

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 proposal dossier for each case and also as might be additionally indicated.

Item D1

**First floor extension at St Crispin's Primary School,
Westgate-on-Sea – TH/08/1366**

A report by Head of Planning Applications Group to Planning Applications Committee on 17 February 2009.

Application by The Governors of St Crispin's Primary School & KCC Children, Families & Education for a first floor extension to provide additional staff accommodation at St. Crispin's Primary School, St. Crispin's Road, Westgate-on-Sea - TH/08/1366.

Recommendation: Planning permission be granted subject to conditions.

Local Member(s): Mr R. Burgess

Classification: Unrestricted

Site

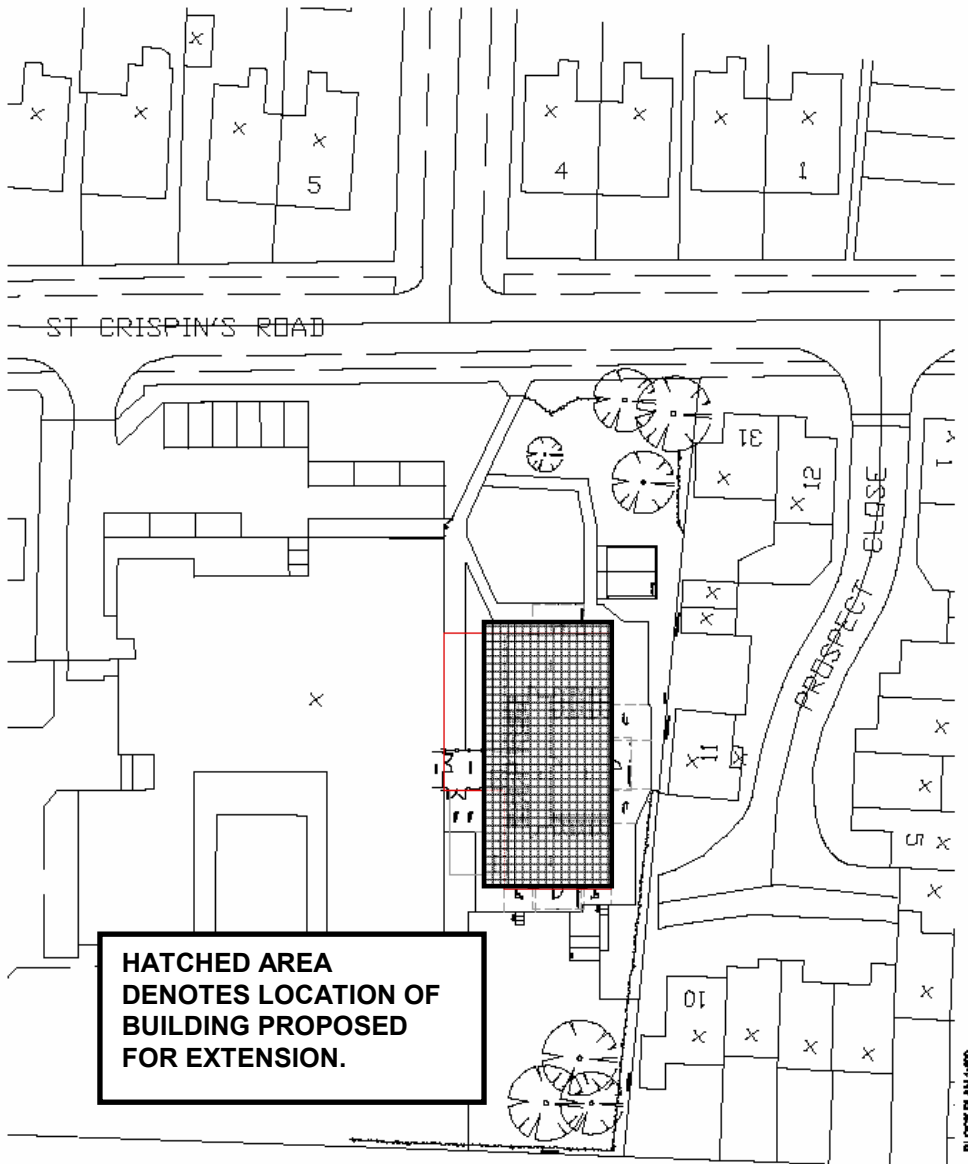
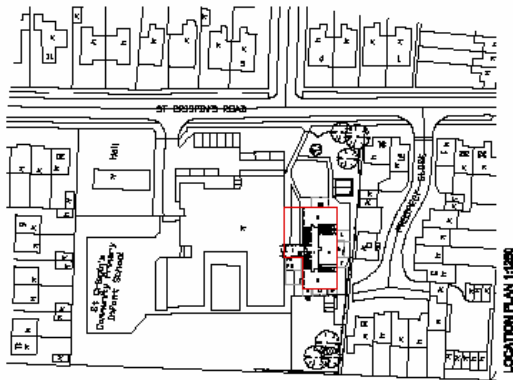
1. St. Crispin's Primary School is located to the south of the centre of Westgate-on-Sea and is accessed by both vehicles and pedestrians from its main entrance on St. Crispin's Road. The school is bounded to the north, south and east by residential properties and by a recreation ground to the west. The existing building for which it is proposed to create a first floor extension is located to the south of the school site adjacent to the boundary with 11 Prospect Close. There is an existing fence along the boundary between the development site and Prospect Close which measures approximately 1.8m with some vegetation topping it, and there are well established mature trees to the east. The school is not situated within any environmental or historically designated/protected areas. *A location plan is attached.*

