokes" off a central hub with a combined gross internal floorspace of some 1750 sq. metres. Most of accommodation would be provided on ground floor level due to the particular specialist needs of this sector of the community, although some administrative and staff facilities would be provided at first floor level. The application sets out that design considerations, such as the increased height space allocated to the entrance and reception/common areas would, provide both visual interest to the external elevations of the building, but also perform an important function in providing a light, airy internal space and allowing views across and through the building to external play areas.
10. The application sets out that the south western arm of the building has been positioned so that the first floor window separation to adjacent residential buildings in Honeysuckle Close would achieve a minimum distance of 21 metres. The layout design has also allowed the building to be set back from the Westfield Road frontage to maintain the open aspect nature to the road frontage and maintain the separation between dwellings and the proposed drop off and vehicle parking areas. The extent of proposed 'built' development footprint on the site equates to 21 percent (1397 sq. metres) of the total site area (0.65 ha), with a further 29 percent (1905 sq. metres) allocated to internal service roads, vehicle parking and drop off areas.
11. The application details that the design of the building has taken account of the proximity to adjacent residential dwellings through the orientation of the building and the location of single and two-storey elements. At the closest point, the MASH building would sit approximately 7.3 metres at an oblique angle to the corner of No. 12 Lavender Close, and approximately 10 metres to a blank end elevation of No. 11 Lavender Close. The nearest residential properties with direct rear-facing views onto the application site (i.e. properties located in Honeysuckle Close) would be located some 16 metres from the corner of the proposed MASH building, and a minimum of 21 metres between first floor windows. In addition, generally the roofs rise up from the rear of the proposed MASH building to increase the perception of scale and mass of the building at its frontage whilst minimising the buildings bulk towards the east and south nearest residential dwellings.
12. The application is accompanied by a Transport Statement setting out anticipated travel details arising from the proposed development. Firstly it details that the specialist children services which the centre would provide are currently being provided in a number of different centres around the Thanet District and east Kent area generally. This means that children and their parents currently have to travel to different locations for example to undertake hearing tests, see a dentist, undertake education assessment,

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etc., which invariably results in a relatively high number of single trips being undertaken every year. By co-locating these KCC and PCT operated services into one single centre, it is intended to coordinate each of these different functions and reduce the number of child and parent visits required every year. However, the bespoke nature of this development means there is no readily-available data available that can be used to forecast likely person and vehicle trip generations. Instead both KCC and the PCT have provided data on expected permanent and visiting staff attendance at the site, assuming the expected level of assessments and clinics being carried out every week.

13. The total number of staff visits per week is expected to be 330. It is proposed that only the Social Services element would operate 7 days per week, resulting in approximately 20 visits per day. The other specialist facilities would generate approximately 200 visits 5 days per week, equating to 40 per day. Therefore the total daily visits are expected to number 60, but not all of these staff would be on site at the same time as many would be part time, occasional or visiting staff. In terms of children undergoing assessment, it is expected that 281 appointments would be made every week. Most of these would comprise more than one assessment, thus reducing the need to travel for multiple assessments at different centres. The applicant has therefore calculated that the co-location of assessment services would reduce external trips by 40 percent, a factor which is applied to visitors to the MASH only, and reduces daily trips from 55 to 33. The applicant notes that most of these external trips would take place outside the morning and evening peaks with appointments being spread across the whole working day.
14. The applicant has then assumed that 75 percent of all the 60 daily staff trips coincide with the morning and evening peaks (i.e. 08:00-09:00 and 17:00-18:00). This has been derived by looking at the number of staff who would be permanently based on the site (60) and by the full and part time employment, giving a total peak hours staff trip generation of 44 people. That number was then factored from statistics taken from the Garlinge Ward 2001 Census Workplace Statistics, which were used to determine both the likely mode share for the MASH proposal and the most likely route that vehicles would take to and from the site. The Census data for the Garlinge Ward indicate that 64 percent of employees travel to work by single cars. When the peak staff generation figure (44) has been factored by the modal share percentage (64%) the total peak hours trip forecast shows 28 cars per hour. A further 16 mobile visiting staff per day are expected to travel by car during the off-peak period, thus the total staff parking demand per day is expected to be 44 (28 permanent staff + 16 visiting staff). The applicant has indicated however that it is unlikely that all these staff would be on site at the same time, and therefore the demand for parking at any one time is expected to be lower than 44.
15. Of the 33 external visitors (patients) expected at the site per day, 10 percent are expected to travel at peak times. These people would typically be the first and last appointments for the day. Given that most of this group would be bringing children with learning and physical disabilities, it is anticipated that most would drive. In summary, the potential daily car trip generation for the MASH could be up to 77 vehicles per day (44 staff + 33 patients). Traffic analysis undertaken by the applicant identified that should the development be implemented, the proposals are unlikely to result in any significant additional delay on the transport network on the basis that the local traffic network would remain to operate within its capacity.
16. As part of the proposals, the applicant has submitted an Interim Travel Plan which details a commitment to implement a full site Travel Plan should the proposals be implemented.

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17. The applicant expects construction operations to last approximately 3-4 months. Site offices, staff parking and welfare facilities would be located on the construction site, with a compound provided on the site. Access would be obtained via a construction access located at the proposed site access, with appropriate signage showing where construction traffic is to route. Delivery and construction HGV traffic would be accommodated on the construction site, with no requirement for waiting on the public highway or on side roads in the vicinity. Vehicles would be routed to and from the construction site via the A28, George V Avenue and Westfield Road. The use of residential streets in the vicinity (e.g. Argyle Avenue, Burlington Gardens and Waverley Road) would not be permitted.
18. The application proposes the formation off a new access of Westfield Road. It is noted that an existing access already exists but the current alignment and dimensions are not suitable for the needs of this development. Instead, the existing access would be stopped up and a new vehicular entrance created in the centre of the site's road frontage with Westfield Road. A new internal access and car parking layout would be provided, including a drop-off and collection area, 14 disabled parking spaces and 31 additional vehicle parking spaces. Internal turning areas would allow vehicles to enter and leave the site in a forward gear, whilst appropriate visibility splays appropriate to the 30 mph speed limit of Westfield Road have been achieved. A dedicated refuse area has also been provided, allowing refuse vehicles to enter and turn in the site without affecting the main entrance of the building or Westfield Road. Motorcycle and cycle parking would be provided as part of the proposals.
19. The proposed development draws on the importance of external spaces as part of the scheme in terms of not only providing an attractive setting to the building, but also in terms of supporting the welfare of visitors, parents and carers of the MASH users. To this effect it is proposed that a well landscaped external environment would be created, together with a series of 'break-out' spaces. Car parking areas are intended to be interspersed with low level shrub planting and individual architectural planting to soften the extent of these hard areas. It is proposed to install new 1.8 metre high green weld mesh fencing to the front boundary of the site adjoining Westfield Road.
20. The adjacent residential buildings are of a traditional domestic scale in terms of building materials, thus resulting in little architectural detailing to match with in terms of the new MASH building. It is proposed that external wall surfaces would comprise a mix of panels of locally matched red stock brickwork, through colour render and hardwood timber cladding. It is intended that the choice of varying materials would help accentuate differences in the plane of the building, alternative sections of the building such as the main entrance, or changes in its use. Roofs would be constructed of a standing seam steel sheet system in grey with overhangs to the eaves providing shading and an emphasis to the roof form.
21. The application is accompanied by an Ecological Scoping Report. The Report concluded that the site has very low to negligible potential to support protected species. This view is established on the basis that the site comprises entirely amenity managed grassland. There is no further survey work recommended by the Report, yet it suggests that measures such as the installation of bat boxes, the creation of log piles and native tree, shrub and hedgerow planting present biodiversity enhancement opportunities for the locality as part of the proposed development.
22. As a result of on going discussions with Sport England during the consultation process a number of playing field mitigation measures were borne out of discussions between the applicant and Officers from the County Planning Authority. A package of mitigation

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measures has been offered by the applicant, which would be brought into use / operation prior to the first occupation of the MASH development proposed. These measures include the following:

- Pitch improvements to be carried out by the applicant, including ground levelling, removal of concrete foundations and improvements to surface water drainage on part of Thanet District Council's sports ground (adjacent to the school site) to provide a junior football pitch (U14). The area of new playing pitch is shown on page D4.9 and is currently unusable for the playing of sport due to its current undulating nature;
- Upgrade and refurbishment of the Garlinge Primary School swimming pool to provide changing facilities, toilets, heating, lighting and alterations to make the building more accessible. The intention is then to make the swimming pool available for community use;
- Allow community access to Garlinge Primary School's existing junior football pitch (U14); and
- Provide of a new pedestrian link within the existing fence between Garlinge Primary School's playing field and the Local Authority's playing fields to the south of the school.

23. It is noted that the community use of both Garlinge Primary School's swimming pool and junior football pitch would be subject to a Community Use Agreement which would need to be agreed between the applicant, Sport England and the County Planning Authority.

Planning Policy

24. The most relevant Government Guidance and adopted Development Plan Policies summarised below are relevant to the consideration of this application:

(i) **National Planning Policies** – the most relevant National Planning Policies are set out in PPS1 (Delivering Sustainable Development), PPS5 (Planning for the Historic Environment), PPS9 (Biodiversity and Geological Conservation), PPG13 (Transport), PPG17 (Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation) and PPS23 (Planning and Pollution Control).

(ii) The adopted 2006 **Thanet District Local Plan:**

Policy TR12 Substantial development generating travel demand will be required to provide convenient and secure cycle parking and changing facilities.

Policy TR15 Development proposals likely to generate significant travel demand and/or traffic movement will be required to demonstrate, through Green Travel Plans, specific measures to encourage and facilitate the use of walking, cycling and public transport in preference to private car travel.

Policy TR16 Proposals for development will be required to make satisfactory provision for the parking of vehicles (including, where appropriate, service vehicles).

