

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

**8 classroom two storey extension and associated works
at The John Wesley CofE Methodist Primary School,
Ashford – AS/13/776 (KCC/AS/0203/2013)**

A report by Head of Planning Applications Group to Planning Applications Committee on 9 October 2013.

Application by Kent County Council Property & Infrastructure Support for an 8 classroom two storey extension with link at ground floor and bridge link at first floor to existing school. Accommodation to comprise 8 classrooms, offices, toilets and ancillary store rooms, stairs and lift; a single storey extension to enlarge existing hall with PE store and toilets, and additional hard playground space, and the provision of 21 additional parking spaces and the removal of 3 road traffic width restrictions to improve vehicular access under a S278 agreement, at The John Wesley CofE Methodist Primary School, Wesley School Road, Ashford – AS/13/776 (KCC/AS/0203/2013)

Recommendation: Permission be granted, subject to conditions.

Local Member: Mr Derek Smyth

Classification: Unrestricted

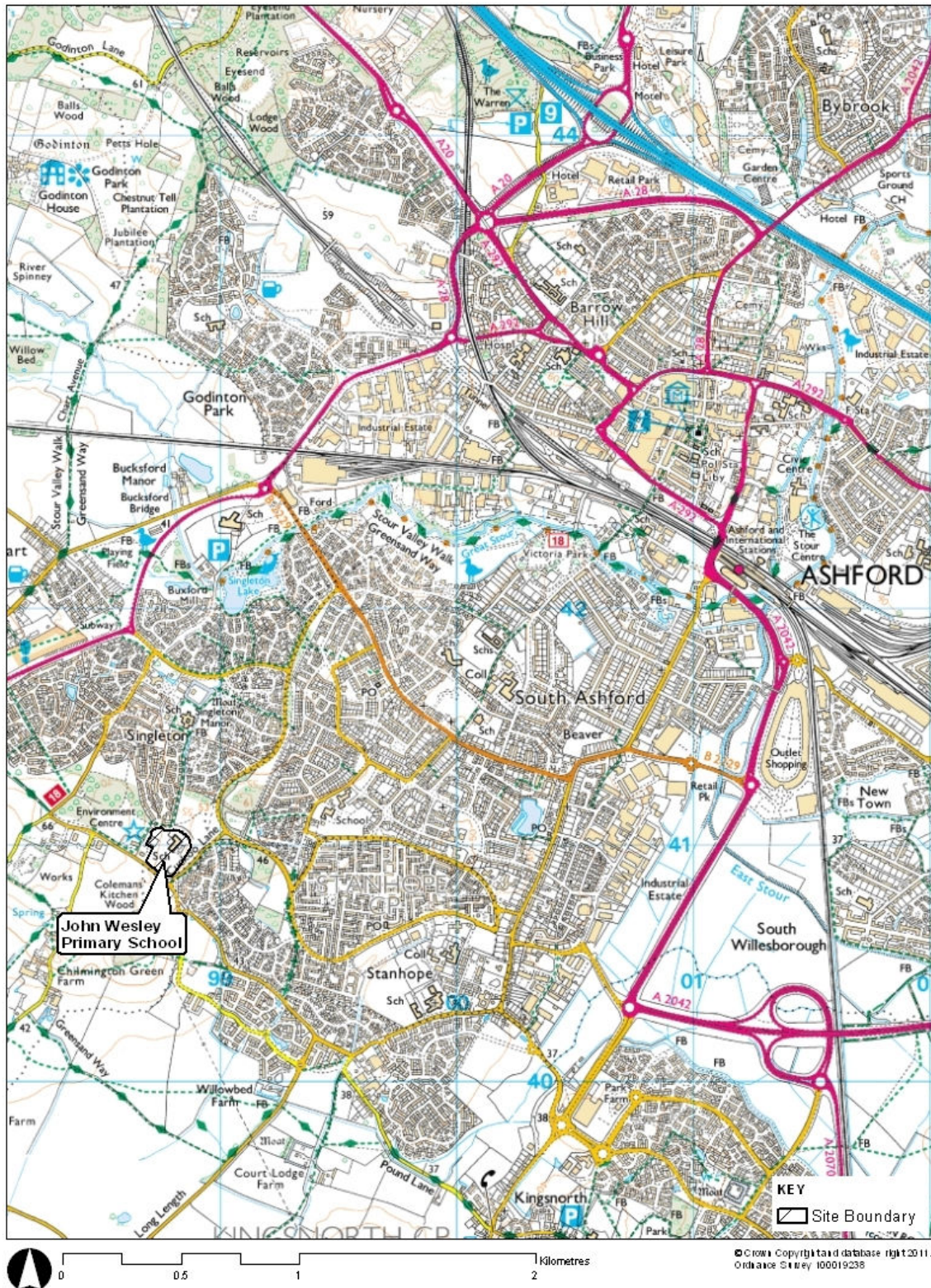
Site

1. John Wesley CofE Methodist Primary School is currently a 1 form entry Primary School, situated in a modern housing development in the Singleton area of Ashford, to the south west of the main town. The site is accessed via Wesley School Road, to the north of the site, and is bounded by residential properties and an open field (which is to be developed) to the north, Cuckoo Lane and residential properties beyond to the east, Chart Road to the south, and Singleton Environment Centre to the west. The school buildings are located at the northern end of the site, central to the school frontage, with car parking to the east, and a designated drop off area and further car parking to the north. The school buildings were constructed in 2007 and are arranged in an 'L' shape, split into 2 'wings'. There are 7 existing classrooms and a library on the ground floor, with staff accommodation on the first floor in one wing, and the school hall, kitchen, IT facilities, main entrance and offices in the second wing, which is single storey although double height at the school hall. A private funded Nursery School is located in an octagonal shaped extension, which has a separate secure fenced play area.
2. The site is within the designated Singleton development area, under saved Policy S20 of the Ashford Borough Local Plan. There are no significant trees within the site, no ecological or landscape designations, and the site is not within a Conservation Area, nor within the setting of any Listed Buildings. A public Right of Way runs adjacent to part of the school's northern boundary, crossing Wesley School Road.