Proposal

2. The proposal seeks to extend an existing single storey pitched roof building (see plan on page D1.3) by adding a first floor. The design chosen for the proposal would see the existing double pitched roof changed to a monopitch. A first floor would also be added to the existing ground floor link to the main school building which would be accessed from a foyer area at the top of a proposed new staircase. The existing roof slope would be continued up to a ridge directly above the existing flank wall that faces the main school building and would slope away from the site boundary shared with the adjacent residential properties. The proposal would provide first floor accommodation that would be equal to 50 per cent of the existing ground floor area, the only additional footprint created would be the staircase that would provide direct access to the first floor. The first floor accommodation would provide a large meeting/activity room, 2 small staff meeting/work rooms, a foyer space, small kitchen area and toilets.

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Site Location Plan



Project title : PROPOSAL FOR ST CRISPIN'S SCHOOL	
Drawing title : EXISTING &/REMOVED BLOCK AND LOCATION PL	
Scale : AS INDICATED	Date : 28.03.08
Rev	Drawing Number : 2008P1.001

cstdp ltd
 Chartered Architects
 E-mail: office@cstdparchitecture.com
 The Studio, 15 Tulse Road,
 Canterbury, Kent CT1 3JY
 Tel 01227-462296
 Fax 01227-786201

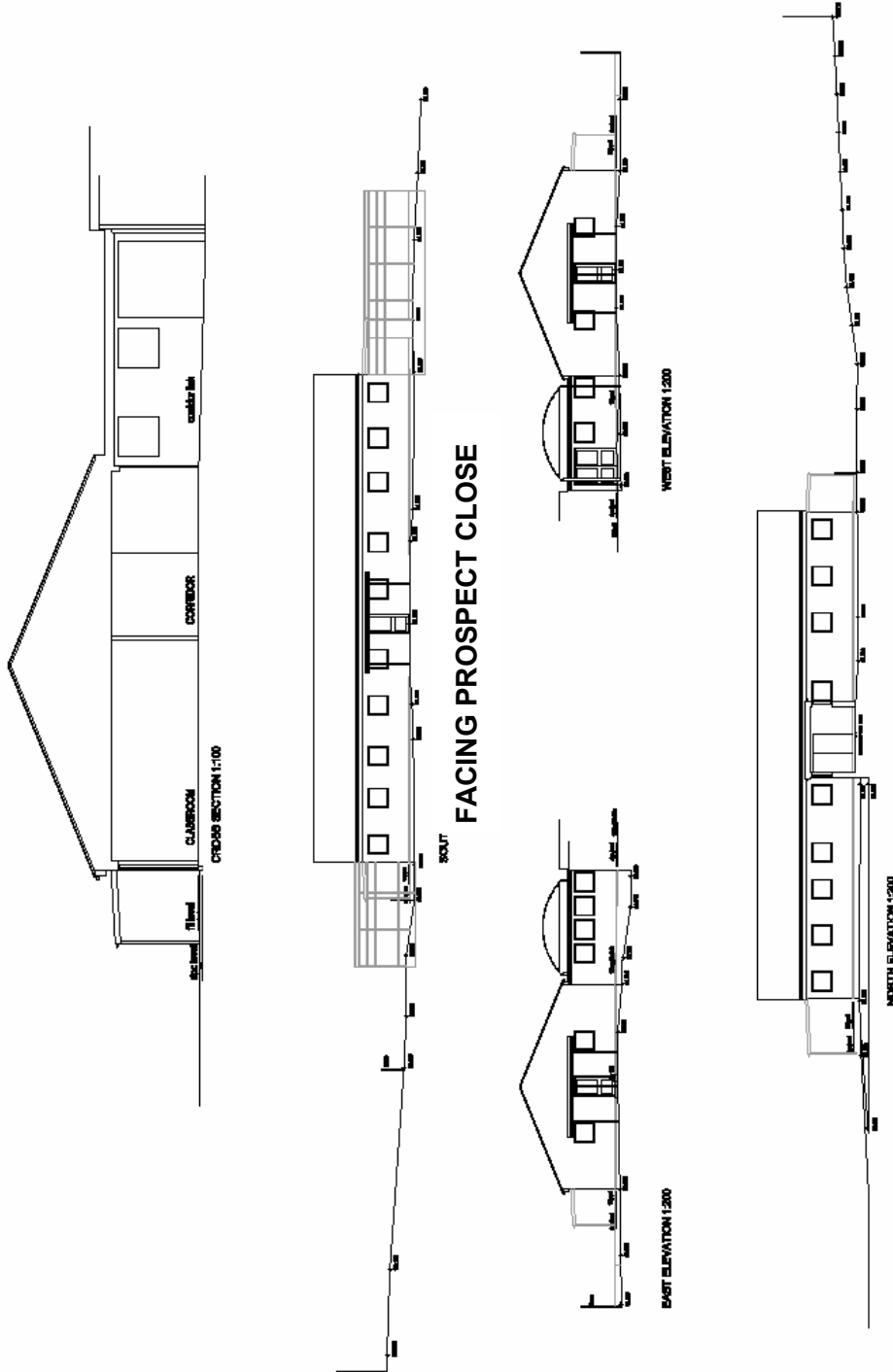


Rev	Revisions Made
Date	

A3 print

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Existing Elevations

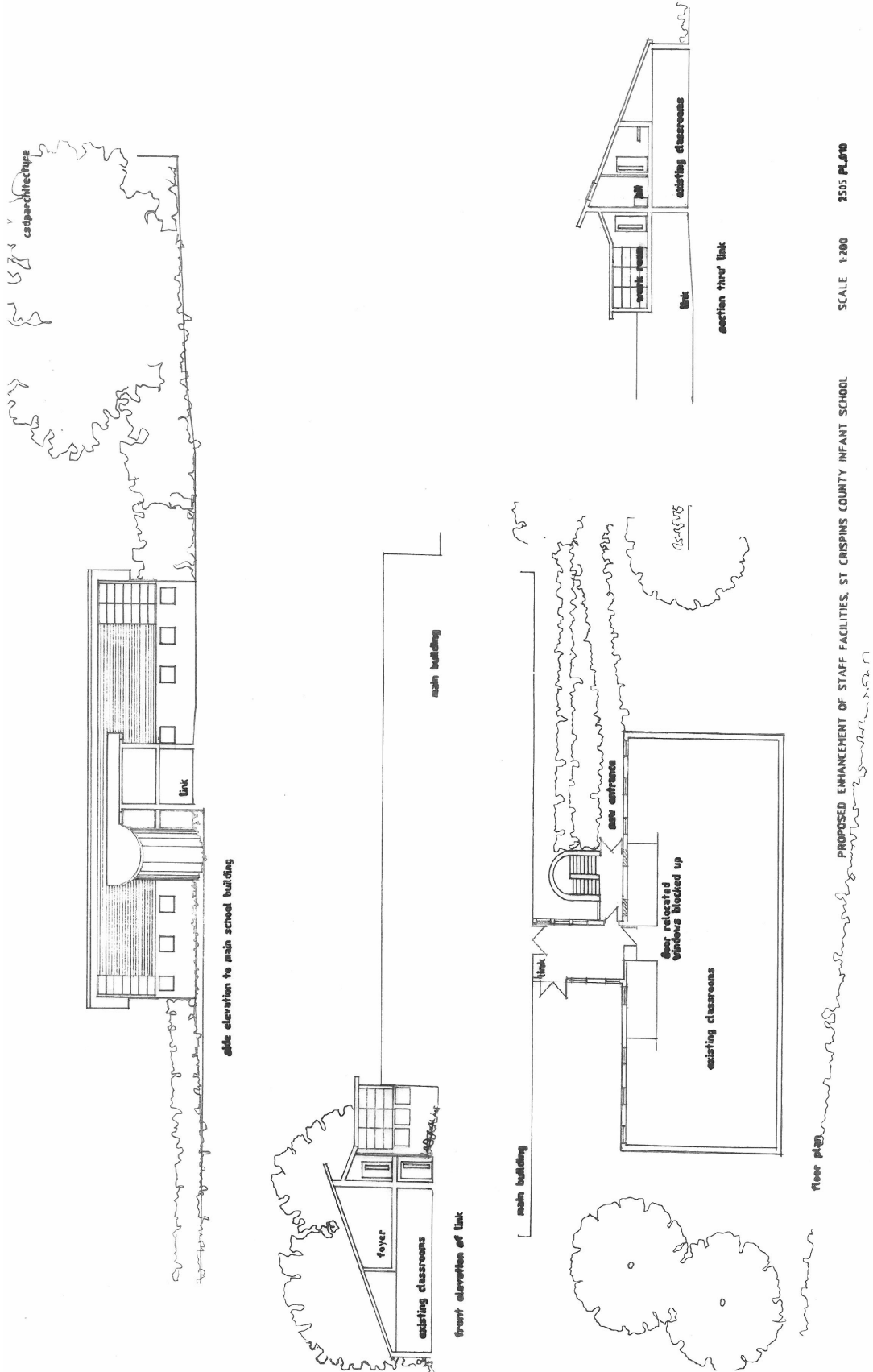


	csdp ltd Chartered Architects E-mail: office@csdparchitecture.com The Studio, 15 Tudor Road, Canterbury, Kent CT1 1BT		Project title : PROPOSALS FOR ST CRISPIN SCHOOL Drawing title : EXISTING SECTION AND ELEVATIONS	
	Date:	Date: 23.09.08	Scale: AS INDICATED	Drawing Number: 2008PL004

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Proposed Elevations



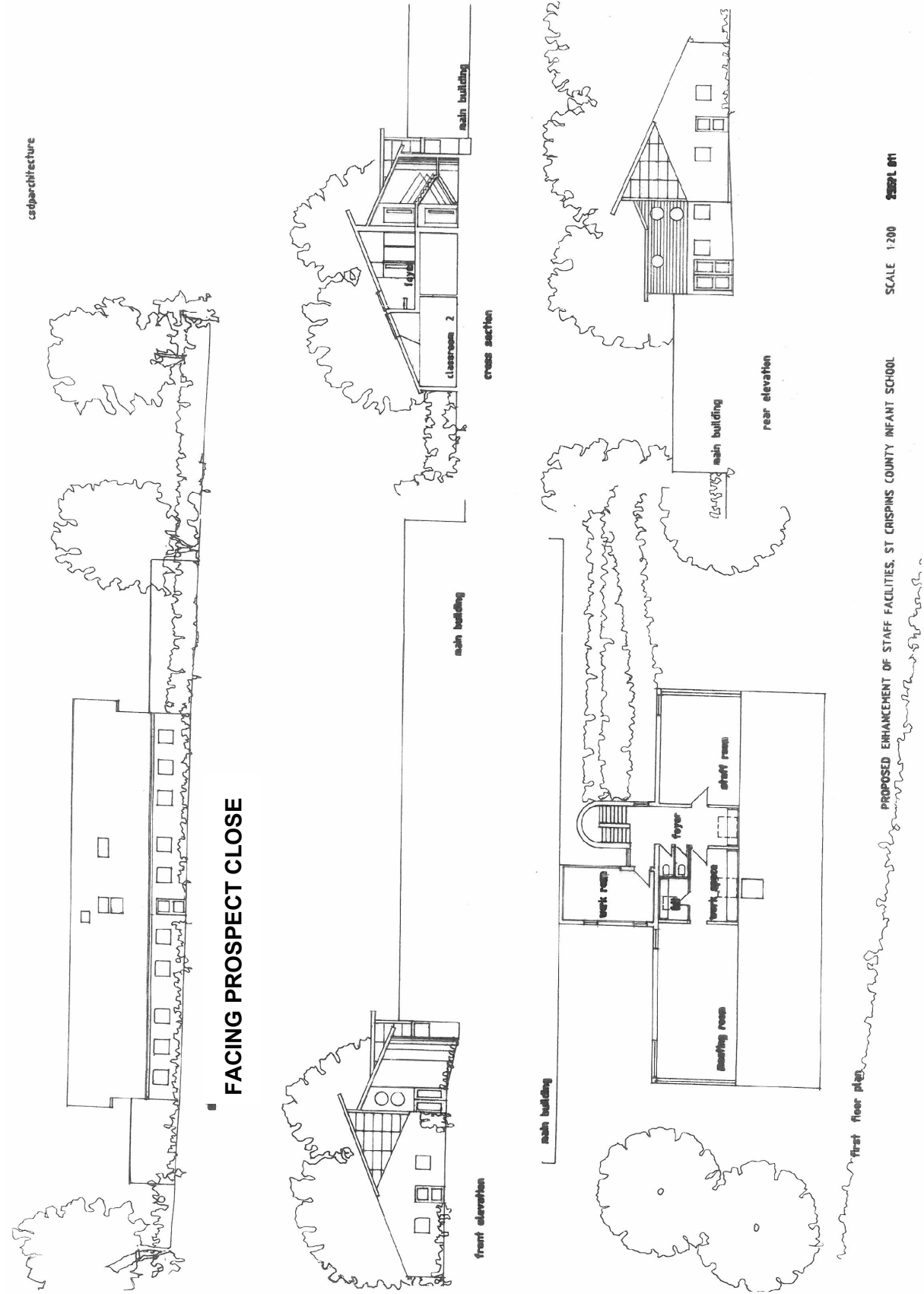
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PROPOSED ENHANCEMENT OF STAFF FACILITIES, ST CRISPINS COUNTY INFANT SCHOOL

