

## Item D6

### **Children's Centre, plus demolition of a derelict chapel and creation of replacement school car park at Priory Infant School, Cannon Road, Ramsgate – TH/08/384**

A report by Head of Planning Applications Unit to Planning Applications Committee on 29 July 2008.

TH/08/384 – Application by Kent County Council Kent County Council Children, Families, Health & Education for construction of a single storey modular building on existing school car park and public car park for use as a Children's Centre, including the installation of canopies, external storage, fencing and external impact absorbent play areas, plus the demolition of a derelict chapel and creation of a new car park at Priory Infant School, Cannon Road, Ramsgate.

Recommendation: Permission be granted

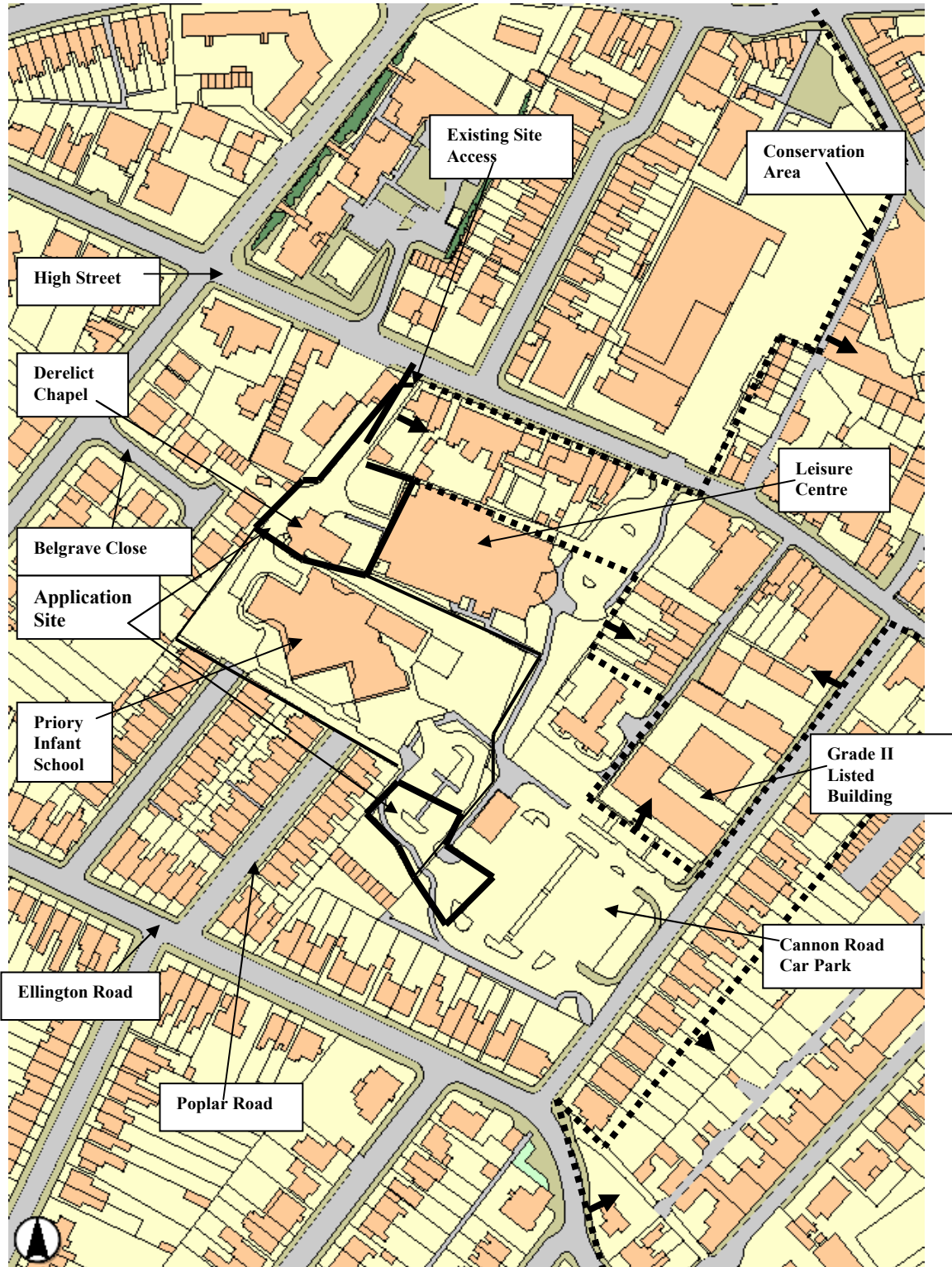
**Local Members:** Mrs E. Green & Mr A. Poole