A site location plan is attached.

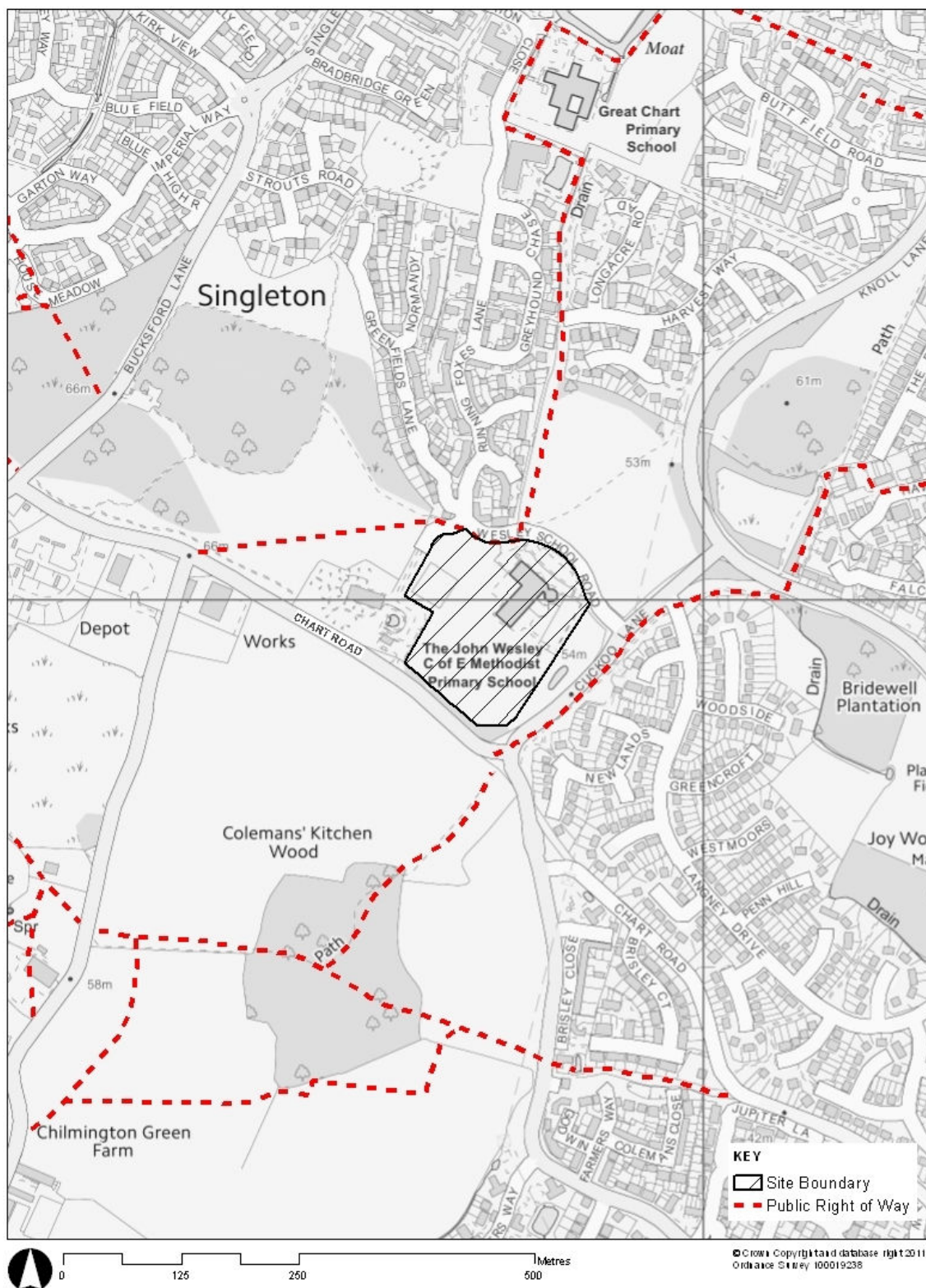
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SITE LOCATION PLAN



