

Proposed expansion of Garlinge Primary School, Westfield Road, Margate – TH/14/79 (KCC/TH/0010/2014)

A report by Head of Planning Applications Group to Planning Applications Committee on 14 May 2014.

Application by Kent County Council, Property & Infrastructure Support for three extensions across the site which include nine classrooms, IT suite, small group rooms, associated storage and toilets at Garlinge Primary School, Westfield Road, Margate – TH/14/79 (KCC/TH/0010/2014).

Recommendation: permission be granted subject to conditions.

Local Member: Mr Jeffrey Elenor

Classification: Unrestricted

Site Description

1. Garlinge Primary School is located within a wedge of land between Westfield Road and Caxton Road, approximately 1.8km to the south west of Margate Town Centre. The site is located in a predominantly residential area, bounded on the north by Westfield Road, to the north-east by residential dwellings, to the south-east by public open space and on its southern side by Caxton Road.
2. The site comprises Junior and Infant blocks, with pupils currently being accommodated in nine buildings. The Junior and Infant schools were amalgamated in September 2007 to form the Primary School. The Primary School consists of a mixture of one and two storey buildings of brickwork construction under pitched tiled roofs and a combination of flat felt and tiled pitched roofs constructed in the 1930's. In more recent years, extensions to buildings and siting of mobile classrooms have occurred at the school. The school playing fields are located to the east of the site. Part of the school playing field land, located to the east, was released to allow for the construction of a Multi Agency Specialist Hub in 2012. Green Banks Children's Centre is located to the south east of Garlinge Primary School.
3. The site has three vehicular access points; one located on Westfield Road and two on Caxton Road, serving the Junior and Infant School sides. Pedestrian access is gained from Westfield and Caxton Road, with a school footpath running along the northern boundary of the school separating school buildings from the residential gardens of Westfield Road. This path provides a link from Westfield Road to the Infant side of the school.
4. The school is defined in the Local Plan as within the urban confines, and it borders an area of public open space to the south-east of the site. The school playing field, to the east of the site, is located within a landscape character area as defined by the Thanet Local Plan (2006). More general policies are set out in paragraph (14).

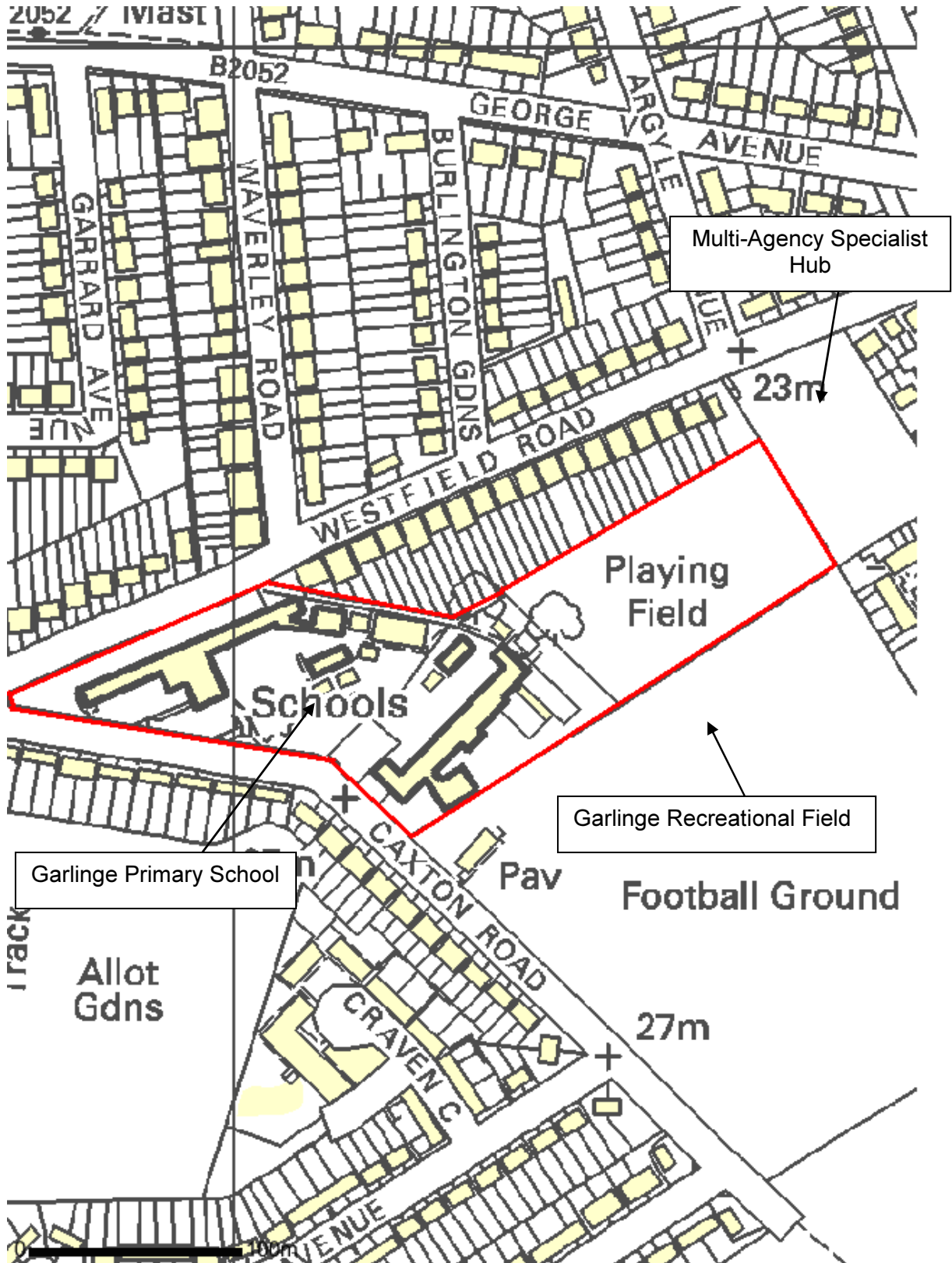
Proposed expansion of Garlinge Primary School, Westfield Road, Margate – TH/14/79 (KCC/TH/0010/2014)