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- Policy D1** All new development is required to provide high quality and inclusive design, sustainability, layout and materials.
- Policy D2** Development proposals will be well landscaped and maximise the nature conservation opportunities wherever possible.
- Policy HE12** Archaeology sites will be preserved and protected.
- Policy SR12** Built development will not be permitted on playing fields if it would be detrimental to the character of the area. Moreover, no development will be permitted on land last used as playing field unless there are exceptional circumstances, including, amongst others: the replacement of playing field of a similar or better standard in a suitable location and equivalent to or better management regimes; or if the proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor sports facility, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to sport and recreation as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss of the playing field. [Note that the five exception criteria in Policy SR12 reflect those set out in PPG17 as discussed in paragraph (37) below].
- Policy CC1** Within the countryside, new development will not be permitted unless there is a need for the development that overrides the need to protect the countryside.
- Policy CC2** On the Central Chalk Plateau care should be taken to avoid skyline intrusion and the loss or interruption of long views of the coast and the sea.
- Policy CF1** Planning permission will be granted for new community facilities if the proposals are not contrary to other Local Plan policies and the community use and location are demonstrated as acceptable.

Consultations

25. **Thanet District Council:** object to the application on the following grounds:

“The site lies outside of the identified urban confines, where Thanet Local Plan Policy CC1 applies. There is a presumption against development in the countryside, unless there is a need for the development that overrides the need to protect the countryside. The design and access statement includes little information about the need for the development and does not justify why the development needs to be in the proposed location. The site is also within the Central Chalk Plateau Landscape Character Area, where Thanet Local Plan Policy CC2 applies.

The site is a playing field for Garlinge Primary School and as such Thanet Local Plan Policy SR12 applies. There is a presumption against the development of playing fields. Whilst there are a set of five exceptions to Policy SR12, there is concern that the applicant has not adequately demonstrated that the development would meet any of these criteria.

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For the above reasons, the Council is concerned that the applicant has not submitted sufficient information to overcome principle policy considerations. Additionally, the Council has some concern over the potential noise and disturbance impacts on neighbouring residents”.

It should be noted that additional information was provided to Thanet District Council relating to the loss of playing field land (including details of the package of mitigation measures put forward by the applicant, as set out in paragraph 22, which has resulted in Sport England raising no objection to the proposed development) and justification for the development in terms of Local Plan Policies CC1 and CC2. The Council has not commented on the further information provided to date. Any additional views received prior to the Committee Meeting will be reported verbally to Members.

26. **Divisional Transportation Manager:** raises no objections to the proposals subject to the imposition of conditions to secure construction operations; the permanent retention of vehicle and cycle parking spaces; the closure of the existing access, removal of the existing vehicle crossing and reinstatement of the footway; completion and maintenance of the new vehicular site entrance; and the provision, implementation and on-going review of a site Travel Plan.
27. **Sport England:** raises no objections to the application on the basis of the following measures being implemented prior to the first occupation of the MASH building, to mitigate the impact on the existing Garlinge Primary School playing field:
- Pitch improvements, including ground levelling, removal of concrete foundations and improvements to drainage on part of Thanet District Council’s sports ground (adjacent to the school site) to provide a junior football pitch (U14);
 - Upgrade and refurbishment of the Garlinge Primary School swimming pool to provide changing facilities and toilets, heating and lighting and alterations to make the building accessible. The pool to then be made available for community use;
 - Community access to Garlinge Primary School’s junior football pitch (U14); and
 - Provision of a new link within the existing fence between Garlinge Primary School’s playing field and the Local Authority’s playing fields to the south of the school.
- Furthermore, Sport England request that a condition requiring a Community Use Scheme be imposed on any forthcoming planning consent. Such Scheme should cover community use arrangements for the Primary School playing field and the refurbished swimming pool facility.
28. **Environment Agency:** raises no objections to the application subject to the imposition of conditions to cover contamination and surface water drainage.
29. **County Council’s Archaeological Advisor:** notes that the site lies in an area of very high archaeological potential. In view of this it is advised that a programme of archaeological evaluation, together with any appropriate safeguarding, be added to any forthcoming consent.
30. **County Council’s Biodiversity Officer:** is satisfied that the Ecological Scoping Report has adequately assess the ecological value of the site and agree that there appears minimal potential for the development proposals to impact protected species. Given the current low ecological value of the site, there are plenty of opportunities that could be sought to achieve a net biodiversity gain on the site, thereby meeting the enhancement principles of PPS9 and gaining credit towards BREEAM certification.

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31. **Kent Police Architectural Liaison Officer:** no comments received to date. Any comments received prior to the Committee Meeting will be shared with Members verbally.
32. **EDF Energy:** has raised no objections to the proposals.

Local Member

33. The local County Member, Mr. R. Burgess, was notified of the application on the 8 March 2010.

Publicity

34. The application was publicised by the posting of two sites notices at the site boundary with Westfield Road, a newspaper advertisement in the KM Thanet Extra, and the individual notification of 23 residential properties.

Representations

35. To date I have received two letters of representation in respect of this application. The letters set out various grounds of objection to the proposals, the key points of which are outlined below: -
 - Currently there is a lot of traffic along Westfield Road due to the existence of Garlinge Primary School at one end and Hartsdown Technology College at the other. The traffic regularly causes parking problems and traffic hold-ups, and with the addition of this establishment this will only be exacerbated. There is in addition to this the concern for safety of the many children who walk and cycle to and from both schools, who would be placed further at risk by the lack of proper provision and the increase in parked cars and traffic;
 - Cannot see the majority of people using the bus to access this site especially if it is for disabled children – cars will be the transport used;
 - Concerns over the extra noise caused by drop off and picking up throughout the day;
 - The garden to our property backs onto the school field and whilst this proposal would not actually mean building behind our property we are concerned that this will pave the way for further expansion into the school field in the future. The development would lead to an increase in people walking between the MASH site and the main school buildings, leading to increased noise at our boundary;
 - It was our understanding that the multi agency hub was to be incorporated into the new Hartsdown Technology College buildings – why then is it necessary to build one attached to Garlinge School as well?
 - Concerned about overall security on the existing school field. Many residents who back onto the field have suffered acts of vandalism due to children accessing the field and using it as a playground. The addition of this application raises further concerns in this area – if the application site has access to the field then it would become a free for all and anyone who is bored will continue to vandalise property nearby with little concern to being called account for it;
 - This is supposed to be a residential area. It is extremely busy already and will be so built up that there will be no green space in this road at all;
 - Rubbish along Westfield Road is an existing problem, with a lack of rubbish bins provided;
 - Construction operations would be long, very noisy and disruptive to the area.

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DiscussionIntroduction

36. The application seeks planning permission for the construction of a Multi Agency Specialist Hub (MASH) for disabled children together with associated access roads and car parking at land annexed from Garlinge Primary School and Nursery, Westfield Road, Margate. The application is being reported to the Planning Applications Committee as a result of the two residential objections received (as outlined in paragraph 35). In considering this proposal, regard must be had to the Development Plan Policies and National Planning Policy Guidance as outlined in paragraph (24). Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan and National Planning Policy Guidance unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Therefore the proposal needs to be considered in the context of the Development Plan Policies, Government Guidance and other material planning considerations arising from consultation and publicity. In my opinion, the key material planning considerations in this particular case can be categorised under the following headings:
- the general conformity of the proposals against Local Plan policies relating to landscape character and urban confines;
 - the impact of the proposals on local sporting provision;
 - the impact of the proposals on nearby residential amenity;
 - the impact of the proposals on the local highway network;
 - the impact of the proposals on ecological and archaeological interests; and
 - any other issues arising from consultation and publicity.

Landscape Character and Urban Confines issues

37. Members will note that as outlined in the site description section of this report, the application site is defined by Local Plan Policy CC1 as being within land outside of the identified urban confines. Furthermore the land is also identified as falling within an area designated as a Chalk Plateau Landscape Character Area (Local Plan Policy CC2), characterised by a generally flat or gently undulating landscape with extensive, unenclosed fields under intensive arable cultivation.
38. Local Plan Policy CC1 states that *'development within the countryside will not be permitted unless there is a need for the development that overrides the need to protect the countryside'*. Whilst I recognise the importance of protecting the countryside from inappropriate development, and particularly as the case is here, protecting important green spaces within urban environments from such development, I have to weigh up the community benefit and need for the development in this particular locality. The site in question is no longer a wholly contiguous part of the wider undeveloped landscape, since it is surrounded by housing development on three sides (see plan on page D4.3), and it therefore makes very little contribution to the open area beyond. Whilst I accept that the retention of green space within developed areas is important, the amenity value here is very localised given the narrow public road frontage and its physical relationship with the open countryside beyond which has already been lost through its separation. Since there is a demonstratable need for wider and improved community services, I consider that there is a good case for setting aside the policy presumption (as set out by the District Council in paragraph 25) against development in this particular case on the grounds of an overriding need.

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39. Having inspected the site on several occasions and considered the impact of the proposals in terms of Local Plan Policy CC2, which highlights the care which should be taken in terms of avoiding skyline intrusion and the loss or interruption of long distance views to the coast and the sea within the Chalk Plateau Landscape Character Area, I consider that the proposed development does not conflict with the general thrust of this policy. In particular, the application site itself does not currently benefit from any long-distance views towards the coast and the proposed building would be a part single and part two-storey construction, which in my opinion would be in keeping with the heights of the two storey residential dwellings which surround the application site on virtually all sides. For information, please see Photograph 1 (below). For these reasons I do not consider the proposed development to conflict with the general thrust of Local Plan Policy CC2. It should also be noted that Landscape Character Areas are not in themselves zones for special protection, but rather are distinctive components within the wider mosaic of the landscape / townscape of the County, irrespective of their comparative quality.

Photograph 1: View of MASH development site road frontage with Westfield Road



(Photograph taken March 2010)

40. On balance, I consider that there is sufficient justification for the provision of the new wider and improved community facilities within the locality to outweigh any presumption against the development of this site in policy terms, notably against Local Plan Policies CC1 and CC2.