floor plan

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Proposed Elevations



FACING PROSPECT CLOSE

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PROPOSED ENHANCEMENTS OF SCHOOL FACILITIES AT ST. CRISPIN'S CP INFANT SCHOOL,
WESTGATE-ON-SEA

Aerial view from St. Crispin's Road

2505/SK001 | 21 October 2008

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Planning Policy

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

(i) The adopted 2006 **Kent & Medway Structure Plan**:

Policy SP1 – The primary purpose of Kent's development and environmental strategy will be to protect and enhance the environment and achieve a sustainable pattern and form of development. This will be done principally by, amongst other matters:

- protecting the Kent countryside and its wildlife for future generations;
- protecting and enhancing features of importance in the natural and built environment;
- encouraging high quality development and innovative design that reflects Kent's identity and local distinctiveness and promoting healthy, safe and secure living and working environments;

Policy QL1 – All development should be well designed and be of high quality. Developments, individually or taken together, should respond positively to the scale, layout, pattern and character of their local surroundings. Development which would be detrimental to the built environment, amenity, functioning and character of settlements or the countryside will not be permitted.

Policy QL11 – Provision will be made for the development and improvement of local services in existing residential areas and in town and district centres, particularly where services are deficient. Flexibility in the use of buildings for mixed community uses, and the concentration of sports facilities at schools, will be encouraged.

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

Policy D1 - all new development is required to provide high quality and inclusive design, sustainability, layout and materials.

A new development proposal will only be permitted if it:

- respects or enhances the character or appearance of the surrounding area, particularly in scale, massing, rhythm, and use of materials appropriate to the locality;
- is compatible with neighbouring buildings and spaces and does not lead to unacceptable loss of amenity through overlooking, noise or vibration, light pollution, overshadowing, loss of natural light, or sense of enclosure;
- incorporates where practicable a high degree of permeability for pedestrians and cyclists and also considers access for public transport;
- incorporates provision for disabled access;
- incorporates new landscaping as an integral part of the proposal;

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- provide safe and satisfactory means of pedestrian and, where provided, vehicle access.

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 appropriate.

Consultations

4. **Thanet District Council:** Raises no objection.

Divisional Transportation Manager: Raises no objection.

Local Member

5. The local County Member, Mr. R. Burgess was notified of the application on the 13 November 2008.

Publicity

6. The application was publicised by posting of a site notice at the school entrance on St. Crispin's Road, and the individual notification of 22 neighbouring residential properties.