Wider Site Location Plan



Proposed expansion of Garlinge Primary School, Westfield Road, Margate – TH/14/79 (KCC/TH/0010/2014)

Site Location Plan



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Aerial View of Garlinge Primary School



Pedestrian and vehicular access routes and car parking



Proposed expansion of Garlinge Primary School, Westfield Road, Margate – TH/14/79 (KCC/TH/0010/2014)

Relevant Planning History

5. Garlinge Primary School has had several minor applications for extended buildings and the development of a Children's Centre on the site in more recent years, the details of which are summarised below:
 - TH/12/488 – Proposed extension to south east of infant's school building to provide 2 additional classrooms, storage and toilet facilities. Granted planning permission July 2012;
 - TH/11/21 – Renewal of planning consent for the siting of 3 timber demountable classrooms and 3 mobile classrooms. Granted temporary planning permission February 2011;
 - 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 School. 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;

6. Additionally, 0.65 hectare of land annexed from Garlinge Primary School, located to east of Garlinge Primary School's playing field, has been the subject to the development of a Multi Agency Specialist Hub. The following applications relate to the development on this land:
 - TH/11/617 - Revised proposal for the Multi Agency Specialist Hub (originally granted planning permission under consent TH/10/227) including a reduction in building footprint with consequential changes to floor plans and elevations; roof structure and materials changes; and details of proposed landscaping and boundary treatment including the addition of landscaping spoil bunds. Granted planning permission December 2011;
 - TH/10/227 – The construction of a Multi Agency Specialist Hub for disabled children, a specialist early years nursery and associated access roads and car parking. Granted planning permission September 2010.

Background and Proposal

7. This application has been submitted by Kent County Council Property and Infrastructure Support and is part of the countywide Basic Needs Programme for educational purposes. The applicant states that the district of Thanet has seen significant growth in the pupil population over the last few years due to both the rise in the birth rate and inward migration of families. This inward migration has been far beyond historic levels and has resulted in a pressure on primary school places across the district.

Proposed expansion of Garlinge Primary School, Westfield Road, Margate – TH/14/79 (KCC/TH/0010/2014)

8. The Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2013-2018 provides forecasts that indicate an increase in the demand for primary school capacity which shows no signs of reducing over the forecast period. Garlinge Primary School currently has 551 pupils enrolled at the school with the School agreeing to open additional classes in September 2011. The expansion programme will enable an additional 210 school places to increase from 3 form entry to 4 form entry with the pupil admission numbers increasing from 90 to 120 pupils in Reception Year and each successive year. The proposed accommodation will allow for the provision of 810 pupils at the school.
9. The School currently employs 45 full time equivalent (FTE) staff positions who are at the school site on a daily basis. The proposal will lead to an increase of 14 FTE additional staff members, bringing the total members of full time staff to 59. An additional 24 part time members of staff will be employed at the school.
10. The application proposes the extension and internal reconfiguration of the existing school buildings providing nine additional classrooms, an enlarged IT Suite and associated toilet and ancillary facilities. Two modular classrooms located on the Junior site and one located on the Infant site would be demolished as part of the proposals due to their deteriorating condition. The proposals would allow the provision of accommodation for another form of entry each year thereby increasing Garlinge Primary School from 3 form entry to 4 form entry. The proposed development would cater for an additional 210 pupils. The new development is not envisaged to be fully occupied for seven years.
11. There are currently nine buildings on site with half of them essentially operating individually of each other. This proposal aims to consolidate teaching and ancillary spaces, creating a more coherent layout, with internal reconfigurations to the layout which would enable classes to be grouped according to year. The Key Stage 1 extensions on the Infant site would provide three additional classrooms. The Key Stage 2 extension on the Junior site would accommodate an additional six classrooms, IT suite, refurbishment of the current swimming pool for use as an additional hall and associated ancillary spaces including the relocation of 40m² of Foreland School teaching space (which would be relocated from a demolished modular building on the site). Currently, internal circulation around the school is hindered by lack of available storage and cloakroom space. This has been addressed in the proposed extensions with the creation of dedicated store and cloakrooms.
12. It should be noted that the swimming pool building which is proposed to be refurbished for use as a hall was the subject of planning condition as part of the approval of the revised proposal application for the Multi-Agency Specialist Hub (MASH) located to the east of the school playing field. (Planning permission ref: TH/11/617). Planning condition 12 of that permission required the development to be carried out in accordance with the playing field compensatory measures approved under consent reference TH/10/227/R12A; the details of which included the upgrade and refurbishment of the swimming pool and access for community use. However due to financial constraints the School were not able to refurbish the facility for school and community use. As part of these proposals, the applicant is intending to provide community use of the hall facilities.
13. The current size and layout of the site poses limitations as to where additional accommodation could be sited. As part of the proposal, three modular buildings would be demolished, providing land upon which new accommodation would be located. These modular buildings are of poor condition and have been classed as condemned.