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Impact on local sporting provision

41. It is noted that the proposed development is located on land covering an area of some 0.65ha which is capable of forming, and has been used in the past as, a playing field. In this instance national planning policy, as set out in PPG 17, recognises the importance of the retention of playing field stock in terms of its social, health and cultural importance and makes clear that such land should not be built upon unless one of the following exception criteria are met. The exceptions detailed in National planning policy are as follows: *“(i) the proposed development is ancillary to the use of the site as a playing field and does not adversely affect the quantity or quality of pitches and their use; (ii) the proposed development only affects land which is incapable of forming a playing pitch; (iii) the playing field that would be lost as a result of the proposed development would be replaced by a playing field or fields of equivalent or better quantity and quality and in a suitable location; or (iv) the proposed development is for an outdoor or indoor sports facility of sufficient benefit to the development of sport to outweigh the loss of the playing field”*.
42. National planning policy governing the protection of playing fields is also reflected within the Adopted Thanet District Local Plan through Policy SR12. This policy states that built development will not be permitted on land last used as playing field unless one of the exception criteria, as set out in national planning policy, is met. Furthermore, Policy SR12 states that built development will not be permitted on playing fields if it would be detrimental to the character of the area. As can be seen from paragraphs (22) and (23) above the application has been extensively discussed during the consultation period with Sport England regarding potential concerns over the loss of land capable of forming, and land previously used as, a playing field. Members will note that the package of mitigation measures put forward by the applicant, as detailed in paragraph (22) to compensate for the loss of playing field, has in this instance been sufficient to outweigh a statutory objection to the proposed development by Sport England. Instead, Sport England consider that the proposed development, subject to the mitigation measures being secured as detailed in paragraph (22), meets with two of its policy exceptions, namely: that *“the playing field which would be lost as a result of the proposed development, would be replaced by a playing field of an equivalent or greater quantity, in a suitable location and subject to equivalent or better management arrangements”* and that *“the proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor sports facility of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss of the playing field”*. Therefore, as detailed in paragraph (27) above it is noted that Sport England does not raise an objection to this application. They do however seek to ensure that a Community Use Agreement be a pre-requisite requirement on any planning permission to control details of community access to, and the use of, the existing School’s junior playing field and swimming pool.
43. I note that Local Plan Policy SR12 reflects the same five exception criteria as reflected by both National planning policy (in PPG17) and Sport England’s Adopted Playing Fields Policy. On the basis of the mitigation measures proposed by the applicant, and the lack of objection from Sport England, I am satisfied that the proposed development conforms to National sporting policy. In respect of Local Plan Policy SR12 I note that one further requirement is placed within this policy to the effect that *‘built development will not be permitted on playing fields if it would be detrimental to the character of the area’*. Arguably any form of built development on the application site would affect the character of the local area, particularly that along Westfield Road. At present the application site, although not publically accessible, forms a pleasant green space along Westfield Road and breaks up existing residential development blocks. However, the application site itself forms a sensible ‘infill’ development plot of land which arguably

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may otherwise be used for housing development in the future. It is noted that as part of the emerging Thanet District Local Development Framework the Council has been requesting that sites to be put forward for future development, for which the application site has been mooted as potential residential infill development. In my opinion it may be more beneficial, and have wider benefits to the local area, to have a community facility being developed on this piece of land, as opposed to further infill residential development. Overall however I accept that the development would have an impact on the character of the local area, but do not consider that the impact would be so detrimental such as to warrant refusal of this application in this instance. I therefore conclude that the proposals conform to the general thrust of both national and local sporting planning policy and that the initial policy objection from the District Council can be set aside in this instance.

Amenity considerations

44. There are a number of amenity considerations to take into account when determining this proposal. These include potential overlooking of nearby residential dwellings, consideration of the buildings massing and security concerns as raised by a local resident. Firstly, with regards to the potential for overlooking of surrounding residential dwellings I note that the building has been oriented so as to minimise any direct overlooking. I also note that the overall bulk of the building has been designed such as to appear taller at the front entrance, with the roof sloping away towards residential dwellings to the east and south. As outlined in paragraph (10) above, the south-western arm of the MASH building has been positioned so that the first floor window separation distance to adjacent residential dwellings in Honeysuckle Close would achieve a minimum distance of 21 metres. At the buildings closest point, it would sit approximately 7.3 metres at an oblique angle to the corner of No. 12 Lavender Close and approximately 10 metres to a blank end elevation of No. 11 Lavender Close. There would therefore be no significant overlooking issues with these two properties in Lavender Close. The nearest residential properties with direct rear-facing views onto the application site (No's 9-15 Honeysuckle Close) would be located some 16 metres from the corner of the proposed building and as previously stated a minimum of 21 metres between first floor windows. Whilst I note that the building is quite tight at part of some of its extremities to adjacent residential dwellings, given its orientation and use of varying roof slopes and massing techniques, I am satisfied that the proposal would not give rise to an unacceptable level of overlooking or have a detrimental overbearing impact upon adjacent residential dwellings. In particular, windows have been carefully arranged to avoid any unacceptable lines of sight to neighbouring property windows. Furthermore, the building itself is well set back from the main road frontage which would maintain a relatively open street-scene appearance.
45. Concerns have been raised by a resident relating to security issues generally with the application site and moreover the use of the existing school playing field. It is noted that the application proposes the sub-division of the current school grounds into two separate entities – that of Garlinge Primary School and Nursery (and its associated playing field) and the new MASH building. The proposed MASH development would be secured by new 1.8m high green weld mesh fencing along its boundary with Westfield Road and a 1.8m high timber close-boarded fence along its boundary with the school playing field. Therefore anyone wishing to access either of the two sites would need to do so via their respective entrances, with the exception of a maintenance access being provided from the MASH site onto the school field. Since the site would effectively be in more regular authorised use, security is likely to be less of an issue. Therefore, I am satisfied that the current proposal would not have any detrimental harm to residential

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properties in terms of their boundary security with either the school grounds or the proposed MASH site.

Highway issues

46. Members will note that highway concerns have been raised by several local objectors (as set out in paragraph 35 above) particularly in respect of the cumulative impact of the proposed development together with the existing primary and secondary schools in the locality. As outlined in paragraphs (12) to (16) of this report, the applicant has been able to provide indicative transportation details for the proposed development, although as a concept the new idea of bringing KCC and PCT services together under one roof is to a certain extent an unknown entity. The application relies on the basis that at present all the specialist services which would operate from the proposed centre (such as hearing tests, dentistry, education assessment, etc.) are being provided across the Thanet District and east Kent area, and that the co-location of these services would coordinate various functions and reduce the number of separate child and parent visits required every year.
47. The application details that the potential daily car trip generation for the proposed development could be up to 77 vehicles per day (44 staff and 33 patients), however these movements would be spread across the whole working day with a relatively small number of movements occurring during peak rush hours. That is largely due to the nature of the proposed centre in terms of many of the staff being 'mobile travelling' staff members, working from a number of different centres within the Thanet and east Kent area generally. When these trip generation figures were factored into network capacity statistics on the existing local highway network, it was demonstrated by the applicant that the road network and its junctions could remain to operate within its capacity as a result of the MASH proposal.
48. In terms of on-site parking provision, the application proposes the construction of 14 disabled spaces, 31 car parking spaces, and adequate provision for cycle and motorcycle parking. Similar to the traffic movements during peak hours, it is not intended that all staff and visitors would be on site at any one time, given the nature of the operations being proposed as part of the MASH project. Instead, the applicant is satisfied that on-site parking provision would be adequate to accommodate the proposed centre's needs, thus reducing any potential impact caused by staff and/or visitor parking on the local highway network, particularly along Westfield Road. I consider that this approach is consistent with local planning policies, notably Policies TR12, TR15 and TR16.
49. It is recognised within the application that the vast majority of patients to the centre would be transported to and from the centre by either private car or mini-bus. This is due to the specific needs to the patients using the centre in terms of their physical or mental disabilities. Whilst there is little scope to change patterns of patient travel to/from the centre, the implementation of a site Travel Plan to encourage sustainable means of staff travel to and from the centre has been put forward by the applicant. This approach is supported and such a Travel Plan in my opinion should form a conditional requirement in the event of planning permission being granted.
50. The application details that construction operations are expected to last approximately 3-4 months. All activities, including offices, parking and welfare facilities would be located within the application site as to minimise potential disturbance to the local area. Construction HGV routing has been proposed by the applicant to avoid the use of small residential streets (notably Argyle Avenue, Birlington Gardens and Waverley Road) and

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instead insist upon site access being achieved via the A28 and George V Avenue. I am satisfied that the measures proposed by the applicant in respect of construction activities are appropriate and proportionate to the level of the proposed development in this instance and would seek to reduce, as far as practicable, impact on residential amenity. Furthermore, in order to ensure that construction activities are carried out during appropriate time periods and therefore to safeguard residential amenity, I propose to impose a condition to restrict all construction activities to between the hours of 08:00 and 18:00 Monday to Friday, 09:00 and 13:00 on Saturday, with no operations taking place on Sundays, Bank and Public Holidays. This is standard practice for similar development proposals.

51. In coming to a view in respect of the impact of the proposed MASH development on the local highway network, I have sought the professional advice of the Divisional Transportation Manager. He considered that subject to the imposition of planning conditions to secure a number of matters (as set out in paragraph 26 above) there are no overriding grounds to substantiate a highway objection to these proposals. He is satisfied that the proposed development is acceptable in terms of highway capacity issues, on-site parking provision and in terms of highway safety issues.
52. Based on the professional advice received from the Divisional Transportation Manager in this instance, I am satisfied that the proposed development could be accommodated within this locality without a significant adverse impact on either highway safety or to the detriment of nearby residential dwellings or the existing two schools in close proximity to the site. Subject to the imposition of conditions to cover a number of highway-related aspects, I do not raise objection to this proposal on the basis of highway matters and consider the proposals to be broadly in line with both national and local transport policy.