**Classification:** Unrestricted

#### Site

1. Priory Infant School is located on a confined urban plot in Ramsgate town centre. The School presently accommodates 178 pupils and employs 35 members of staff, including those employed on a part-time basis. The School has two entrance points; the main entrance is at the rear of Cannon Road Public Car Park and includes pedestrian access to the site and car parking for 21 vehicles within the grounds. The second is along an access road off the north-west end of the High Street that passes between residential property on the road. That route also serves the rear service/ emergency entrance to the District Council managed Sports Centre adjacent to the school grounds to the north-east.
2. The application site proposed is split into two separate locations to the north and south-east of the main school building. The site to the north includes the access road to the High Street, a disused area of land to the rear of the Sports Centre, and a derelict chapel owned by Thanet District Council. The site to the south-east of the school forms the greater part of the School's car park and part of the western corner of the adjacent public car park, also in the ownership of the District Council.
3. The school grounds, including the application site, are surrounded by development including for the most part residential properties. A sports centre and the rear of properties facing onto the High Street are positioned to the north. Residential properties are located immediately adjacent to the site to the south and west, and to the east is Cannon Road Car Park. The surrounding urban environment consists predominantly of terraced properties. Two blocks of flats are located to the east, adjacent to Cannon Road Car Park; the further of the two is a former Brewery, which is a Grade II Listed Building. A modular building accommodating the Ramsgate Library, whilst the permanent building is redeveloped, is located adjacent to the school grounds within Cannon Road Car Park on part of the land proposed as part of the application.
4. The application site is not subject to any specific designations. The Thanet District Local Plan identifies land to the immediate north and east as being within the Ramsgate Conservation Area.

**Children's Centre, plus creation of replacement school car park at  
Priory Infant School, Cannon Road, Ramsgate – TH/08/384**