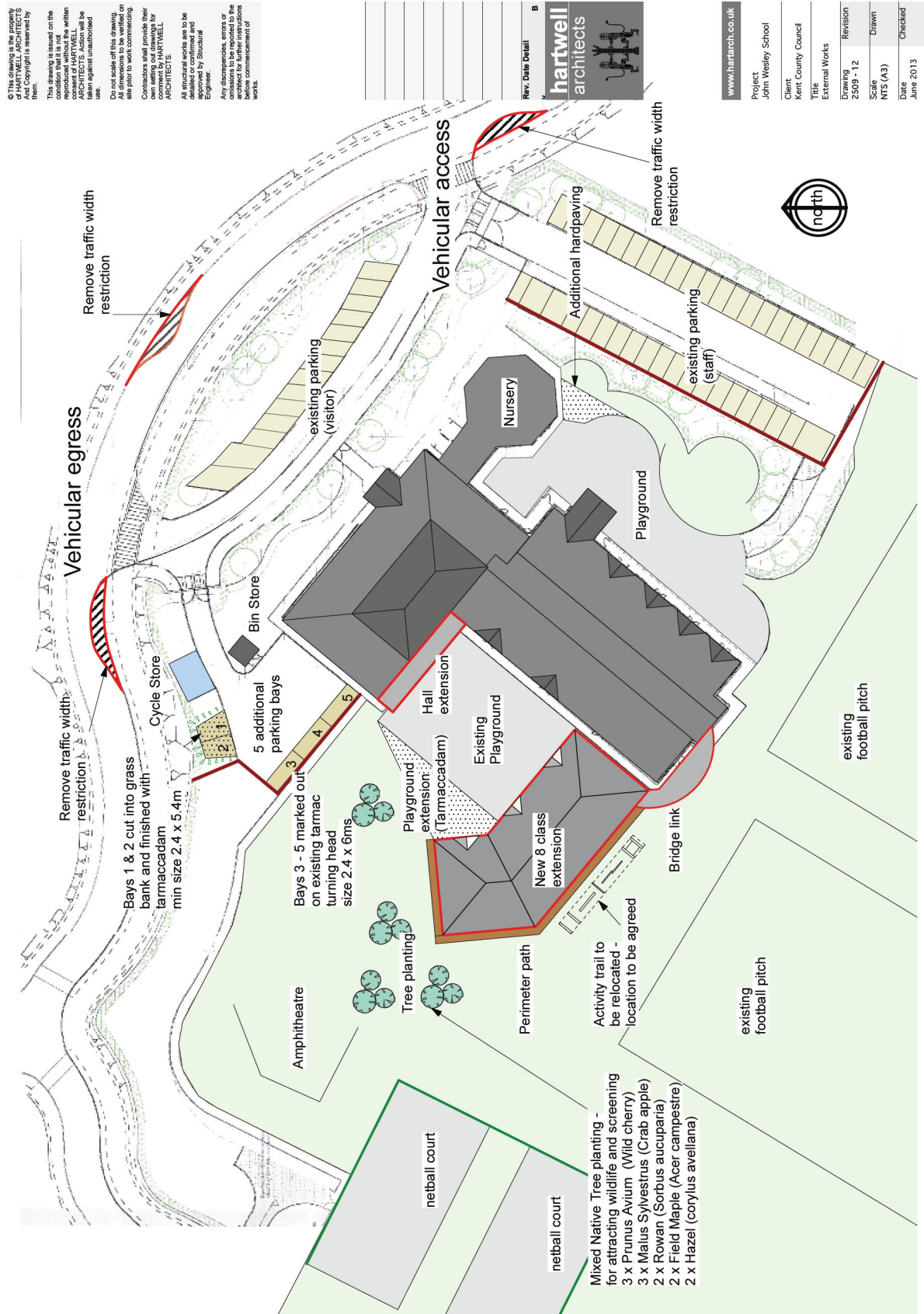
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SITE PLAN



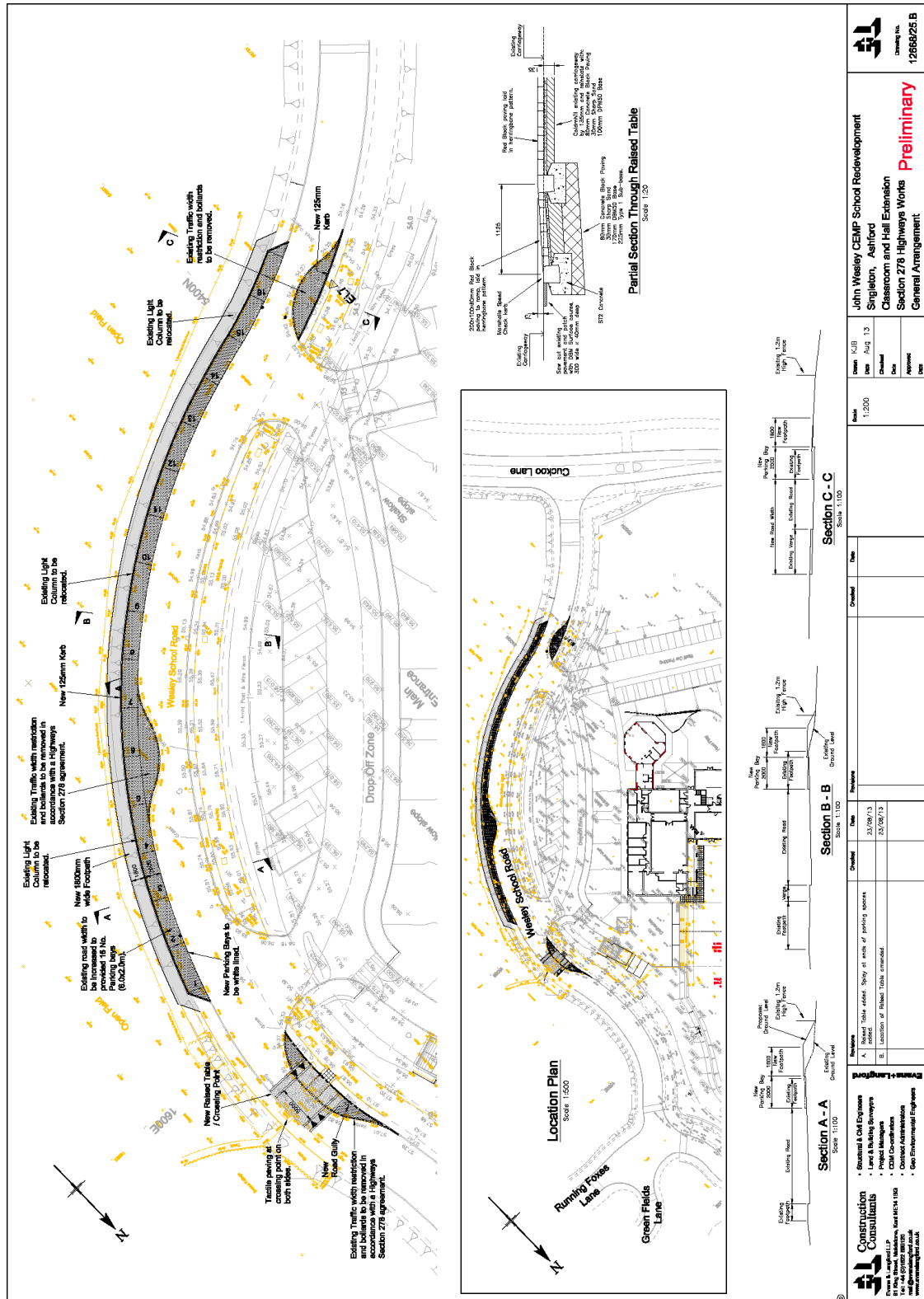
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Site layout