Impact on ecological and archaeological interests

53. The application is accompanied by an Ecological Scoping Report which identifies that the site has very low to negligible potential to support protected species on the basis that it comprises entirety of amenity managed grassland. It is noted that the County Council's Biodiversity Officer is satisfied with the conclusions of the Report, but seeks to achieve a net biodiversity gain on the site through the implementation of measures such as the installation of bat boxes, the creation of log piles and native tree, shrub and hedgerow planting. Achieving a net biodiversity gain as part of development proposals is consistent with the objectives of National Planning Policy Statement 9 and would help the applicant gain credits towards final BREEAM building certification. I am therefore satisfied that subject to the inclusion of appropriate biodiversity enhancement measures that the proposed development is consistent with development plan policy.
54. Members will note that the County Council's Archaeological Advisor has highlighted that the development site is located in an area of very high archaeological potential. In view of this he advises that a programme of prior archaeological evaluation takes place, together with any appropriate safeguarding measures being put in place as appropriate. I am satisfied that this approach is consistent with the objectives of PPS5 and Local Plan Policy HE12 and therefore recommends that such condition be placed on any planning consent.

Other issues arising from consultation and publicity

55. Concerns have been expressed by a local resident regarding the setting of a principle in terms of allowing built development on a school playing field. In particular, the concern lies with the principle of further development, over and above the MASH proposal, being

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built on the existing Garlinge Primary School playing field. The arguments regarding the principle of allowing buildings on land capable of forming, or land currently being used or having previously been used as playing field are well expressed throughout this report. The current position of planning policy is such as to prevent such development except in exceptional circumstances which only include those set out in paragraph (41) above. In the case of the concerns which have been raised here, although total reassurance cannot be offered regarding the possibility of building on the existing school playing field, it would be extremely unlikely that such proposal would either be allowed or would occur unless the building was intended to provide either indoor or outdoor sports provision. By allowing this development on the basis of exceptional circumstances does not, in my view, set any precedent for building on school playing fields in other localities. As members will be aware precedent is not a material planning consideration and instead each individual application would be treated on its own merits in light of current development plan policy applicable at that time.

56. An issue was raised regarding the incorporation of the MASH proposals within the planned rebuilding of Hartsdown Technology College under the Government's Building Schools for the Future Programme. Whilst this concept was initially investigated, it became apparent that adequate land was not available within the Technology College site to house a re-built school as well as the MASH proposals. Therefore, the idea of pursuing this development on the Technology College site was not pursued, but instead the concept of developing on the current site was pursued to the planning application stage. Members will also be aware that the planned re-development of many secondary schools under the former Government's BSF Programme, such as Hartsdown Technology College, has been put on hold as a result of the recent change in Government and their associated Spending Review, so that alternative approaches are unlikely to be an option anyway.
57. I note that Local Plan Policy D2 requires all new developments to be well landscaped and to maximise the nature conservation interests wherever possible. To this effect I consider that the proposed new MASH development should be accompanied by an appropriate native landscape planting scheme to help soften the development into the local environment. At the application stage indicative details have been provided, and therefore I suggest that a condition be placed on any future planning consent to ensure the submission and agreement of an appropriate native landscaping scheme with the County Planning Authority which would then be implemented within the first planting season following the completion of construction activities.
58. I note that Local Plan Policy D1 requires all new development to provide high quality and inclusive design with a suitable palette of external materials. As detailed in paragraph (20) above, the application sets out an indicative palette of external materials incorporating red stock brick, through colour render panels and hardwood timber cladding. I consider that these materials are acceptable for this locality, however I recommend that the exact details of external materials be secured for later agreement through planning condition in the event of permission being granted.

Conclusion

59. The proposal seeks to provide a new purpose built single and part two-storey community building for use as Multi Agency Specialist Hub (MASH) for disabled children together with associated access roads and car parking at land annexed from Garlinge Primary School and Nursery. The centre would be operated by KCC and the local PCT and would incorporate a number of health, education and social service roles all within one single building. Having fully considered the potential environmental, highway,

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amenity and sporting impacts of the proposals, together with the Policy concerns raised by the District Council in this instance, I am satisfied that there are no overriding grounds for objection to the proposed development. I consider that subject to the provision of the mitigation measures put forward by the applicant to compensate for the loss of playing field land, that the development proposals comply with both national and local sporting planning policy. Furthermore, I consider that amenity and highway concerns, as expressed by local residents, have been fully considered throughout the report and note that the Divisional Transportation Manager raised no objections to the proposals in terms of local capacity, highway safety or parking provision issues. For the reasons set out and discussed throughout this report, I therefore recommend accordingly.

Recommendation

60. I RECOMMEND that PLANNING PERMISSION BE GRANTED, SUBJECT TO conditions, including conditions to cover the following aspects:

- 5 year implementation period;
- the development to be carried out in accordance with the permitted details;
- Sport England compensatory measures including: (i) *provision of replacement U14 junior football pitch within Garlinge Recreation Ground to an agreed specification;* (ii) *upgrade and refurbishment of Garlinge Primary School swimming pool and make available for community use;* (iii) *provision of community access to Garlinge Primary School's existing U14 junior football pitch;* and (iv) *provision of a new pedestrian link between Garlinge Primary School and Garlinge Recreation Ground, prior to the first occupation of the building;*
- Community Use Agreement to cover the usage of the refurbished swimming pool and Garlinge Primary School junior football pitch;
- scheme to ensure that new playing fields are provided to an acceptable quality (including appropriate drainage where necessary);
- external materials to be agreed;
- submission of landscaping scheme and implementation with first planting season following construction activities;
- measures to prevent mud and debris being tracked out onto the public highway;
- parking being made on site for construction operatives and construction vehicles during construction works;
- vehicle and cycle parking (as proposed in the application) being provided prior to the first occupation of building and permanently retained on site thereafter;
- completion of new vehicular access prior to first occupation of the building and full removal of existing vehicle crossing and re-instatement of pedestrian footway;
- submission of a Travel Plan (including an implementation programme) prior to the first occupation of the building and on-going monitoring and review thereafter;
- implementation of biodiversity enhancement measures;
- external lighting to be agreed;
- hours of construction limited;
- programme of archaeological evaluation prior to commencement of development and the implementation of any appropriate safeguarding measures (if required);
- land contamination study to be undertaken and verification report; and
- surface water drainage measures to be agreed.

Case officer – Julian Moat

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Background documents - See section heading
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Item D5**Detached single storey building for use as a Children Centre and nursery at The Downs CEP Primary School, Walmer DO/10/637**

A report by Head of Planning Applications Group to Planning Applications Committee on 7th September 2010.

Application by the Kent County Council Property Group for the construction of a detached single storey building for use as a Children Centre and nursery at The Downs CEP School, Downs Road, Walmer, Deal (Ref: DO/10/637)

Recommendation: The application be referred to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and subject to his decision planning permission be granted subject to conditions.

Local Member(s): Julie Rook and Kit Smith

Classification: Unrestricted

Site

1. The Downs CEP School is located to the south west of Walmer in a predominantly residential area. The school is located close to the Walmer Science College. A Public Footpath runs between the two school sites from Salisbury Road through to Downs Road.
2. The main vehicular access to The Downs CEP School is via Downs Road via separate access and exit gates. There is also access onto the school field from Salisbury Road. The main vehicle access for the Walmer Science College is in Salisbury Road but there is also an emergency access gate and field gate adjacent to the entrance to the Downs CEP School.
3. This planning application relates to a proposal for a new Children Centre and nursery on playing field land to the rear of the Downs CEP School at the boundary between the school field and the footpath which runs between the Downs School and the Walmer Science College. The proposal would use the vehicular access within the Downs School and extend the car parking provision within the Downs School site. It would also use an existing access into the Walmer Science College field in order to provide an emergency access to the proposal.
4. A site plan is attached.