Proposed expansion of Garlinge Primary School, Westfield Road, Margate – TH/14/79 (KCC/TH/0010/2014)

The proposed development would limit the amount of play space that could possibly be lost by locating part of the Key Stage 2 six classroom extension on the footprint of modular buildings which are to be demolished as part of the proposals.

14. The extensions to the school would be constructed using red stock brick with off white 'eternit' board cladding incorporating squares of coloured boards. The extensions across the site would be of single storey construction with plain red tile flat roofs to reduce the visual impact on neighbouring residential properties. A pitched roof is also to be removed as part of the proposals and replaced with a flat roof to reduce the visual impact of the development.
15. No trees are proposed to be removed as part of the proposed development however a 4m section of hedgerow located on the eastern boundary of the Infant side of the school would be removed in order to accommodate the proposed Reception classroom.
16. The application is accompanied by a Transport Statement setting out the potential impact the proposed expansion of pupil numbers would have on the surrounding local highway network. Through the successful adoption of the school's Travel Plan, the applicants' transport consultant concludes that this will help to mitigate the traffic impacts of the proposed development. To mitigate the current and potential future congestion issues along Caxton Road to the south of the school site, the applicant is proposing to apply for a Traffic Regulation Order to enforce a one-way flow of traffic along Caxton Road. An application to facilitate this would have to be submitted to and approved by the Highway Authority. The implementation of a one-way system along Caxton Road would act to formalise an informal arrangement which is currently already used by vehicle drivers.

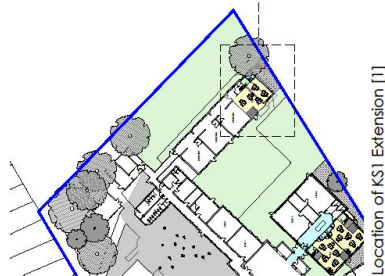
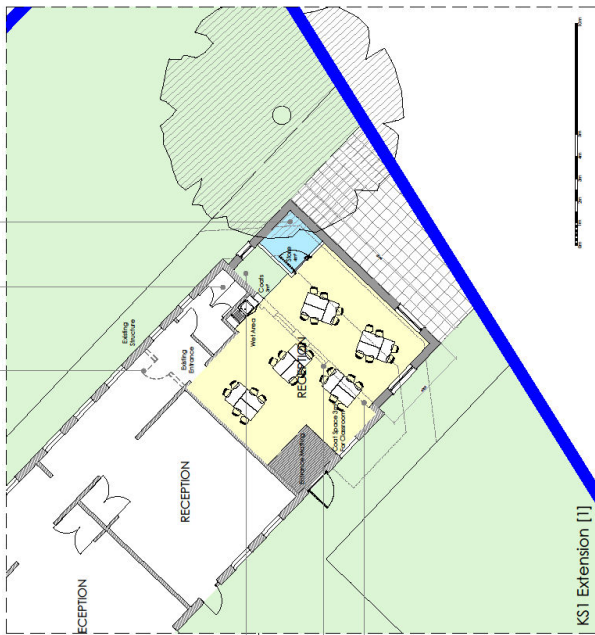
Location of Key Stage 1 and 2 Extensions



Proposed expansion of Garlinge Primary School, Westfield Road, Margate – TH/14/79 (KCC/TH/0010/2014)