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Off site highway works



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Ground floor plan



<p> 9 Chapel Lane Dover, CT16 3NP T 01304 210 776 F 01304 210 770 www.hartwell.co.uk </p>		<p> Project: John Wesley CofE Methodist Primary School Extension Client: Ashford Local Education Authority Architect: Hartwell Architects Proposed Ground Floor Plan </p>	<p> Drawn by: J. Smith Checked by: J. Smith Date: 21/06/2013 </p>	<p> Revision: 1. Initial Design 2. Final Design </p>
<p> h artwell architects </p>		<p> PLANNING ISSUE 21/06/2013 </p>		
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Background/Relevant Planning History

3. John Wesley CofE Methodist Primary School was originally granted planning approval under consent reference AS/03/975, and was subsequently amended by 2 further planning applications, AS/05/687 and AS/06/435. The amended applications altered the site layout and design of the school development. The planning approval for John Wesley School approved a 2 phase project, phase 1 providing accommodation for a 1 form of entry (1FE), and phase 2 providing additional accommodation to enable future expansion to a 2 form of entry (2FE), when demand arose. Phase 1, a 1FE Primary School, was built in 2007. The Education Authority now needs to build phase 2 to provide the accommodation required for a 2FE, due to growing numbers of pupils aged between 5 & 11 in the area. The approved phase 2 development comprises a single storey building, which would link the two ends of the existing 'L' shaped building, creating a quadrangle with an internal courtyard. However, the applicant does not wish to build the development in accordance with the approved details, and has therefore submitted this planning application for a two storey 8 classroom extension.
4. When this application was originally submitted, an additional 5 car parking spaces within the school site were proposed. However, following consultation with Kent County Council Highway's and Transportation, additional car parking is now proposed on the northern verge of Wesley School Road. The land is owned by Ashford Borough Council, and the appropriate notice has been served on them. It is the amended application, including the additional car parking provision, that will be outlined below and discussed throughout this report.

Proposal

5. This application has been submitted by Kent County Council Property and Infrastructure Support and proposes the erection of an 8 classroom two storey extension with associated offices, toilets and ancillary store rooms. In addition, a single storey extension is proposed to enlarge the existing hall, with PE store and toilets. Additional hard playground space of 150m² is also proposed. Three existing road traffic width restrictions are proposed to be removed to improve vehicular access under a S278 agreement, and 5 on-site and 16 off-site car parking spaces are proposed. A new raised table/crossing point is also proposed, to align with the Public Right of Way.
6. With regard to pupil numbers, the proposed expansion would increase the school roll from 270 (1FE and an additional 30 pupils in September 2012, and September 2013) to 420. The school is expected to grow by an additional 30 pupils each September until it reaches full 2FE capacity, 420 pupils, in 2018. Staff numbers are expected to increase from the current 40, to 52 in 2018.
7. The 8 classroom extension is proposed over two storeys, with a corridor link at the ground floor and a bridge link at the first floor, connecting the extension to the existing school building at both levels. A first floor external balcony is proposed, which would overlook the playground, and provide outside play/teaching space, as well as creating covered play below. Each floor of the building would accommodate 4 classrooms, offices, toilets, storage, cloakrooms and circulation spaces.
8. The proposed building would form a new 'wing' to the school, and is proposed to reflect the same design and scale of the existing school. Roof lines, window fenestration, and

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materials are proposed to replicate and match the existing. The new 'wing' would change the footprint of the school from an 'L' shape to a 'U', partly enclosing the central play area. The materials proposed have been selected to match the existing, and are as follows:

- Artificial slate roofing tiles;
 - Sarnafil single ply membrane (flat roof linking sections only);
 - Ibstock Leicester Multi Cream Stock (main brick);
 - Ibstock Staff Blue Brindle Smooth Blue Grey (feature brick);
 - Trespa fascias and soffits, fascias finished in 'Red Wine', soffits in white;
 - Velfac composite timber/aluminium windows and doors RAL 3004 (purple/red)
 - Aluminium square section rainwater goods RAL 3004 (purple/red);
 - Hardwood timber decking, galvanised steel frame and toughened glass infill panels to form the balcony; &
 - Steel frame with insulated aluminium panels and solar controlled glazing infills to form the first floor link.
9. It is also proposed to incorporate a 'feature' brickwork panel showing a simple cross, to reflect the school's Christian background, on the south west elevation.
10. In order to meet educational guidelines, the size of the school hall would need to be increased to a minimum of 180m² to accommodate the additional pupil roll. It is therefore proposed to extend the hall with a single storey extension which would provide an additional 29m² of hall space, in addition to storage, toilet and lobby space.
11. The proposed extension would be constructed upon an open grassed area of the site, but on an area which does not form part of a playing pitch and/or formal playing field. A purpose built timber log activity trail would need to be relocated on the site as it would be too close to the new building. The school currently has two designated football pitches on the playing field, measuring 6175m², and two hard surface netball courts measuring 960m², in addition to informal soft and hard play space. As part of this application it is proposed to enlarge the school's rear playground by 150m², and the eastern side playground by 23m². The development would not result in the removal of any trees, hedges or shrubbery. However, additional tree planting is proposed to provide screening from the prevailing wind and to provide shade for outdoor play and learning.
12. The School currently has 14 car parking spaces to the front of the main building, 2 of which are accessible, and a drop off zone is also provided with enough space for 6 cars at a time. A further 38 car parking spaces are provided within the staff car park, including another 2 accessible car parking spaces. The applicant advises that for special events at the school, the playground is occasionally used as an overflow car park. 60 cycle parking spaces and a scooter pod for 10 scooters are currently available on site. This planning application proposes to provide an additional 5 car parking spaces within the site, and a further 16 spaces on the northern verge of Wesley School Road. These 16 spaces are proposed upon land owned by Ashford Borough Council, and notice has been served upon them. In addition, a raised table crossing is proposed, to follow the line of the Public Right of Way, to enable safer crossing of the road.
13. During peak school times, the applicant advises that Wesley School Road (which is within a 30mph zone) becomes congested due to the existing traffic calming creating 'pinch points'. The width restrictions which are in place extend to half of the width of the

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road, meaning that two-way traffic cannot easily pass. I am advised that the width restrictions were originally installed when the school was essentially within a cul-de-sac. However, since new housing has been constructed, Wesley School Road is no longer a cul-de-sac, and the width restrictions cause significant congestion by preventing the two-way traffic flow. Therefore, as part of this application, and under a Highway Section 278 Agreement, it is proposed to realign the carriageway by removing the width restrictions, reinstating free flowing two-way traffic.