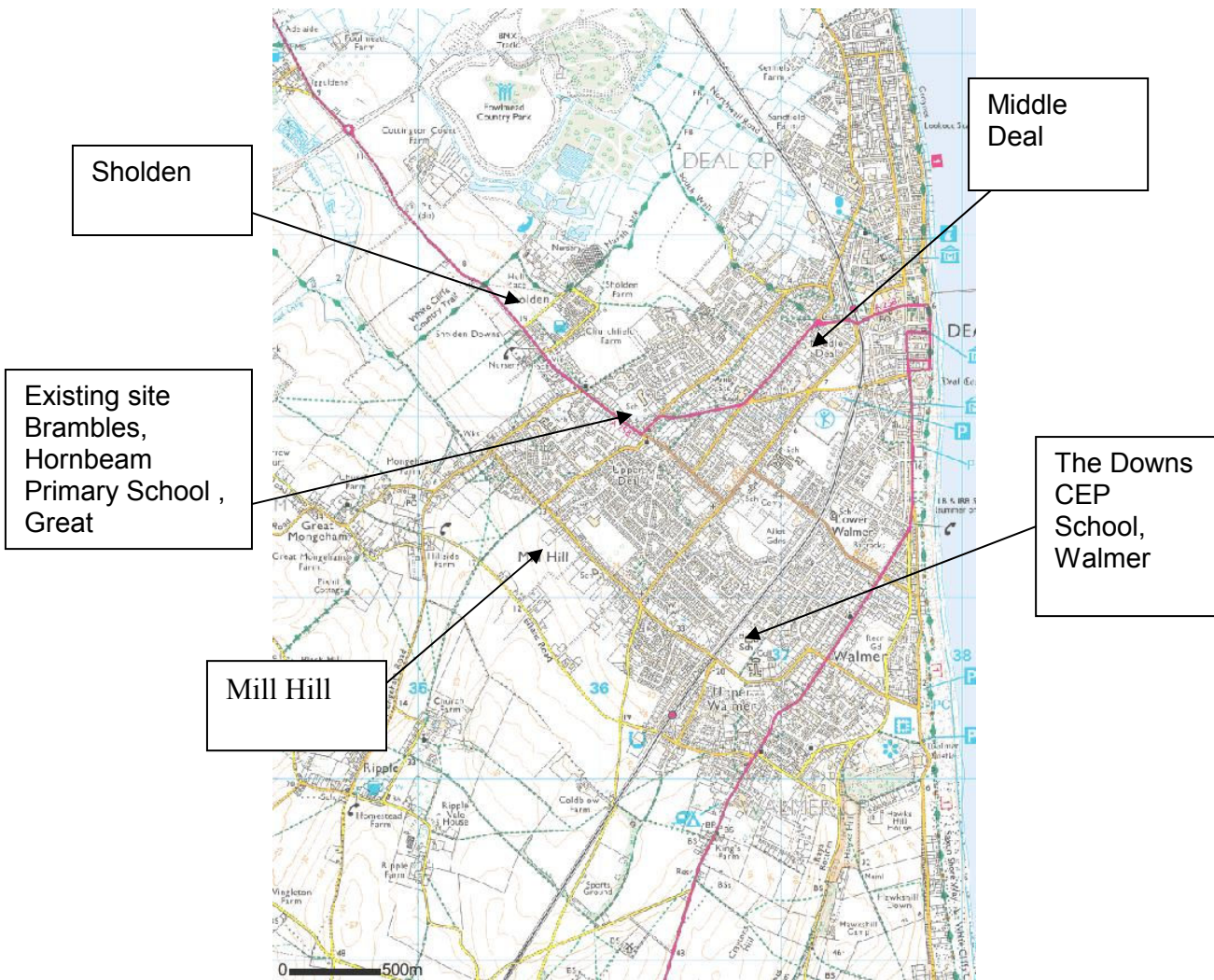
Background

5. There has been a number of planning applications relating to the school in recent years. Most recently, permission was granted in 2009 and 2010 for a covered walkway at the school (reference D0/09/1141 and DO/09/259), in 2008 for a canopy (DO/08/1249) and alternations to the entrance facade (DO/08/1089).

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6. In September 2002, permission was given for extension of playgrounds and for additional car parking at the Downs School (DA/01/764) although the school did not complete the works to extend the car parking area. Permission has also previously been given for a new access road and small car park from Downs Road at the Walmer School (DO/01/86) using the same access that the applicant now proposes.

Location Plan



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Proposal

7. The proposal is for the construction of a new detached single storey building at the eastern edge of the Downs CEP School playing field near to the fenced boundary of the playing field with the Public Footpath which runs between the Downs CEP School and the Walmer Science College. Two thirds of the building would be used as a Children Centre (Blossom) and a third as a private day nursery (Brambles). Both uses would operate during term time only and between the hours of 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday. The Children Centre would provide crèche space, consultation rooms including a medical room, staff room, family therapy room, school room and counselling room, toilet facilities, kitchen and hard safety external play space and it is proposed that, together with outreach strategies, it would serve a catchment area of at least 600-1200 0 to 5 year olds and beyond. The day nursery would provide term time only day care for 26 children between the ages of 2 and 5. It would provide activity space, kitchen, toilet facilities and hard safety external play space.
8. The building would be constructed with a cedar (or similar) timber clad finish in similar style to the new Downs CEP School main entrance permitted in 2008 (DO/08/1089). Windows and doors would be double glazed white anodised aluminium, exposed timber rafters to the eaves with black guttering and down pipes. The roof eaves would be low and form an overhang to the front/east elevation. The roof pitch would be shallow with grey concrete / slate finish tiles. The main entrance to the building would face the footpath beneath the roof eaves. The roof overhang would, together with further "hit and miss" style fencing provide screening, security and shelter for a buggy park. A cycle park for up to 6 bicycles and a buggy park is proposed at the entrance to the building along with a bin store along the front elevation. It is proposed that the building would meet as a minimum the BREEAM rating of Very Good.
9. The building would be surrounded by separate fenced play areas for the children centre and day nursery and the whole area would be fenced from the school playing fields with a 2m high boundary fence. Internal fencing would be 1800mm high with planting between the two. Double gates would be installed within the boundary fence of the public footpath to provide access to the entrance footpath to the building. Similar gates would be installed in the boundary fence opposite these to allow an emergency access from the emergency vehicle path. These gates would only be used in the event of an emergency.
10. Amendments to the existing school car parking layout, including an automated barrier and a drop off zone are proposed to accommodate the proposed 10 new spaces for the Children Centre and Nursery and to allow segregation of car parking areas for between the school and the proposal. 8 bays (including 2 disabled bays) would be formed in an existing grass bank at the front of the school between the vehicular exit gate and a pedestrian access gate and 4 spaces would be formed in an area of the school currently used as a school bin store. Redundant timber sheds would be removed to provide a new fenced and gated area for refuse. The existing access arrangements for the school allow for a separate access and exit gate to be used and it is proposed that a one way traffic plan would be introduced to assist traffic flow. A new pedestrian gate is also proposed to allow access from the Downs CEP School car park to the footpath. All access to the proposed building would be on foot via the existing footpath. A new pedestrian access from the footpath to the

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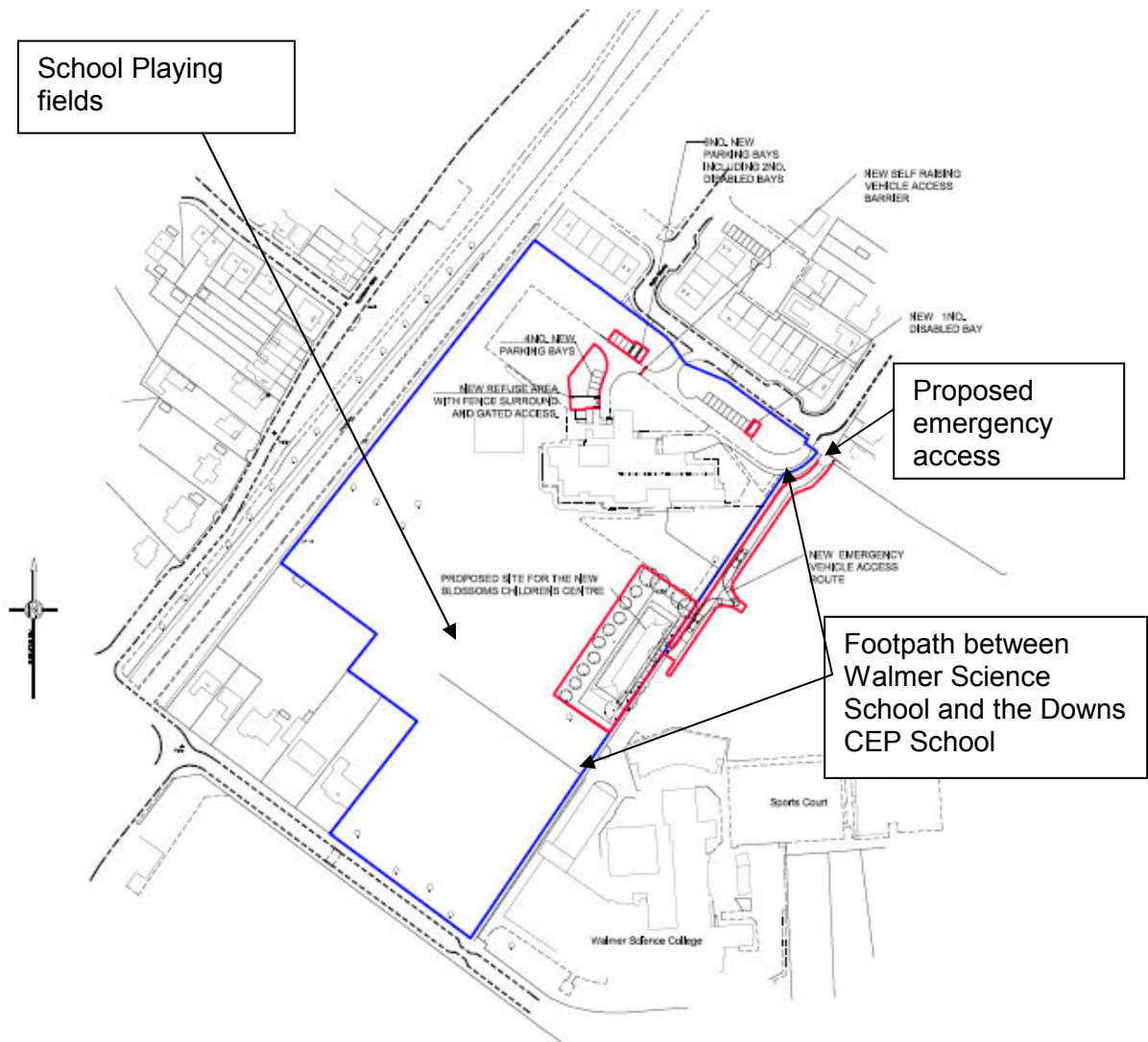
Detached single storey building for use as a Children Centre and nursery at The Downs CEP School, Walmer

south elevation would be created to provide the entrance from the footpath to the building.

11. The proposed emergency vehicle access would average a 5m width, incorporate a turning area and would be finished with topsoil and seeded. The existing school cycle path within the Walmer Science College grounds would be maintained. This access would also be used as a construction access to the site and so would be the first stage of the development proposal. Temporary fencing would be provided between the access and the cycle path and a banksman would be employed to manage the flow of traffic during the construction phase of the proposal. The access would not be used for construction purposes during peak pedestrian times of 8am – 9.15am and 3pm and 3.45pm during the school term time.
12. The proposal would involve the removal of 5 trees along the boundary of the site with the footpath. However, existing mature trees would be retained and the applicants propose additional planting to screen the north and west elevations at the boundary with the school playing fields.
13. An application site location plan showing the proposed site layout and model illustrations together with photographs of existing views are attached.