Proposed Key Stage 1 (Infant Block) Floor Plan

<p>Notes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Over scale from existing 2) All proposed work must be reported to the appropriate authority 3) All proposed work must be reported to the appropriate authority 4) All proposed work must be reported to the appropriate authority 5) All proposed work must be reported to the appropriate authority 6) All proposed work must be reported to the appropriate authority 7) All proposed work must be reported to the appropriate authority 8) All proposed work must be reported to the appropriate authority 9) All proposed work must be reported to the appropriate authority 10) All proposed work must be reported to the appropriate authority <p>Construction should be in accordance with the relevant Building Regulations and all other applicable legislation. The contractor shall be responsible for obtaining all necessary consents and for ensuring that the work is carried out in accordance with the relevant Building Regulations and all other applicable legislation. The contractor shall also be responsible for ensuring that the work is carried out in accordance with the relevant Building Regulations and all other applicable legislation.</p>	<p>Rev. Date Details</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </table>				<p>Legend</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class Room Play Area Teaching Space Year Area Circulation Storage Reception / Staff Space Work to be demolished



Proposed expansion of Garlinge Primary School, Westfield Road, Margate – TH/14/79 (KCC/TH/0010/2014)

Planning Policy Context

17. 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** and the **National Planning Policy Guidance (March 2014)** 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 communities, and that great weight should be given to the need to create, expand or alter schools; and

- (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) **Development Plan Policies**

The adopted 2006 **Thanet District Council Local Plan (Saved Policies)**:

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 expected to include satisfactory provision for the parking of vehicles (including service vehicles where appropriate).

Proposed expansion of Garlinge Primary School, Westfield Road, Margate – TH/14/79 (KCC/TH/0010/2014)

Policy D1	All new development is required to provide high quality and inclusive design, sustainability, layout and materials.
Policy D2	Landscaping measures should be considered as part of any new development proposals and existing trees, hedges and other habitat features should be retained wherever possible and protected during site works.
Policy HE12	Archaeology sites will be preserved and protected.

Consultations

18. **Thanet District Council** – Raises no objection to the principle of the development but query the removal of the existing pitched roof from building 2 (the Year 3 building). They ask if the design of the proposed infill could be amended to allow for the retention of the existing pitched roof due to its loss being regrettable in the street scene. Thanet District Council also queries the proposed finish of the development, which they state would appear out of keeping with the existing school. They have suggested that further details of the external materials are submitted prior to the determination of the application to assess whether such a colour scheme is appropriate for this location. Since their initial comments, the applicants' architect has provided further details of the proposed external materials including colour finishes (albeit being slightly amended in colour from those originally proposed) and the District Council has accepted the revised cladding colour finishes.

Kent County Council Highways and Transportation – Raises no objection to the application and provide the following comments:

"The additional trips generated by the additional form entry are unlikely to have a significant detrimental impact on the surrounding road junctions which would cause additional journey time delay. There is undoubtedly likely to be additional vying for parking spaces in the vicinity of the school on the adjoining roads but this is unavoidable and with increased demand parents will be forced to park further away from the site and walk to the school.

Traffic Regulation Order

The additional information requested relates to the proposed mitigation measures to Caxton Road by way of a traffic regulation order (TRO) to enforce a one way flow along Caxton Road between Westfield Road and Fulham Avenue. This will assist in formalising a system adopted by most parents picking up and dropping off and will have no impact on bus services operating in the area.

The TRO cannot be part of the planning application process and should be applied for under a separate cover. I consider that the TRO will definitely help to relieve some of the congestion issues in and around Caxton Road at school pick up and drop off times and will make for a safer environment for children walking and crossing the roads in getting to and from the school.

I do not wish to oppose the application on this basis and suggest that the Travel Plan continues to seek innovation to encourage sustainable choices to and from the school."

Proposed expansion of Garlinge Primary School, Westfield Road, Margate – TH/14/79 (KCC/TH/0010/2014)

The following conditions should be attached to any planning permission including;

- details of a construction management plan to be submitted prior to commencement of works on site and for the duration of construction;
- provision of construction vehicle loading/unloading facilities prior to commencement of work on site and for the duration of construction;
- provision of wheel washing facilities prior to commencement of work on site and for the duration of construction.

In addition, an informative advising the applicant to ensure that before the development is commenced, all the necessary highway approvals and consents where required are obtained and that the limits of highway boundary are clearly established in order to avoid any enforcement action being taken by the Highway Authority. The applicant must also ensure that the details shown on the approved plans agree in every aspect with those approved under such legislation and common law. The applicant should contact KCC Highways and Transportation to progress this aspect of the works prior to the commencement of works on site.”

The County Council’s School Travel Plan Advisor – requests that the School Travel Plan be updated by the School within 6 months of occupation of the new buildings.

Environment Agency – provides Flood Risk Standing Advice indicating that the site lies outside of a flood risk zone.

Sport England – does not wish to comment on the application

County Archaeologist – raises no objection, subject to the imposition of a condition requiring the applicant to submit details of an archaeological watching brief prior to commencement of the development. This is due to the application site being located in an area of considerable archaeological interest. Therefore it is possible that proposed development works may disturb archaeological remains.