14. The design aims to achieve a BREEAM 'very good' rating, but the applicant advises that given the nature and scale of the development such certification does not apply. Where practicable the materials used in the building would be selected to reduce carbon emissions in their production, and not be unduly harmful to the natural environment. The proposed extension would also incorporate rainwater harvesting for grey water systems, and would be naturally ventilated with opening windows and a 'passivent' roof system. Photo Voltaic panels are also proposed to reduce the overall carbon footprint of the new built development.

The application is accompanied by a Design & Access Statement, Transport Statement, and Phase 1 Geo Environmental Desk Study & Phase 2 Report on Subsoil Investigations, including appendices.

Planning Policy

15. The following Guidance/Statements and Development Plan Policies summarised below are relevant to the consideration of the application:

- (i) **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** March 2012, sets out the Government's planning policy guidance for England at the heart of which is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The guidance is a material consideration for the determination of planning application but does not change the statutory status of the development plan which remains the starting point for decision making. However the weight given to development plan policies will depend on their consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the development plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

In determining applications the NPPF states that local planning authorities should look for solutions rather than problems, and decision-takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

In terms of delivering sustainable development in relation to this development proposal, the NPPF guidance and objectives covering the following matters are of particular relevance:

- consideration of whether the opportunities for sustainable transport have been taken up and safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people;
- achieving the requirement for high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;
- the great importance that the Government attaches to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new

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communities, and that great weight should be given to the need to create, expand or alter schools;

- (ii) **Policy Statement – Planning for Schools Development** (15 August 2011) which sets out the Government's commitment to support the development of state-funded schools and their delivery through the planning system.

- (iii) The **Ashford Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2008**:

Policy CS1 Sustainable developments and high quality design are at the centre of the approach to deciding planning applications, the key objectives of which include the timely provision of community services.

Policy CS2 'The Borough Wide Strategy' – Focus' large scale development within the Ashford Growth Area. Key infrastructure projects, including education, to be delivered at the same time as the development that they would serve.

Policy CS4 'Ashford Urban Area' – Seeks maximization of the potential for improvement and regeneration within the urban area whilst ensuring that redevelopment is of an appropriate use, scale and density, and provides a high quality living environment.

Policy CS9 Development proposals must be of high quality design and address issues such as character, distinctiveness, sense of place, permeability, ease of movement, legibility, mixed use and diversity, continuity and enclosure, quality of public spaces, flexibility, adaptability and liveability, richness in detail and efficient use of natural resources.

Policy CS10 All major development must incorporate sustainable design features to reduce the consumption of natural resources .

Policy CS15 Promotes public transport and other non-car based modes of travel including measures to encourage cycling, and sets out maximum vehicle parking standards.

Policy CS18 School and community facilities should be timely and provided to meet the needs generated by new development.

Policy CS20 All developments should include appropriate sustainable drainage systems for the disposal of surface water.

- (iv) The adopted **Ashford Borough Local Plan 2000**:

Policy S20 Land at Singleton is identified for residential development, with an indicative site capacity of 550 dwellings within the plan period, and capacity for further development beyond 2006 (end of plan period)

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Consultations

16. **Ashford Borough Council** raises no objection to the application.

Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council objects to the application on the ground that the already existing parking and traffic problems that occur during peak school times would be exacerbated by an increase in pupil numbers. It is suggested that a staff only access be created from Chart Road, with an additional car park provided, freeing up the existing staff car park for parent parking and additional drop off. The Parish Council consider that this would reduce parking and congestion on Wesley School Road, and other adjacent roads, enabling easier access for all, including emergency vehicles. In addition, the removal of the pinch points would just enable parents to park along the whole length Wesley School Road, so two-way traffic would still not be achieved. Parents are also parking in the adjacent Environment Centre, which prevents users of the Centre from being able to park. The proposed 16 parking bays along Wesley School Road are considered to be insufficient and unsuitable to alleviate the traffic and parking concerns, and would exacerbate traffic movement issues. Safety concerns are also raised in relation to a play park on land to the north (part of a housing development approved by the Borough Council), as it is considered that cars parked on Wesley School Road would endanger children's lives as they cross the road.

The Parish Council does not consider that the Travel Plan/Statement and the traffic implications of the proposed development have not been sufficiently considered, and that already inadequate facilities would become worse.

It is also stated that the development would commence at the same time as the Persimmon housing development on land opposite the school (60 houses due to start in October 2013), and also the Singleton Park development (due to start in Spring 2014). The Parish Council therefore urges the County Council to review overall traffic management and the site construction management before development commences.

The Divisional Transportation Manager raises no objection to the application subject to the imposition of conditions regarding the following:

- provision of parking facilities for site personnel, construction vehicle loading/unloading and turning facilities, and wheel washing facilities;
- provision and permanent retention of the vehicle parking spaces and turning space shown on the submitted drawings prior to occupation of the development;
- provision of the raised table/crossing point across Wesley School Road as shown on the submitted plans prior to occupation of the development; and
- submission of an updated School Travel Plan within 3 months of the occupation of the development. The Travel Plan shall include new modal share targets and measures aimed at reducing private car usage and encouraging sustainable transport.

An informative is also required advising the applicant that the removal of the width restrictions, the 16 parking spaces on the verge of Wesley School Road, alteration to the footway, and the raised crossing table on Wesley School Road would be subject to a Section 278 Agreement with Kent County Council Highways and Transportation. The Agreements Team should be contacted to discuss further.