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Application Site Location Plan and Proposed Site Layout



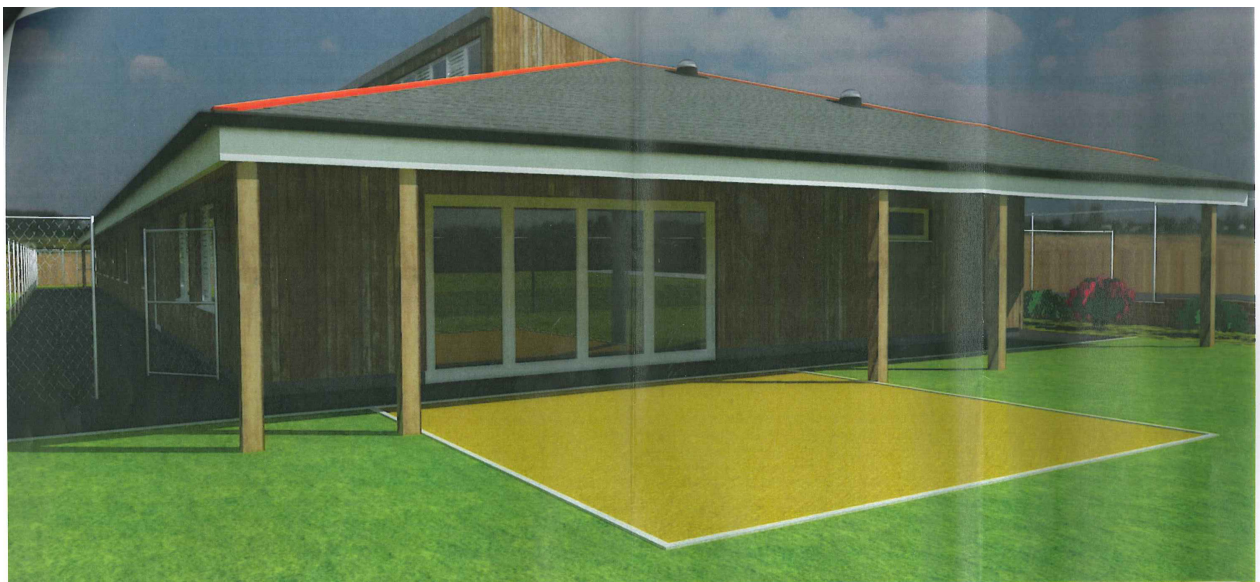
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Figure 1 – 3-D Model illustration of proposal from footpath looking at the southern and eastern elevation.



Figure 2 – 3-D Model illustration of west elevation of the proposal, showing part of north elevation.



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Figure 3 – View of existing emergency access to the Walmer school field and footpath which runs alongside the site.



Figure 4 – View across school field from Salisbury Road field gate toward location of proposal and the existing boundary with footpath and Walmer Science College beyond.



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Planning Policy

14. The Development Plan policies contained in the **Dover District Council Adopted Core Strategy 2010** and summarised below are relevant to consideration of the application:

Policy DM25 Seeks to protect open space from proposals for development unless specific circumstances exist, such as there is no identified deficiency in public open space or in the case of a school site the development is for educational purposes and the site has no overriding visual amenity interest, environmental role, cultural importance or nature conservation value.

Policy DM11 Seeks to manage the location of development in relation to increases in travel demand and developments that would generate high levels of traffic in urban areas would need to be well served by a range of means of public transport.

Policy DM13 Encourages provision for parking to be informed by Kent County Council Guidance SPG4.

Policy DM17 Seeks to manage the impacts of development and provide adequate safeguards against possible contamination in the groundwater source protection zone.

Policy DM16 Seeks to protect the character of the landscape.

15. In addition, National planning policy PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development and PPG17 Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation is relevant to consideration of this application.

Consultations

16. **Sport England** objects to the proposal in the context of playing fields policy which states that “Sport England will oppose the granting of planning permission for any development which would lead to the loss of, or prejudice the use of, all or any part of a playing field, or land last used as a playing field in an adopted or draft deposit local plan, unless, in the judgement of Sport England, one of the specific circumstances applies”. The reason is that “Development which would lead to the loss of all or part of a playing field, or which would prejudice its use, should not normally be permitted because it would permanently reduce the opportunities for participation in sporting activities”. As a result of this objection, in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009, the County Planning Authority will need to consult the Secretary of State at the Government Office South East if Members do not propose to refuse this application for planning permission. *This is discussed further below.*

Dover District Council does not object to the principle of the development, although advises that further views of Sport England should be obtained, consideration be given to highway safety and that a landscaping scheme should seek to replace the five trees which would need to be felled.

The **Divisional Transportation Manager** raises no objection, subject to amendments to the application (*which have since been made*), to provide a turning area within the parking drop off area and clarification relating to the parking of

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delivery vehicles when delivering to the nursery and school. They suggest a number of conditions relating to turning space, layout, and details of parking arrangement for construction vehicles, parking, cycle and footpath provision and prevention of deposit of mud on the road during construction.

The KCC Biodiversity Team raises no objection as the site appears to have limited potential for wildlife. However they would like to see further information about the possibility of roosting bats to be present within trees which would need to be removed at the site. They also make recommendations in relation to the impact of lighting on roosting bats if they are present at the site.

Walmer Parish Council positively supports the proposal.

Local Member(s)

17. The local County Member(s), Julie Rook and Kit Smith were notified of the applications on the 14th July 2010.

Publicity

18. The application has been advertised by the posting of site notices at three locations and the individual notification of a number of neighbouring properties.

Representations

19. Neighbour representation has been received querying whether the development is really necessary, particularly as if permitted there would be three childcare settings close together in one road; expressing concerns that Downs Road and Salisbury Road are already very busy roads and about difficult access, parking on both sides of the road and a perception that additional impacts that would cause more chaos and disruption and a concern about increased impact from traffic in Owen Square. However, further information from the applicant has been provided about these aspects and I am satisfied that there are now no objections from neighbours regarding the proposal.

Discussion

20. This application is being reported to the Planning Applications Committee because of the objection to development of part of the playing field from Sport England.
21. Decisions on planning application proposals are required to be in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The relevant development plan policies are set out above and require proposals to be acceptable in terms of the site, context, design and impacts. In my opinion, the main determining issues for this application relate to the need for the facility and the acceptability of the site given that the location is on playing field land. However, the design, access and amenity impacts of the proposal are also important and these matters are discussed in more detail below.

Detached single storey building for use as a Children Centre and nursery at The Downs CEP School, Walmer

Need considerations

22. The need for this proposal should be considered both in relation to the development of a Children Centre and a private day nursery. Kent County Council has been working toward the establishment of Children Centres across the County and this proposal falls into phase 2 of the Children Centre agenda serving families in more and less disadvantaged areas. It is intended that such centres will build upon existing private, voluntary, independent or statutory services for children and families. The applicant has previously sought permission for a similar proposal at the Hornbeam Primary School, Great Mongeham, Deal. However, that planning application was refused (Planning Application Committee, 21st March 2009) and the applicant says that this is the only other site that they have been able to identify within this catchment area.
23. This proposal is intended to serve the wards of Middle Deal and Sholden, Mill Hill, part of Sandwich and part of Walmer. The applicant has provided information showing that these Wards would provide a catchment of 1018 children aged between 0 and 4 (based on 2009 health authority GP registration data). The data indicates that the majority of children that the Centre would serve appear to be located in the Mill Hill Ward and the Middle Deal and Sholden Ward. However, the applicant also says that it is intended that Children Centres would provide local services within "pram pushing distance" of a community and so to reach families further afield in this catchment area; outreach services would also be provided from the Centre.
24. The applicant has provided deprivation ranking information for the wards that the Centre would serve and the information indicates that the Centre would serve the most disadvantaged ward within this catchment as well as the less disadvantaged areas. The applicant uses this information together with the number of children within the catchment to demonstrate that such a facility is needed within the area in order to provide local accessible services to families in the area.
25. Neighbour representation has indicated a concern that another day care nursery might not be necessary as there are already two in Downs Road. The private day care nursery is currently located at Hornbeam Primary School at Great Mongeham, Deal. However, this nursery will no longer be able to use the site which is in the process of being sold. The number of private nursery spaces in the area would not be increased as a result of the proposal.
26. The proposal therefore includes an extension to the range of educational activities that exist at the site Downs CEP School. National Planning policy (PPS1) seeks to encourage socially inclusive communities and mixed use approaches that include community facilities alongside formal educational facilities and shared use of public buildings links to this objective. It links also to other sustainable development objectives such as making effective use of resources, making facilities accessible to all sections of society and developing and shaping healthy sustainable communities.
27. Based on this information, I am therefore satisfied that the need for the facility has been demonstrated.