Representations

7. I have received four letters and one email of representation in respect of this application, two of the letters received were objecting to pre-existing localised parking and congestion problems, which raised issues that are not material to the determination of this planning application. The other two letters and email were received from the same resident in Prospect Close. The main planning reasons for objection to the current proposals can be summarised as follows:

- The roof of the new building would be much higher than the school and therefore tower over everything that surrounds it.
- From where they live in Prospect Close all they will be able to see from their kitchen window would be the roof stretching high into the sky above them and they feel that it would be very oppressive.
- The design chosen is far too different to what already exists and the contrast in design is too great.
- This school has always been a single storey building and they consider that to make one part of it two storey would be completely out of keeping with the surrounds.
- They state that they would be more sympathetic if the new construction was to benefit the pupils attending the school by providing extra teaching facilities but they do not consider that a larger staff room would really merit the scale of construction.
- Questions why this new extension could not be built elsewhere within the grounds of the school if it is really so essential. Also questions whether or not the school really need a car park as big as the one it now enjoys and suggests that it would be a lot easier and cheaper to build the new construction there.

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- The hedge that did provide substantial screening from their property has now been cut back to an unacceptable height and would offer no screening whatsoever from the new building. A photograph of the view from the resident's property can be found in Appendix 1, the red line highlights the approximate height of the hedge prior to it being cut back.

DiscussionIntroduction

8. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) states that applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Whilst the provision for educational and community needs are acknowledged by Structure Plan Policy QL11 and Local Plan Policy CF1 the proposal must also be considered against the other relevant Development Plan Policies, outlined in paragraph 3 above, policy guidance and any other material planning considerations arising from consultation and publicity.
9. The application proposes a first floor extension to an existing single storey pitched roof building in order to enhance the existing staff facilities, namely to provide a large meeting/activity room, two small staff meeting/work rooms, foyer space, small kitchenette area and toilets. The application is being reported to the Planning Applications Committee due to objections received from one neighbouring resident. The main issues for Members to consider in the determination of this application are the location of the proposed extension, its design and proposed use.

Location

10. The constricted nature of the school site prevents there being many viable options for expansion of the school facilities. Coupled with this, the original school building is of a lightweight frame construction with lightweight cladding panels. As such, the existing foundations are not considered sufficient to support additional first floor loadings. Furthermore, the applicant has stated that the existing frame and cladding are working to their stability limit.
11. The building which it is proposed to extend was permitted under planning permission TH/01/1026 and was completed in late 2002. It is to the south of the main school site and buildings and ranges from about 3.6m to 6m from the boundary (see plan on page D1.2). The building ranges from about 5.4m to 6.2m in distance from the façade of the nearest residential property, 11 Prospect Close. Although the building proposed to be extended is in close proximity to a residential property, this is mitigated by the fact that it is the side façade of the residential property that adjoins the school boundary, and which has no windows. The building currently comprises 3 classrooms, toilets and a link corridor to the main school building; there are also three external canopies.
12. Although the site for development is in close proximity to residential properties, it is noteworthy that there is existing landscaping screening in the vicinity. To the east of the development site fronting the boundary with St. Crispin's Road there are a number of mature and well established trees that would aid the screening of the proposed development from that aspect. Until recently there was a hedge that extended almost from the boundary of 11 Prospect Close all the way along the school boundary to the west, which would have aided the screening of views from Prospect Close of the

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proposed extension. However, it was recently cut back in accordance with recommended good horticultural practices, and as a consequence it would, in its current condition, provide little screening of the proposed extension, (as can be seen by the photograph in Appendix 1). The School has informed me that the hedge is classified as a 'field' hedge and is not a species that is recommended for school sites due to its rapid growth. It is however acknowledged, that due to the speed with which the hedge grows, it could provide again a significant level of screening potential within a relatively short period of time. I do accept though, that the screening potential is lessened during the winter months. I am currently discussing with the applicant, the potential for allowing the hedge to grow back to its former height to provide screening of the development site.

13. Members will note the objections received that have suggested that the proposed extension be sited on the school car park. The immediate vicinity of the school, as with most schools, suffers from a significant degree of localised congestion at drop-off and pick-up times, and the loss of car parking spaces would, in my view, exacerbate the situation considerably.
14. I consider, based on the evidence above, that the proposed site in terms of its location is acceptable in planning terms. Given the degree of natural vegetation screening to the east and that approximately half of the building to be extended is screened from view of properties in Prospect Close by number 11 Prospect Close, I do not consider the proposal to be contrary to Structure Plan Policies SP1 and QL11 and Local Plan Policy D1, in terms of its proposed location and would not be detrimental to the built environment, amenity, functioning and character of the locality. Under the circumstances, I would not object to the proposal on the grounds of its location.