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Public Rights of Way notes that the proposal would remove the width restrictions in order to reinstate two-way traffic flow. As this may increase vehicle movements and speed in the vicinity, the ramped/table pedestrian crossing should be constructed to Kent Highway Services specification to aid crossing for those using the Public Right of Way. General informatives are also required with regard to obstructing or disturbing the use of the Right of Way.

Sport England raises no objection to the application.

Environment Agency has assessed the application as having a low environmental risk and has no comments to make.

The County Archaeologist raises no objection subject to the imposition of a condition requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological work.

Local Member

17. The local County Member, Mr Derek Smyth, was notified of the application on the 11 July 2013.

Publicity

18. The application was publicised by an advertisement in a local newspaper, the posting of 3 site notices and the individual notification of 21 neighbouring residential properties.

Representations

19. 1 letter of representation on the application has been received as a result of publicity. The points made are summarised below:
- Objection is not to the building itself, but to the proposed road alterations and specifically the removal of 1 of the 3 pinchpoints;
 - Removal of the pinch point at the upper end of Wesley School Road, where it becomes Running Foxes Lane, would encourage additional illegal parking on the verges and pavements, and further extend the length of the blockage by parents;
 - The Transport Statement does not take into account the existence of Great Chart Primary School at the other end of Running Foxes Lane, and the unsuitability of Highland Park Estate to cope with existing traffic, let alone an increase.
 - Parents drive too fast, and an accident is inevitably going to happen;
 - The upper pinch point should be left in place, speed limits should be reduced to 20mph for the entire length of Hoxton Close, Running Foxes Lane, and Wesley School Road, parents should drop off and not park, and Wesley School Road should be a no-parking zone.

Discussion

Introduction

20. This application has been submitted by Kent County Council Property & Infrastructure Support and proposes the erection of a two storey 8 classroom extension, a small hall extension, additional playground space, removal of existing width restrictions on Wesley

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School Road, and the provision of 21 additional car parking spaces, 5 onsite and 16 offsite. In considering this proposal regard must be had to the Development Plan Policies referred to in paragraph (15) above. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Therefore, this 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.

21. In this case the key determining factors, in my view, are the impact upon the local highway network, and the policy support for the development of schools to ensure that there is sufficient provision to meet growing demand, increased choice and raised educational standards, subject to being satisfied on amenity and other material considerations. In the Government's view the creation and development of schools is strongly in the national interest and planning authorities should support this objective, in a manner consistent with their statutory obligations. In considering proposals for the creation, expansion and alteration of schools, the Government considers that there is a strong presumption in favour of state funded schools, as expressed in the National Planning Policy Framework. Planning Authorities should give full and thorough consideration to the importance of enabling such development, attaching significant weight to the need to establish and develop state funded schools, and making full use of their planning powers to support such development, only imposing conditions that are absolutely necessary and that meet the tests set out in Circular 11/95.

Design and site layout

22. Development Plan Policies promote high quality design, sustainable development, and significant improvements to the built environment. Although no objections to the design and general principle of the proposed development have been received, it is important to discuss these matters to ensure that the proposal is in accordance with the general design principles expressed in Development Plan Policies. It should also be noted that the original planning permission for the school granted approval for a 2FE primary school to be built over two phases. Phase 1 has been built, which has an 'L' shaped footprint. Phase 2, as previously designed, would have linked the 'L' shape with a single storey building, to create a quadrangle with an internal courtyard. The applicant is now proposing a simple two storey additional 'wing', which would create a 'U' shaped primary school.
23. The siting of the development follows that as originally approved, but due to the additional storey, has a much reduced land take/footprint. The siting of the development would not affect playing field provision, and would not result in the removal of any trees and/or landscaping. The proposed 8 classroom extension is located well within the site boundaries and screened from local properties, which are over 60 metres away at the closest point, by existing school buildings, in addition to mature planting and trees. Additional tree planting is also proposed to the north west of the proposed building, which would further soften the development's appearance, in addition to providing shade for outdoor play. The siting of the building, in my view, is appropriate and logical, and would not have a detrimental impact on neighbouring properties with regard to noise, overlooking, loss of privacy or general amenity matters. I therefore consider the siting of the 8 classroom extension to be appropriate and acceptable.

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24. In addition to the siting, the massing and design of the development must also be considered and assessed. The existing school building is formed of two 'wings', one of which has 7 classrooms and a library on the ground floor, and staff/office accommodation on the first floor, and the other (the site frontage) which is single storey although double height at the school hall. The two storey 8 classroom extension proposed would link with the existing two storey element of the building, with a corridor link at the ground floor, and a bridge link at the first floor. Although the proposed building would be marginally higher than the current buildings on site, it would sit to the rear of the existing, so would not be unduly prominent or appear out of scale with the existing Primary School accommodation. I therefore consider the massing of the building to be appropriate in terms of its relationship to the existing buildings on the school site and to surrounding two storey residential development.
25. The design of the new classroom wing purposefully replicates the existing buildings on the school site in terms of material choices, elevational treatment and fenestration. As outlined in paragraph 8 of this report, the proposed materials are as follows:
- Artificial slate roofing tiles with Sarnafil single ply membrane (flat roof linking sections only);
 - Multi cream stock brick with a smooth blue grey feature brick;
 - fascias finished in 'Red Wine' and soffits in white;
 - Composite timber/aluminium windows and doors (purple/red)
 - Aluminium rainwater goods (purple/red);
 - Hardwood timber decking, steel frame and glass infill panels to form the balcony; &
 - Steel frame with aluminium panels and glazing infills to form the first floor link.
26. The materials listed above have been selected to match the existing entirely, or as close as practicably possible. The applicant is also proposing to include a feature brickwork panel on the south west elevation, depicting a simple cross to reflect the school Christian status. I consider that the design of the proposed extension is well thought through and would link with the existing buildings on site to give the appearance of one cohesive development. However, in order to ensure that the materials palette does not vary from that as submitted I consider it appropriate, should permission be granted, to impose a condition requiring the materials to match the existing as detailed within the planning documentation and shown on the application drawings. Subject to that, I consider the design of the proposed development to be acceptable.
27. In order to meet educational guidelines, the size of the school hall would need to be increased to a maximum of 180m², to accommodate the additional pupil roll. It is therefore proposed to extend the hall with a single storey extension which would provide an addition 29m² of hall space, in addition to storage, toilet and lobby space. The hall extension is to the southern elevation of the existing hall, would follow pitched roof line of the roof, and would replicate the existing elevations. The small extension would also be screened from the site frontage by existing school buildings. In my view, the scale, design and massing of the hall extension is appropriate for the site and would read as part of the original building when complete. I therefore consider this element of the proposal to be acceptable in siting, massing and design terms.
28. The application also proposes to extend the school's rear playground by 150m², and the eastern side playground by 23m². An additional 5 car parking spaces are also proposed within the site, 3 of which would be upon an existing tarmac turning head, with the remaining 2 adjacent to the turning head cut into a grass bank and finished in tarmac