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Acceptability of site location on school playing field

28. The building would be located on land which is currently part of the Downs CEP School playing field and designated as open space. It concerns an area of the school playing field which is 30m wide and 66m long, within which the proposed building and associated outdoor play space would be sited.
29. National planning policy (PPG17) seeks to protect playing fields from development unless the proposed development only affects land which is incapable of forming a playing pitch or part of one. Sport England objects to the proposal, as it would lead to the loss of part of a playing field and because based on the information provided within the application; their view is that the proposal does not meet one of the specific circumstances where an exception to policy can be made. The policy seeks to prevent the reduction of opportunity for participation in sporting activities as a result of the loss of playing field land to development.
30. There are 5 specific circumstances where Sport England will make an exception to their policy. The circumstances which are most relevant to this proposal include where there has been a carefully quantified and documented assessment of current and future needs demonstrating that there is an excess provision and that the site has no special significance to sport (E1); where it affects land which is incapable of forming part of a playing pitch and does not result in the loss of or inability to make use of any part of the playing pitch (E3); that the playing field which would be lost would be replaced with an equivalent or better quality arrangement (E4).
31. In this proposal, the applicant has sought to rely on exception E4 by re-arranging the existing marked pitch further to the west of the playing fields utilising existing unmarked field space, thus replacing the lost pitch area prior to the commencement of the development. The applicant says that there is currently approximately 22,747m² of grass open space for the 420 pupil capacity at the site. They suggest that there is sufficient space (21,487m²) for the number of pupils even with the loss of 1,260m² which would result from this development proposal, and that the playing space available at the site would still exceed the ratio requirement per pupil at this site. The applicant refers to DfES Circular 3/99 which states that a requirement of 20,000m² would be expected for a Primary school with pupil capacity of between 401 and 500 children and the playing field provision for the school would still exceed the ratio requirement per pupil. However, Sport England's policy seeks to protect all parts of the playing field, not just those that are currently laid out as pitches, and to guard against the loss of any part of the playing field. In this proposal, whilst the pitch layout can be re-arranged, an area of the playing field would still be lost as a result of the proposal.
32. However, national planning policy should be set within the context of the needs of local communities, and an assessment of local needs and existing provision of open space and playing fields. The Dover District Council Green Spaces Strategy (2004) indicates that there is not a shortfall of open space in this area. Local Development Framework Policy DM25 also seeks to protect open space and as there is not a shortfall of open space provision in the locality, the development is akin to an educational purpose and there is no overriding visual amenity interest, environmental role, cultural importance or nature conservation value, the development is in accordance with development plan Policy DM25.

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33. Given this local context and considering the specific location, existing use and dimensions of this proposal within the school playing field, it would appear that the applicant may be able to provide information which demonstrates that other exceptions (such as E1 and/or E3) may apply, and in so doing seek to resolve the objection from Sport England. However, this information has not yet been provided within the application which is to be determined.
34. On the basis of the information provided, the application appears to go against the national policy contained in PPG17 seeking to protect playing fields so as not to reduce opportunity for participation in sporting activity. However, the proposal does not go against local policy contained in Policy DM25 regarding Dover's open spaces. In determining this application consideration needs to be given as to whether to give more weight to the national policy contained in PPG17 or to the local development plan policy and the local context. Given that Dover District Council and other consultees do not object to the proposal, and issues arising from neighbour representations have been resolved, my recommendation to Members is to give more weight to the local context.

Design issues

35. There are three design aspects to the proposed development to consider – the building, the access and the car parking provision and amendments. The building design being single storey and situated along a boundary close to other larger scale development within the Walmer Science College does not create any visual amenity issues which cannot be screened by the additional landscaping proposed. However, the visual appearance of the proposed building is not unappealing and the development does not need to be shielded from local or wider view in my opinion. In particular, the building design and materials proposed would be similar to other recent amendments to the entrance of the Downs CEP School and in my opinion would not be out of context in this location.
36. The proposal seeks also to re-establish an emergency access to the Walmer Science College which would form the temporary construction access to the site together with the permanent emergency access. Permission has already been granted for an emergency access in this location and although there are some differences within this proposal, such as a turning area and the formation of gates within the fencing to allow access to the site, the principle of an emergency access has already been accepted in planning terms.
37. Amendments to car parking provision and layout within the Downs CEP School would extend the existing car parking arrangement further west of the car park exit on land which is currently grassed. The car parking is set back from the fence line toward the school and a green area with planting between the car park and Owen Square would remain. In my view, the reconfiguration of the car parking layout and provision of additional car parking and parking controls in this area is not a significant visual impact. The principle of additional car parking at the school has previously been accepted in planning terms, although this proposal provides a different configuration to that previously approved.
38. Other policies (such as DM16) require development to be well designed and to respect the site and its surroundings. I am satisfied that the site and design of the proposal is appropriate to the surroundings (as discussed above) and that the proposed uses are akin to the educational use that already exists at the site.

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Access issues

39. The application relies on the vehicular access and car parking facilities currently provided at the Downs CEP School and does not introduce an additional vehicular access to the building other than for temporary construction work and for emergency purposes. All access between the Downs CEP School and the Children Centre and nursery would be on foot via the existing footpath. Access impact considerations therefore relate only to the impact of additional users of the existing site, and consideration of the impact of the proposal to re-instate an existing emergency access and gates within fencing on either side of the footpath leading to the entrance to the proposed building.
40. Neighbour representation originally expressed concern about the access, parking and congestion in the vicinity of the school site along Downs Road, Owen Square and Salisbury Road and in particular, that this proposal would add to existing congestion. However, the number of additional users generated by this proposal is limited to specific times of day within term time only. The school has a capacity of 420 but current pupil enrolment of 390 and the proposal needs to be considered within this context. Whilst the catchment area of the proposed Children Centre includes families with children between 0 and 5 from a number of wards, it is expected that only a small number of families would use the facility at once and that on average it could be expected that approximately 25 would visit the Centre in one day, by appointment. A total of 3 full time staff would work within the Children Centre with further visiting staff during the day. Within the nursery 6 full time staff would work at any one time and there would be a maximum of 26 children places within term time only. The applicant has provided information that suggests that visitors to the site are expected to be from the local community, and therefore by foot rather than car. An Outreach service would be provided in conjunction with the Centre to reach those families further afield.
41. The area is generally well served by a range of means of transport and the proposal appears to allow a choice of transport modes in that there is provision for cycle racks, buggy's, car parking (in the Downs CEP School) and pedestrian access via Public Right of Way (PROW). Bus routes run nearby and the train station is also nearby.
42. The Divisional Transportation Manager did not raise any objection in relation to the proposals in relation to generation of additional traffic movement and impacts on the highway network, I therefore conclude that the impacts of the proposal on highway and access matters are acceptable in planning terms and that matters relating to parking and access within the site can be adequately controlled by appropriate planning condition.

Amenity issues

43. The location of the proposal within the site has been designed to spread along and close to the fenced boundary so as to limit the impact on the school playing field. Whilst well screened from the Downs Road there are currently uninterrupted views towards the proposal location from residential property across the Downs CEP School playing fields to the edge of the playing field and the footpath where views are broken up by existing planting, fencing and Walmer Science College buildings.

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However, these are relatively long views within which the proposed building would be seen in the wider context of other modern buildings and suburban development.

44. The applicant proposes to remove 5 trees which have been assessed as trees of low quality and value, from the edge of the site along the line of the Public Footpath, in order to allow the building to be constructed. The applicant says that this would also introduce light to the site and encourage greater use of the Footpath. Some mature trees would be retained and further planting would be introduced which once established would help to screen the development. The Biodiversity Group raises no objection to the proposal but would like to see further information about the possibility of roosting bats being present within trees which would need to be removed at the site. The applicants have informed me that this work is already in progress.
45. Given the overall site context comprising existing single storey school buildings at the site, I am satisfied that there are no adverse amenity impacts from the siting and design of the proposed building and that the amenity aspects of the proposal could be dealt with by condition.

Conclusion

46. Given consideration of the site, context, design and impacts, I conclude that the proposal would be acceptable in this location. However, given the Sport England objection, should Members support my views expressed in paragraph (34) above and decide against refusal of this application, the County Planning Authority is required to consult the Secretary of State at the Government Office South East and not grant planning permission until the Secretary of State has first considered the application. The Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009, requires that the Authority may only proceed to determine an application once the Secretary of State has had an opportunity to consider whether to call in the application for his own determination.

Recommendation

47. I RECOMMEND that the application BE REFERRED to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, and SUBJECT TO his decision, PLANNING PERMISSION BE GRANTED, SUBJECT TO conditions, including:

- the standard time condition;
- the development be carried out in accordance with the submitted details and plans;
- the hours of use to be between 0800 and 1800 hours during the term time;
- the provision and maintenance of designated vehicle turning and drop off areas and vehicle and cycle parking arrangements at the site prior to occupation of the building;
- the provision and maintenance of the cycle and footpath to Walmer Science College;
- precautions to guard against transfer of mud to the highway during construction;
- the submission of further details regarding native species to be planted as part of the landscaping scheme; and

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- the submission of the findings of the assessment of the potential for roosting bats at the site prior to the removal of any trees at the site.

Case officer – H Mallett	01622 221075
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Background documents - See section heading
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E1 COUNTY MATTER APPLICATIONS AND DETAILS PURSUANT PERMITTED/APPROVED/REFUSED UNDER DELEGATED POWERS - MEMBERS' INFORMATION

Since the last meeting of the Committee, the following matters have been determined by me under delegated powers:-

Background Documents - The deposited documents.

CA/97/936/R2A, 6A & 7A	Details submitted pursuant to conditions (2), (6) and (7) in respect of revised restoration scheme. Milton Quarry, Ashford Road, Chartham, Canterbury
CA/10/404	Change of use from open space to wastewater pumping station. Access road off Vauxhall Road serving fenced compound around underground sewerage pumping station and above ground kiosks. Kiosk at northern end of Vauxhall Avenue. Land to the West of Vauxhall Road, Canterbury
DA/10/776	Construction of a sludge storage building (amendment to that permitted under DA/09/681). Long Reach Sewage Treatment Works, Marsh Street, Dartford
SE/09/1788/R5	Details submitted pursuant to condition (5) in respect of signage. Ideal Waste Paper, The Teardrop Centre, London Road, Swanley
SH/07/774/MR66/R22, R23 & R25	Details submitted pursuant to conditions (22), (23) and (25) in respect of proposed landscaping, restoration, aftercare and afteruse. Lydd Quarry, Jury's Gap Road, Lydd
TH/10/387	Change of use from B1 use to Waste Recycling use. MPL, Unit J7, Channel Road, Westwood Industrial Estate, Margate
TM/09/188/R18	Detailed scheme of routing, design and associated measures for a public footpath across the site (East / West) pursuant to condition (18) of planning permission TM/09/1888. Offham Landfill Site, Teston Road, Offham, West Malling

E2 CONSULTATIONS ON APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED BY DISTRICT COUNCILS OR GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS DEALT WITH UNDER DELEGATED POWERS - MEMBERS' INFORMATION

Since the last meeting of the Committee, I have considered the following applications and - decided not to submit any strategic planning objections:-

Background Documents - The deposited documents.