Design

15. The design for the extension can be seen from the plans on pages D1.4-1.6. Members will note that the extension takes the form of a monopitch method of roof construction, with the roofline continuing, from the existing ridge, away from the boundary. One of the benefits of this method of construction is that the highest point of the roof would be further away from the boundary than it currently is. The overall increase in roof height would be approximately 2m above the existing pitched roof ridge, to a new height of about 7m, but it would be about 6m further away from the boundary than the current roof ridge. Whilst the protection of individual/private views is not a material planning consideration, the photograph in Appendix 1 shows the view of the development site from a property on the south side of Prospect Close. Nevertheless, I do not consider that the proposed extension in roof height would tower 'oppressively' over, and impact detrimentally on residential amenity as argued by the objectors. The school building is located about 26 metres from properties on the south side of Prospect Close and No.11 Prospect Close sits between (see site plan on page D1.2) being only about 5 metres away, and obscures part of the school building in any case. I understand from the applicant that the height of 11 Prospect Close is approximately 8.765m, some 1.7 m taller than the school building would be with the proposed extension.
16. The palette of materials that would be used in the construction would include: the reuse of existing tile roof covering for the extended monopitch roof slope; the existing brickwork gables retained and the extended height of the walls over constructed from powder coated aluminium windows with cedar cladding infill; and the flat roof to the workroom over the link and the sloping roof to the stair core finished with a lead coloured roofing material. I do not consider the fact that the existing school buildings

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are all single storey to preclude any first floor expansion, providing that a sympathetic and appropriate design solution could be achieved. Moreover, I am of the opinion that the design approach undertaken is an innovative and creative solution, that would provide much needed facilities, on a site that has minimal available space for expansion.

17. I would therefore consider the proposed development to be in accordance with the Development Plan, in particular Policy QL1 of the Kent and Medway Structure Plan and Policy D1 of the Thanet Local Plan 2006. In addition, I consider that the external materials should be secured by planning condition to match those of the existing building, and accordingly recommend that planning permission be granted on this basis.

Use of the Building

18. The applicant has clarified that the additional floorspace would not be for the creation of a larger staffroom, as the letters of representation suggest, but rather for a number of meeting and activity rooms, toilet facilities and a small kitchen area. Currently meetings and other activities are undertaken in areas of the school that could otherwise be used for the teaching of pupils. Therefore the proposal would free up valuable space within the existing school buildings to enhance the educational provision for the pupils of the school.

Conclusion

19. Overall, I believe that the School would benefit greatly from having the facility and consider that the design solution proposed by the applicant is innovative and creative. The available locations for a suitable extension or new building are extremely limited, and in light of this, I consider the proposed development site to be the most acceptable solution in planning terms. The decision to implement a monopitch roof over a more conventional pitched roof design not only enables the highest part of the roof line to now be some 6m further way from the boundary than the existing ridge but would create a valuable amount of new floorspace in a sustainable manner without increasing the school's overall footprint, by only increasing the overall building height by 2m. Furthermore, in my view, the first floor extension on the proposed site would not unacceptably compromise the amenity of local residents. However should Members be minded to permit, I would recommend that conditions controlling the external materials and the protection of existing landscaping be imposed on any planning consent. Consequently, I consider that the proposed development would be in accordance with the aims and objectives of the relevant Development Plan Policies and recommend that planning permission be granted.

Recommendation

20. I RECOMMEND that PLANNING PERMISSION BE GRANTED, SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS, including conditions to cover the following aspects:
- The standard time limit;
 - The development to be carried out in accordance with the permitted details;
 - Prior to the development being commenced, details and samples of the external materials in accordance with those indicated in the application shall be submitted to

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and approved by the County Planning Authority, and the development shall be subsequently carried out using the approved materials;

- No trees, shrubs and hedges shall be lopped, topped or removed as a result of the development and all necessary measures to ensure their protection before, during and after construction must be undertaken;
- Control over the hours of construction.

Case officer – Adam Tomaszewski	01622 696923
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Background documents - See section heading
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Appendix 1

View of development site from first floor window of 5 Prospect Close - line indicates approximate height of hedge recently removed.