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(an additional 16 spaces are proposed off site, to be discussed below). The additional hard standing proposed for both play space and car parking is in logical locations, and would not impact upon the open space within the site, or use land that is regularly used for another purpose. I therefore consider these elements of the scheme to be acceptable.

Access and parking

29. First, it should be noted that when planning permission was originally granted for John Wesley Primary School, under consent reference AS/03/975, permission was given for a 2FE Primary School, to be constructed in two phases. Therefore, at the time that that application was approved, the development was considered acceptable in terms of accommodating the vehicle movements associated with a 2FE primary school. It should also be noted that the School has onsite staff (38 spaces), visitor and parent car parking (14 spaces), and a dedicated pick-up/drop-off facility. However, this planning application must be considered on its own merits, and must take account of current concerns expressed regarding highway and access issues. Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council and a local resident object to the application of the grounds of highway and access matters, and consider that the additional vehicular movements associated with the expansion of the school would exacerbate existing congestion and onsite parking at peak school times.
30. As outlined in paragraph 4 of this report, when this application was originally submitted an additional 5 on site car parking spaces were proposed. As a result of the concerns expressed by the Parish Council and a local resident, and in consultation with Kent County Council Highways and Transportation, an additional 16 car parking spaces are now proposed to be provided along the northern verge of Wesley School Road on land owned by Ashford Borough Council. On street car parking, and the congestion that this causes was raised as a concern by the Parish Council and the local resident, and objection was also raised to the removal of the western most width restriction as it was considered that its removal would extend parking associated with the school further along the highway by removing what essentially forms a barrier.
31. The removal of the width restrictions is proposed by the applicant as a measure to ease congestion at peak school times, as their removal would reinstate two-way traffic movements. Although parking on Wesley School Road would still occur at peak school times, as is the case with schools across the County, the provision of 16 additional parking bays to the north of Wesley School Road would alleviate the pressure on the highway network, and remove a significant amount of car parking from the main carriageway. However, the Parish Council considers the provision of these 16 parking bays to be insufficient, and questions the safety of the parking proposed. The Parish Council also suggests that a dedicated staff only access be provided from Chart Road, and a new staff car park created, freeing up the existing car park for use by parents.
32. First, Kent County Council Highways and Transportation has been extensively involved in discussion for the design of the car parking facility, and are satisfied that the provision of the 16 additional car parking bays, in addition to the 5 proposed on site, would be sufficient to reasonably alleviate any additional pressures on the highway network that would occur as a result of the school expansion. Providing parking bays off of the highway would enable parents to park without blocking Wesley School Road. Highways and Transportation consider that this, in conjunction with the removal of the width restrictions, would improve the traffic flow situation when compared with the

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current situation. With regard to the safety of crossing the road, children should be crossing at the existing raised table to the eastern end of Wesley School Road, and a second raised table is to be provided as part of this application to the western end of the proposed car parking (see paragraph 37 below).

33. With regard to the suggestion that a dedicated staff access be provided from Chart Road, with a new staff car park created, this is not feasible for a number of reasons. First the provision of a new access would require the approval of the Highways and Transportation, and would necessitate the removal of a significant amount of vegetation, including mature trees and hedging to provide the access and the required sightlines. Vegetation removal would not be desirable, and the provision of an access onto Chart Road may not meet with approval with the Highway Authority. In any case, Highways and Transportation have not required such a provision. In addition, a car park at the southern end of the site would be upon playing field, which would likely attract objection from Sport England, and would also be remote from the school which would not work well operationally.
34. Kent County Council Highways and Transportation are satisfied that the development as proposed would not have an unacceptable impact upon the highway network and consider that the mitigation proposed would be sufficient to mitigate the impact of any additional vehicular movements generated by the school expansion. However, conditions of consent are required with regard to the provision and permanent retention of the vehicle parking spaces and turning space, and the provision of the raised table/crossing point, both of which are required to be provided prior to the occupation of the development. In addition, the submission of a revised School Travel Plan, within 3 months of the occupation of the development, would be required. The revised Travel Plan must include new modal share targets and measures aimed at reducing private car usage and encouraging sustainable transport. It should be noted that John Wesley School has 60 cycle parking spaces, and 10 scooter spaces, and no further provision has been required by Highways and Transportation.
35. A further informative is required advising the applicant that the removal of the width restrictions, the provision 16 parking spaces on the verge of Wesley School Road, alteration to the footway, and the raised crossing table on Wesley School Road would be subject to a Section 278 Agreement with Kent County Council Highways and Transportation, to be discussed further with the Agreements Team. Should permission be granted, an informative to cover this matter would be included.
36. In light of the above, I consider that the applicant has taken all reasonable steps to provide adequate facilities to accommodate those that choose to drive to the site, and steps will be taken to encourage alternative modes of travel as far as is practicable. In particular, it is not practicable or proportional to withhold planning consent solely on the basis that a development would generate additional traffic movements if satisfactory measures are being taken to reduce the impacts of additional traffic to reasonably manageable standards. Subject to the imposition of the conditions required by Kent County Council Highways and Transportation, I consider that the development would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the local highway network and, therefore, see no reason to refuse the application on these grounds.