Local Member

19. The County Council Local Member Mr Jeffrey Elenor was notified of the application on the 28 January 2014.

Publicity

20. The application was publicised by the posting of 2 site notices at the main school entrance located on Westfield Road and a vehicular and pedestrian entrance on Caxton Road. The individual notification of 108 neighbouring properties was carried out.

Representations

21. I have received 3 letters/emails of objection to the proposal. The main points of objection are summarised as follows:-

Access, Parking and Highway Safety

- Concerns regarding the current levels of traffic along Caxton Road and the safety implications that this currently creates and the belief that the School expansion would exacerbate the problem;

Proposed expansion of Garlinge Primary School, Westfield Road, Margate – TH/14/79 (KCC/TH/0010/2014)

- The number of autistic children who live in Caxton Road and the congestion created by taxis and mini buses collecting and dropping off children;
- Concerns regarding vehicles being driven dangerously and parents parking in local roads and blocking driveways which is a nuisance to local residents;
- Vehicles parked on 'School Keep Clear' yellow marking which is dangerous for pupils and parents
- The parking, safe crossing and access by road needs to be improved before the School is extended;
- Currently staff park their vehicles in Westfield and Caxton Road which already causes congestion and nuisance to local residents;
- The lack of additional parking provision for extra staff that will be working at the school;
- Request that Caxton Road should be a one way street; *[Note that this is one of the traffic mitigation measures that is being proposed by the applicant];*
- Reduced rate for drop kerb applications should be afforded to local residents;
- The small size of the school's delivery entrance and the problems that delivery lorries create when travelling along Caxton Road, blocking the road and difficulty manouvering;
- Damage to kerbs has been caused by school delivery vehicles;
- Deliveries to residents in Caxton Road need to be requested outside school hours as any delivery vehicle which stops will block the road causing gridlock and would delay any emergency vehicle needing to attend;
- The additional traffic that construction vehicles would create and the further damage to the road surface which would result in new potholes;
- Visitors to the Childrens Centre taking up local residents parking spaces;
- Belief that Caxton Road should be a residential parking permit only road;
- Concern with parents parking on Garlinge Recreational field and the effect that this has the ground surface as well as safety concerns for people using the field.

Need for the development and impact on the school

- The expansion of the school would not serve 'local children' with children attending the school believed to be travelling from the Dane Park/Cliftonville area;
- If the need for school places is likely to increase as predicted, why is consideration not being given to building a new school or increasing the size of other local schools, including Salmestone Primary School, St Gregory's Roman Catholic Primary School, Holy Trinity & St John's Church of England Primary School?;
- Does this predicted need for additional school places take into consideration the number of new homes being built at Westwood Cross, and would these children be attending Garlinge Primary School?;
- Why was consideration for the need for additional school places and classrooms not given before land was given to build the Children's Centre (Greenbanks)? This land would have been ideal to build any extension needed and provide additional car parking for staff;
- The construction of 9 classrooms and almost doubling the pupil roll would have a detrimental effect on the school and the site is too constricted; *[NB. An additional 210 pupil places is proposed]*
- The School's last OFSTED report was not particularly good and the additional pupil numbers would not help the School improve its rating;
- Pressure on sufficient play areas that the development would create.

Proposed expansion of Garlinge Primary School, Westfield Road, Margate – TH/14/79 (KCC/TH/0010/2014)

DiscussionIntroduction

22. The application seeks planning permission for the extension and internal reconfiguration of the existing school buildings, providing nine additional classrooms, an enlarged IT Suite and associated toilet and ancillary facilities. The application is being reported to the Planning Applications Committee as a result of the residential objections received regarding the proposals.
23. In considering this proposal regard must be had to Development Plan Policies outlined in paragraph 16 above. 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. Therefore, the proposal needs to be considered in the context of Development Plan Policies, Government Guidance and other material planning considerations including those arising from consultation and publicity.
24. The main aspects to consider are the issues to do with the design, layout and quantity of the development, implications of the proposal on the local road network and highway safety considerations. The policy support for the development of schools should also be considered 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 and reflected in the Policy Statement for Schools. 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, Layout and Quantity of Development Issues

25. The Thanet Local Plan (2006) promotes high quality design and sustainable development. The proposed layout, scale and design of the development should be considered to establish whether the development, as proposed, is acceptable and is in keeping with the existing residential setting. The layout of the proposed development aims to provide a more coherent and integrated teaching accommodation to cope with the additional pupil numbers and improve upon the current pupil learning environment.
26. Regarding an element of the proposed design, Thanet District Council has queried the need to remove the existing pitched roof from building 2 (the Year 3 building). They request that the design of the proposed infill building be amended to allow for the retention of the existing pitched roof as its loss would, in their view, have a negative visual impact on the street scene.
27. The applicant has provided further clarification as to why the pitched roof would be removed as part of this proposal. Various options for the classroom block were