- MA/10/1230 Outline – Erection of a medical centre (use class D1) and 4 dwellings and parking with all matters reserved for future consideration.
26 Tonbridge Road, Maidstone
- MA/10/1231 Outline – Erection of a residential care home (use class C2) parking and relocation of access with all matters reserved for future consideration.
13 Tonbridge Road, Maidstone
- MA/10/1232 Outline – Erection of 14 x 2 bedroom apartments and 9 x 3 bedroom dwellings, parking and new access with all matters reserved for future consideration.
13 Tonbridge Road, Maidstone
- MA/10/1233 Outline – Erection of a mass storage warehouse (use class B8) with ancillary offices and retail counter with all matters reserved for future consideration.
13 Tonbridge Road, Maidstone
- SE/10/1598 Four caravan pitches on existing caravan site and associated works/facilities including replacing existing amenity blocks.
Hever Road Gypsy Site, Romani Way, Hever Road, Edenbridge

E3 COUNTY COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS AND DETAILS PURSUANT PERMITTED/APPROVED UNDER DELEGATED POWERS MEMBERS' INFORMATION

Since the last meeting of the Committee, the following matters have been determined by me under delegated powers:-

Background Documents – The deposited documents.

- AS/10/730 Additional car park for 42 cars.
The Towers School, Faversham Road, Kennington, Ashford
- AS/10/731 New gymnasium, drama studio and two classroom extension.
The Towers School, Faversham Road, Kennington, Ashford
- AS/10/837 Construction of a 1½ storey roof structure over an enclosed courtyard to form multi-use internal space.
Beaver Green Primary School, Cuckoo Lane, Ashford
- AS/10/838 Change of use from B1 workshop and storage unit to use by Kent County Council Social Services for wood n ware occupational centre (workshop and training for disabled users).
Units 3 & 4, Heron Business Centre, Henwood, Ashford
- AS/10/847 Erection of a parent waiting shelter at front of school.
St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, Quantock Drive, Ashford

CA/09/1680/R	Non-material amendment to permitted elevations to provide 2 additional windows to the eastern elevation permitted under permission reference CA/09/1680. Hampton Primary School, Fitzgerald Avenue, Herne Bay
CA/10/867	Construction of an Inclusion Centre comprising of a single storey building in brick with flat roof in a courtyard section of the school to provide toilet, counselling/meeting room and open plan teaching/meeting space with small kitchen unit. Whitstable Junior School, Oxford Road, Whitstable
CA/10/947	Erection of a sun canopy, green house and shed. Pilgrims Way Primary School, Pilgrims Way, Canterbury
CA/10/1150	Erection of 2 canopies (5m x 2m each) to cover cycle storage racks at a height of 2.5m. Erection of a canopy adjacent to reception class (6m x 2.5m). St. Peter's Methodist Primary School, St Peter's Grove, Canterbury
DA/10/975	Installation of a new outdoor play area. Maypole Primary School, Franklin Road, Dartford
DO/09/1027/R3	Details of external materials pursuant to condition 3 of planning permission DO/09/1027 for external works to Deal Library. Deal Library, Broad Street, Deal
DO/10/622	Five bay mobile classroom installation. Sandwich Technology School, Deal Road, Sandwich
GR/08/154/R5A	Amendments to details of external lighting as previously approved pursuant to condition 5 of planning permission GR/08/154. Thamesview School, Thong Lane, Gravesend
GR/08/154/R24	Details of works to be carried out to the public highway. Thamesview School, Thong Lane, Gravesend
MA/08/2186/R	Non-material amendment to elevations including, the omission of sports hall roof lights, amendments to rooflight and window configurations, omission of high level plant screens and a change to the cladding material submitted under condition (3). Cornwallis Academy, Hubbards Lane, Maidstone
MA/10/788	Demolition of single storey classroom building and construction of two storey food technology block, housing a replacement classroom and a sixth form area. Maidstone Grammar School, Barton Road, Maidstone

MA/10/923	Internal alterations and change of use of Headmasters house to provide office and storage space on the ground floor for school use and two 2 bedroom apartments on the first floor for occupation primarily by school staff with the possibility of the apartments being rented out to the public if left unoccupied by school staff. Maidstone Grammar School, Barton Road, Maidstone
MA/10/1133	To increase the height of the portion of boundary fence adjoining Sutton Road. Oak Trees Community School, Oaktree Avenue, Maidstone
SE/10/1263	Section 73 application to amend car park design previously approved under consent reference SE/08/1896. Lullingstone Country Park, Kingfisher Bridge, Castle Road, Eynsford, Dartford
SE/10/1503	Placement of small temporary mobile containing three toilet facilities. Seal Church of England Primary School, Zambra Way, Seal, Sevenoaks
SE/10/1592	Construction of a single storey extension to existing school office. Hartley Primary School, Round Ash Way, Hartley, Longfield
SE/10/1761	Construction of a new upper storey extension and associated remodelling to the junior block first floor area and creation of an overflow car park to the side of the school for 5 vehicles. St Bartholomew's Catholic Primary School, Sycamore Drive, Swanley
SH/09/27/R4	Details of fencing and paving. Christ Church CEP School, Brockman Road, Folkestone
SH/09/822/R	Application for a non-material amendment; Inclusion of 2 external enclosures for sprinkler tank and various plant units. The Marsh Academy, Station Road, New Romney
SH/09/822/RVAR	Details of: external lighting including floodlighting of the MUGA; a scheme of landscaping & tree planting; fencing, gates and other means of enclosure; further ecological surveys; a scheme for the provision of a buffer zone alongside the New Romney main sewer; surface water drainage; a programme of archaeological work and a construction management strategy pursuant to conditions 4, 10, 13, 17, 19, 21, 22, 24, 30 & 33 of planning permission SH/09/822. The Marsh Academy, Station Road, New Romney
SH/09/1009/R4	Details of landscaping scheme pursuant to condition (4) of planning permission SH/09/1009. Folkestone Academy, Academy Lane, Folkestone
SH/10/508	Rear infill extension. Highview School, Moat Farm Road, Folkestone

SH/10/559	Demolition of existing changing rooms, screen walls, open air swimming pool and out buildings and the construction of a new single storey enclosed swimming pool with changing and ancillary accommodation. Lydd Primary School, Skinner Road, Lydd, Romney Marsh
SW/10/773	Erection of a 2kw wind turbine on 7.5m high galvanised steel mast as an educational tool for vocational skills training. Swale Skills Centre, Unit 1 & 2, Bonham Drive, Eurolink Business Park, Sittingbourne
TH/08/384/R10	Details pursuant to condition (10) - Landscaping – of planning permission TH/08/384 for a childrens centre. Priory Infant School, Cannon Road, Ramsgate
TH/10/438	Retention of existing mobile classroom. Ramsgate Holy Trinity CEP School, Dumpton Park Drive, Broadstairs
TM/10/1837	Erection of 2 canopies on the school playground. Borough Green Primary School, School Approach, Borough Green, Sevenoaks
TW/10/1736	Placement of one modular/mobile classroom unit, housing two classrooms. St. James CE Infant School, Sandrock Road, Tunbridge Wells
TW/10/2025	Renewal of planning consent for the retention of two mobile classroom units. Pembury School, Lower Green Road, Pembury, Tunbridge Wells
TW/10/2026	New entrance and cloakroom to I.T suite and enlargement of the two adjacent classrooms. Horsmonden Primary School, Back Lane, Horsmonden, Tonbridge
TW/10/2058	Renewal of planning consent for the continued use of the School House as administration space in connection with the adjoining Primary School. School House, Frittenden Primary School, Cranbrook Road, Frittenden

E4 TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS 1999 – SCREENING OPINIONS ADOPTED UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

Background Documents –

- *The deposited documents.*

- *Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999.*
- *DETR Circular 02/99 – Environmental Impact Assessment.*

- (a) Since the last meeting of the Committee the following screening opinions have been adopted under delegated powers that the proposed development does not constitute EIA development and the development proposal does not need to be accompanied by an Environmental Statement:-

DC29/10/AS/0001 - Proposed development of a Park and Ride site comprising of:

- an 800 space car park;
- a bus interchange for Smartlink and domestic/national bus service;
- a facilities building with on site warden in attendance during hours of operation;
- access routes to/from Drovers roundabout and Fougères Way (A20);
- a passenger drop off area; and
- a motorcycle and bicycle area.

Land to the northwest of A20 Drovers roundabout and on the western flank of Fougères Way, Ashford

SE/10/TEMP/0021 – Erection of a single storey extension to the existing hall for storage and spectators. Valence School, Westerham Road, Westerham

SW/10/TEMP/0024 – Construction of a cycle track along the ‘canal bank’ (Queenborough Lines) Sheerness. Halfway Road, Sheerness West, Sheerness

SW/10/TEMP/0028 – Proposed wind turbine to be located within the new primary school at Warden. Open ground situated to the north of the B2231 Leysdown Road, close to the junction within Warden Bay Road, Sheerness

- (b) Since the last meeting of the Committee the following screening opinions have been adopted under delegated powers that the proposed development does constitute EIA development and the development proposal does need to be accompanied by an Environmental Statement:-

None

E5 TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS 1999 – SCOPING OPINIONS ADOPTED UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

- (b) Since the last meeting of the Committee the following scoping opinions have been adopted under delegated powers.

Background Documents -

- *The deposited documents.*
- *Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999.*
- *DETR Circular 02/99 - Environmental Impact Assessment.*

Proposed Northfleet Logistics Facility, Northfleet Works, Northfleet Embankment, Gravesham