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Public Right of Way

37. The Public Right of Way, which crosses Wesley School Road and runs along part of the northern site boundary, would be affected in that existing traffic calming, which narrows the road at the point the Right of Way crosses, would be removed. The County Council's Public Right of Way Unit has been consulted on this planning application and has not raised objection, but has required the provision of a raised table top crossing linking the Public Right of Way as it crosses Wesley School Road. This crossing is proposed as part of this planning application, and would be included within the Section 278 Agreement with Kent County Council Highways and Transportation. The provision of the crossing, in addition to the other works to the public highway, would be secured by condition of consent, and in accordance with the requirements of Highways and Transportation, would have to be provided prior to occupation of the new classroom wing. In addition, the Public Right of Way Unit provided general informatives with regard to works adjacent to and/or on a Public Right of Way. Should permission be granted, I consider it appropriate to attach the advice given by the Public Rights of Way Officer to the decision notice, and bring this to the applicant's attention by way of an informative. Subject to the above, I do not consider that the proposal would adversely affect the Public Right of Way.

External lighting

38. No details have been provided on external lighting for the development. If permission is granted, it would therefore be appropriate to reserve details by condition so that the type and position of any external lighting (including car parking) can be controlled to ensure any potential nuisance from light pollution can be minimised.

Sustainable construction

39. The applicant advises that the project would be expected to achieve a minimum 'Very Good' rating under the BREEAM for schools environmental performance rating system. As outlined in paragraph 14 of this report, the building would include a number of sustainable features which indicate how the rating of 'Very Good' would be achieved. I therefore consider it appropriate not to request the submission of further details in relation to this, since that would be a matter for the developers to satisfy their client on, rather than one that has a direct bearing on land use planning aspects, or capable of being of being adjusted by planning controls.

Construction

40. Given that there are neighbouring residential properties, if planning permission is granted it would, in my view, be appropriate to impose a condition restricting hours of construction in order to protect residential amenity. I would suggest that works should be undertaken only between the hours of 0800 and 1800 Monday to Friday and between the hours of 0900 and 1300 on Saturdays, with no operations on Sundays and Bank Holidays. It is also normal on school sites for contractors to be required under the terms of their contract to manage construction traffic/deliveries to minimise conflict with traffic and pedestrians at the beginning and end of the school day.
41. In addition, I consider it appropriate that details of a Construction Management Strategy be submitted for approval prior to the commencement of development. The strategy should include details of the methods of working, location of site compound and

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operative/visitors parking, details of site security and safety measures and details of any construction accesses and lorry routing. Such a strategy would cover all of the matters that Highways and Transportation required to be conditioned with regard to construction. Therefore, should permission be granted, a Construction Management Strategy would be required pursuant to condition and the development would thereafter have to be undertaken in accordance with the approved strategy.

42. That document would be subject to consultation with Kent County Council Highways and Transportation who, as advisors to the Borough Council also, would be able to assess the details in conjunction with those submitted for adjacent residential developments which are due to be constructed in the near future. Although unfortunate that the construction periods of various local developments may clash, this is not a reason to refuse this application, and the Highway Authority and contractors would need to manage construction and associated access issues to minimise disruption and nuisance to other road users.
43. In addition to the above, should permission be granted, conditions of consent would ensure that dust, noise, mud on the local highway network, and other matters associated with construction, would be mitigated as far as reasonably possible so as to minimise disruption to local residents.

Conclusion

44. In my view, the development would not give rise to any significant material harm and is in accordance with the general aims and objectives of the relevant Development Plan Policies. In addition, the development is in accordance with the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning Policy Statement for Schools (2011). Subject to the imposition of the conditions outlined throughout this report, I consider that the proposed development would not have a significantly detrimental impact on the local highway network or residential amenity, and would accord with the principles of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF. Therefore, subject to the imposition of conditions, I am of the opinion that the proposed development would not give rise to any material harm and is otherwise in accordance with the general aims and objectives of the relevant Development Plan Policies and the guidance contained in the NPPF. Therefore, I recommend that permission be granted subject to appropriate conditions

Recommendation

45. I RECOMMEND that PLANNING PERMISSION BE GRANTED SUBJECT to conditions, including conditions covering:
 - the standard time limit;
 - the development to be carried out in accordance with the permitted details;
 - the materials to match the existing, as detailed within the planning application;
 - details of external lighting, to the building and car parking;
 - provision of tree planting as shown on the submitted drawings;
 - provision of car parking and circulatory space prior to first occupation, and subsequent retention;
 - provision of the raised table/crossing point across Wesley School Road prior to first occupation;

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- submission of an updated School Travel Plan within 3 months of occupation;
- hours of working during construction and demolition to be restricted to between 0800 and 1800 Monday to Friday and between the hours of 0900 and 1300 on Saturdays, with no operations on Sundays and Bank Holidays;
- construction management strategy, including access, parking and circulation within the site for contractors and other vehicles related to construction and demolition operations;
- measures to prevent mud and debris being taken onto the public highway.

46. I FURTHER RECOMMEND THAT the applicant BE ADVISED of the following informatives:

- The applicant's attention is drawn to the letter from Public Rights of Way which contains general informatives with regard to works adjacent to and/or on a Public Right of Way. It is also advised that 'the granting of planning permission confers on the developer no other permission or consent or right to close or divert any Public Right of Way at any time without the express permission of the Highways Authority'.
- The applicant is advised that the removal of the width restrictions, the 16 parking spaces on the verge of Wesley School Road, alteration to the footway, and the raised crossing table on Wesley School Road would be subject to a Section 278 Agreement with Kent County Council Highways and Transportation. The Agreements Team should be contacted to discuss further.

Case officer – Mary Green	01622 221066
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Background documents - See section heading
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