Proposed expansion of Garlinge Primary School, Westfield Road, Margate – TH/14/79 (KCC/TH/0010/2014)

considered including the retention of the roof however due to the height of the new proposal and the impact that would have on the existing structure, the raised flat roof was considered to be the best option. This was due to multiple factors but weathering was the most significant, with the ability to leave a fit for purpose building that was not prone to future leaks. The visual impact on the street scene through the loss of the pitched roof would not be significantly detrimental with the applicant providing photographs from Westfield Road (which runs along the north of the site) and Waverley Road (off Westfield Road, to the north of the building with the pitched roof) showing that, from most angles and from the street itself the roof is not visible. The building is set back nearly 30 metres from Westfield Road within the school confines. I consider that the removal of the pitched roof and replacement with a raised flat roof to building 2 is acceptable and would not be visually detrimental to the local street scene.

28. The proposed development has been designed to bring a modern outlook to the school. This is reflected in the choice of external materials and colour scheme chosen for the proposed buildings. The extensions to the school would be constructed using red stock brick with off white 'eternit' board cladding incorporating squares of green and multi-coloured boards to represent the schools colours under plain red tiled roofs. Thanet District Council has considered that the proposed finish for the development would appear to be out of keeping with the existing school and has requested that further details of the materials to be used should be submitted by the applicant prior to determination of the application. Having viewed samples of the proposed cladding, the District Council is satisfied with the colour scheme proposed (albeit differing slightly from the original colour scheme). Subject to permission being issued, a planning condition requiring the submission of details of external materials prior to the construction of the development would be stipulated
29. The applicant agrees that the material finish is not in keeping with the existing school buildings but intends to provide a proposal which contrasts yet compliments the existing Victorian red brick buildings. Through the use of the proposed external materials and colour scheme, the applicants' architects have tried to break up the current mass of the existing buildings with their long elevations. They comment that the proposed colour palette would incorporate the school colours, aiming to provide an inspiring learning environment. The applicant notes that the visual impact of the proposed development would be limited due to its position located centrally within the site. The proposed buildings would be screened from the north, west and east of the site by existing brick buildings and trees, not creating an adverse impact from 'long views' into the site. From the south, the Key Stage 2 extension is located 50m from the site boundary and would be well screened from residential properties with trees along the southern boundary.
30. I consider that the proposed external finish to the new extensions would enhance the appearance of Garlinge Primary School and would be sufficiently screened from residential properties so as not to have a negative impact on visual amenity. It should be noted that I have not received any objections from local residents regarding the proposed external finish to the development. Subject to the imposition of a condition requiring the submission and approval of all materials to be used externally, I consider the design of the building to be acceptable and in accordance with Development Plan policies.
31. The quantity of proposed development at Garlinge Primary School and the subsequent affect this would have on play space at the school has been questioned by a local resident. The comments received show concerns that the amount of the proposal represents overdevelopment of the site and would compromise the available play space

Proposed expansion of Garlinge Primary School, Westfield Road, Margate – TH/14/79 (KCC/TH/0010/2014)

for pupils. The proposed development would limit the amount of play space that could possibly be lost by locating part of the Key Stage 2 six classroom extension on the footprint of modular buildings which are to be demolished as part of the proposals. Essentially, this would result in a total net gain of available play spaces as part of the land made available by the demolition of the modular buildings would be returned to hard play space. The application documents show other layout options for the proposed extensions which were investigated and these options would have had a greater impact on available play spaces. In my opinion, the amount of the proposed development is acceptable and does not represent overdevelopment of the site. In addition the visual impact of the scale of the development would be reduced due to the site being adequately screened from residential properties with the north-eastern and southern boundaries of the site being lined by trees.

Need for the development

32. One neighbour representation received has queried the expansion of other schools in Thanet and the number of children attending Garlinge Primary School from outside the local catchment area. As stated in paragraph 7, considerable expansion of Primary School places in Thanet needs to be addressed due to the increased rates of inward migration into Thanet and an increase in the birth rate. The applicant has provided further clarification regarding the expansion of school in Thanet, detailing the feasibility of particular proposals. Salmestone Primary School is located on a site which would restrict expansion, Holy Trinity & St John's Church of England Primary School has similar constraints, and feasibility studies have been carried out exploring the option of expanding St Gregory's Roman Catholic Primary School by half a form entry (15 places in each year group). Drapers Mill Primary School has been expanded from 2 to 3 forms of entry, Palm Bay Primary School has been expanded by half a form of entry and planning permission is currently being sought for the expansion of Cliftonville Primary School by 1 form of entry (planning application reference: KCC/TH/0005/2014). Possible sites for a new school in Margate are also being investigated by Thanet District Council. A site at Westwood Cross for a new Primary School has been identified to cope with the additional need for school places in Birchington but the timescale for possible occupation of this site would not be until September 2019. Furthermore, a local resident has queried why consideration was not given to the need for additional school places and subsequent accommodation before Garlinge Primary School land was used to build a Childrens Centre. The applicant has explained that pupil numbers had reduced considerably at the time that land was given to build the Childrens Centre. The amalgamation of the Junior and Infant schools which took place in September 2007 saw the reduction in pupil admission for the combined schools drop from 3 forms of entry to 2 forms of entry. This situation has changed within the last few years due to the considerable population growth in Thanet. I am satisfied that sufficient information has been provided by the applicant to re-enforce the need case for the proposed expansion to Garlinge Primary School.

Traffic and Highway Safety

33. This application has met with local objection on the basis that the local highway network already struggles to accommodate traffic associated with the school, and that on-street car parking by parents and staff is dangerous, and an inconvenience to local residents, particular during peak school times. The Transport Statement submitted as part of the application concludes that the proposed expansion in pupil numbers would generate an additional 67 vehicles in the morning peak hour (0800-0900 hours) and 66 vehicles in the afternoon peak hour (1500-1600 hours). Accordingly, the impact that the

Proposed expansion of Garlinge Primary School, Westfield Road, Margate – TH/14/79 (KCC/TH/0010/2014)

additional traffic would have on the priority junction of A28 Canterbury Road/George V Avenue and on the priority junction between Westfield Road/Hartsdown Road has been assessed as being negligible during morning and afternoon peaks. Consequently, the Transport Statement concludes that the implementation of traffic mitigation measures is not deemed necessary for the level of impact that the proposed expansion of pupils numbers would have on the local highway network. The School aims to alleviate any potential impacts on the local highway network as a result of increased pupil numbers through the use of a school travel plan which would encourage the use of sustainable methods of transport. This would require updating and annual monitoring which could be addressed via a planning condition.

34. As with other schools, it is recognised that congestion issues exist on the local highway network before and after the school day. In particular, Caxton Road, located to the south of the school suffers from traffic and access issues. The road has two vehicular accesses and a pedestrian access to the Infant block. The road is not enforced by any parking restrictions so cars park along its southern side, reducing the width of the carriageway to accommodate for vehicles travelling in a single direction only. As such, issues are created when vehicles travel in both directions as the volume of parked cars removes any ability for vehicles to pass. As such, the two vehicular entrances that are located on Caxton Road are used as passing places which can prove problematic if vehicles are trying to enter or exit the school. A feasibility study was carried out by the applicant's transport consultant to explore possible mitigation measures to alleviate the potential impact the proposed expansion of the school would have on the local highway network and in particular mitigation measures along Caxton Road. Two options were assessed for their suitability including option 1 for the construction of a car park on Caxton Road; and option 2 for the implementation of a one-way system along Caxton Road.
35. The first option for the construction of a car park, creating approximately 37 spaces on land adjacent to the school located on the north west corner of Garlinge Recreational Ground is not considered by the applicant's transport consultant to be feasible for a number of reasons. The possible construction of a car park on this site would remove existing recreational space which could not be re-provided elsewhere on site. Therefore it is likely that Sport England would object to the construction of a car park on this land as it may affect existing sporting provision. The location of the potential car park would be adjacent to the Infant side of the school and would most likely be used by parents of these pupils as only one pedestrian access is located on Caxton Road serving only the buildings which accommodate for Key Stage 1 pupils. Half of the additional pupils that would attend the school as a result of the expansion to the school would be in Key Stage 1 which would equate to an additional 31 vehicles. The applicants' transport consultant notes that the construction of a car park may act to promote increased car usage and encourage a greater number of parents to drive to school to collect their children which would not promote sustainable travel patterns. This option would also create additional congestion issues along Caxton Road. The land in question is not under Kent County Council's or the School's ownership and the option of creating a car park would be dependent on the successful purchase of the land or agreement sought from the landowner to apply for planning permission for any car park. Without the construction of the car park, it has been assessed that other local roads in the vicinity of the site could cope with the additional traffic pressure. This includes Brooke Avenue which has been identified as being able to have capacity during morning and afternoon school peak periods to accommodate vehicles being parked for a short time. This option is not therefore being considered as part of the application before you.

Proposed expansion of Garlinge Primary School, Westfield Road, Margate – TH/14/79 (KCC/TH/0010/2014)

36. The second option and one that is now included in the proposal is to introduce a one-way system along Caxton Road to ease congestion issues and improve the safety along this road. The one-way flow of traffic would essentially prevent vehicles entering Caxton Road from the existing junction with Westfield Road. The proposals would involve the widening of the footpath at the Westfield Road/Caxton Road junction and the Fulham Avenue/Caxton Road Junction. Street signage including 'no-entry' and 'one-way' signage would be implemented at these locations. The implementation of the one-way system would act to formalise the existing arrangements whereby vehicles already egress from the road in the same direction as they entered. To prevent cars parking on both sides of Caxton Road where the carriageway is not wide enough, double yellow lines would be introduced to the northern side of the road, enabling the free flow of vehicles. The applicant proposes to progress with the one-way system option along Caxton Road, subject to the grant of planning permission.
37. Local residents have raised a number of highway issues regarding vehicular parking which is perceived to be inconvenient and a danger to safety. Several local residents have raised concerns regarding the parking of vehicles on Garlinge Recreational Ground on Caxton Road, to the south east of the school site stating that this causes damage to the surface of the field and is dangerous for pedestrians. Garlinge Primary School has advised parents not to park their vehicles on this land. However, as the land is not under Kent County Council or the School's ownership, the parking of vehicles on this land cannot be enforced by the County Council. The landowner would have to restrict access to the land to prevent vehicles being parked here.
38. Concerns have been raised regarding delivery vehicles unloading deliveries to the school in Caxton Road, blocking access along the road. The School have been advised to make their delivery company aware that delivery drivers should park and unload on site rather than in Caxton Road.
39. Kent County Council Highways and Transportation conclude that the additional vehicle trips generated by the expansion of the school to 4FE are unlikely to have a significant detrimental impact on surrounding road junctions. It is considered that the proposed Traffic Regulation Order to implement a formal one-way system along Caxton Road would assist in relieving congestion issues in and around Caxton Road as well as improving pedestrian safety. Kent County Council Highways and Transportation consider the proposed one-way system along Caxton Road a desirable mitigation measure to ease congestion yet not an essential requirement. The one-way system would act to formalise an arrangement that is already carried out in practice by drivers using the road and I would support this element of the proposal. It should be noted that local residents are also generally supportive of this measure. Recognition needs to be made when considering this proposal that all schools generate traffic and often some parking on the public highway, but unless that constitutes a severe risk to road safety then that is not a reason to withhold planning consent. I consider that the proposed implementation of a one-way system to formalise the existing arrangements would provide sufficient mitigation to accommodate the increase in vehicles associated with the expansion of the school. The updating and annual review of the School Travel Plan would assist in mitigating the potential impacts the proposed expansion in pupil numbers may have. Kent County Council Highways and Transportation are satisfied that this proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the local highway network, and raise no objection on that basis.
40. Taking the professional advice received from KCC Highways & Transportation into account, I would consider the proposal acceptable in highway terms subject to the

Proposed expansion of Garlinge Primary School, Westfield Road, Margate – TH/14/79 (KCC/TH/0010/2014)

imposition of conditions covering details of a construction management plan to be submitted prior to commencement of works on site; provision of construction vehicle loading/unloading facilities prior to commencement of work on site; provision of wheel washing facilities prior to commencement of work on site and updating of the School Travel Plan within 6 months of occupation of the proposed extensions. The submission and implementation of a Construction Management Plan would help to minimise disruption to the day-to-day functioning of the school and minimise disruption to local residents. The application for a Traffic Regulation Order to implement a one-way system along Caxton Road would be submitted to approval sought from the Highway Authority.

Conclusion

41. Concerns have been raised regarding the impact of the proposed development on various aspects including residential amenity, design aspects and traffic and highway safety issues. Having assessed each of these areas of concern, in my view, the development would not give rise to any significant material harm sufficient to warrant withholding planning consent. The proposed development is in accordance with the general aims and objectives of the relevant Development Plan Policies. In addition, the development is sustainable and in accordance with the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework and the Policy Statement on Planning for School Development. I consider that, subject to the imposition of appropriate planning conditions, this proposal would not have a significantly detrimental impact on residential amenity, design and layout aspects and traffic/parking issues.

Recommendation

42. 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 submission of details of all materials to be used externally;
 - a programme of archaeological work;
 - no vegetation clearance to take place during the bird breeding season;
 - 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;
 - details of a construction management plan to be agreed prior to commencement of the development;
 - details of construction vehicle loading/unloading and turning facilities to be agreed prior to commencement of the development;
 - details of wheel cleaning facilities to be approved prior to commencement of development.
42. I FURTHER RECOMMEND that the applicant be advised by informative of:
- Before the development hereby approved is commenced, that all necessary highway approvals and consents where required are obtained and that the limits of highway boundary are clearly established in order to avoid any enforcement action being taken by the Highway Authority. The applicant must also ensure that the details shown on the approved plans agree in every aspect with those approved under such legislation and common law. It is therefore important for the applicant

Proposed expansion of Garlinge Primary School, Westfield Road, Margate – TH/14/79 (KCC/TH/0010/2014)

to contact KCC Highways and Transportation to progress this aspect of the works prior to commencement on site.

- That the applicant be advised that the Travel Plan should be registered on-line with Kent County Council's School Travel Plan site 'Jambusters' by accessing the following link www.jambusterstpms.co.uk, to assist with the updating, monitoring and future review of the Travel Plan.

Case officer – Hardeep Hunjan	01622 221057
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Background documents - See section heading
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