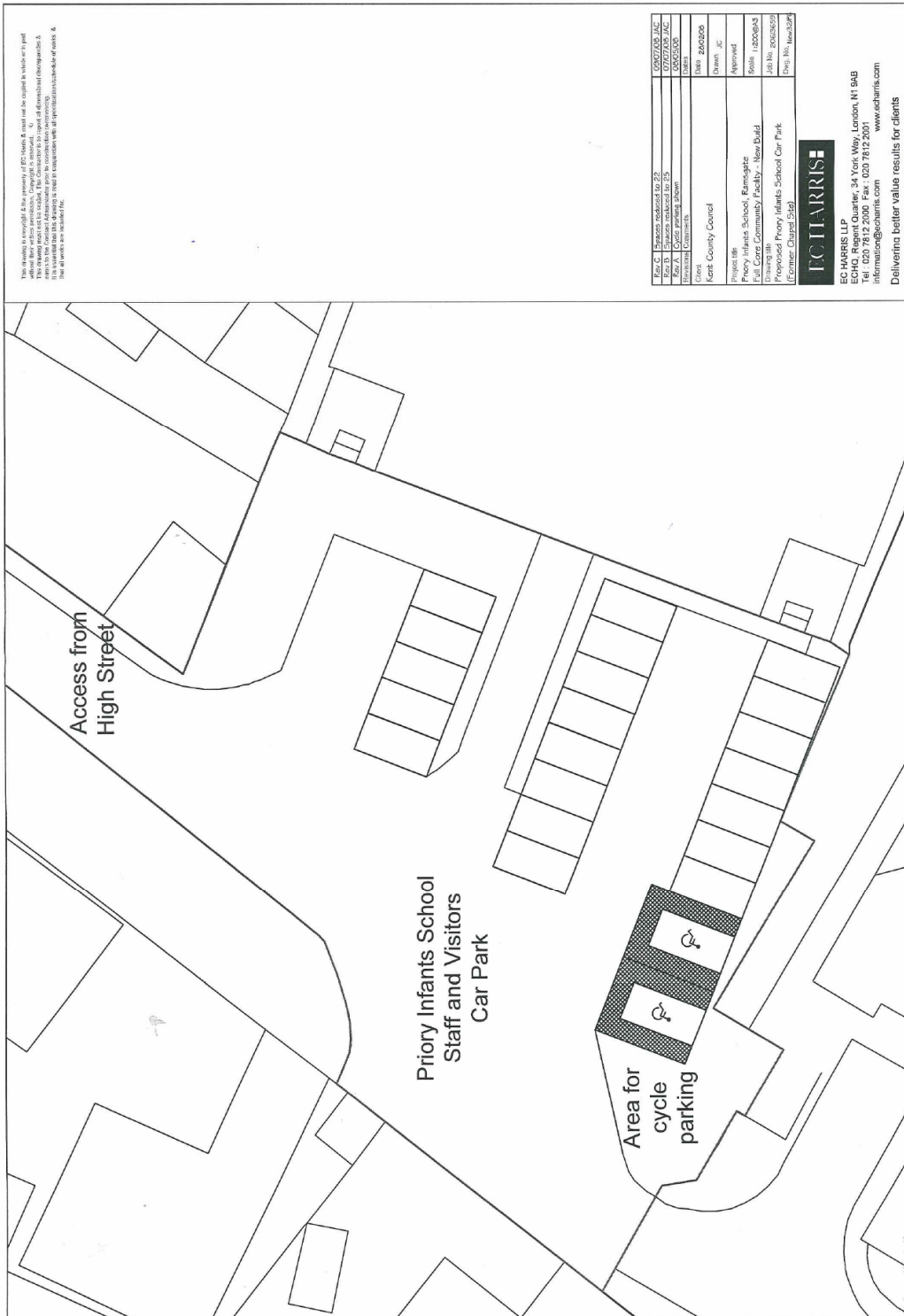








**Children's Centre, plus creation of replacement school car park at  
Priory Infant School, Cannon Road, Ramsgate – TH/08/384**



This quantity is copyright & the property of ECH Harris & must not be copied or published in whole or in part without the prior written consent of ECH Harris. This quantity is for information only and does not constitute an offer of any services. ECH Harris is not liable for any loss or damage, including consequential, special or exemplary damages, arising from the use of this information. All rights are reserved.

Rev. C1	Structure reduced to 2.2	02/07/2010 JAC
Rev. B1	Structure reduced to 2.5	07/07/2010 JAC
Rev. A1	Original Scheme	08/05/2010 JAC
Client	Kent County Council	
Project title	Priory Infant School, Ramsgate	
Drawn by	J. Harris	
Checked by	J. Harris	
Scale	1:2000/0.3	
Job No.	20080093	
Proposed	Proposed Priory Infants School Car Park	
Drawn No.	20080093	
Drawn Jc.	J. Harris	
Approved	J. Harris	
Scale	1:2000/0.3	
Job No.	20080093	
Proposed	Proposed Priory Infants School Car Park	
Drawn No.	20080093	
Drawn Jc.	J. Harris	

**ECH HARRIS**

EC HARRIS LLP  
 ECCHO, Regent Quarter, 34 York Way, London, N1 9AB  
 Tel: 020 7812 2000 Fax: 020 7812 2001  
 information@echarris.com  
 www.echarris.com

Delivering better value results for clients

**Children's Centre, plus creation of replacement school car park at Priory Infant School, Cannon Road, Ramsgate – TH/08/384**

---

**Background**

5. Part of the proposed redevelopment of this part of the town centre includes a land exchange between the District and County Councils. Thanet District Council is planning to extend the adjacent Sports Centre to potentially include a new swimming pool. To enable this development to take place the District Council would require part of the Priory Infant School grounds including the northern end of the School's car park. To compensate for the loss of this part of the County Council owned school grounds the District Council will transfer ownership of the land the derelict chapel currently occupies and part of the eastern end of the Cannon Road Car Park to the County Council.
6. The Chapel building identified in the application is derelict and has been for sometime. The Church was burnt out in the past and has never been redeveloped. The building dates from the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century and is not of listable quality.
7. As set out above a temporary library building currently occupies part of the land identified for development within the Cannon Road Car Park. This building has recently been granted planning permission under reference TH/08/487 for a continued temporary period until March 2010, or until the permanent Ramsgate Library building, which was recently burnt out, is redeveloped.

**Proposal**

8. The application proposes the creation of a community Children's Centre within the grounds of Priory Infant School and on part of the adjacent Cannon Road Car Park, along with the provision of a replacement school car park. The existing arrangements would be compromised by the proposed development.
9. The proposed Children's Centre would be accommodated within a purpose-built single storey modular building that would be constructed off site in a quality-controlled environment and transported to site to be fixed on pre-constructed foundations. The exterior of the building would be finished with white render, 75mm wide oiled cedar cladding, brown UPVC windows, brown aluminium doors, metal profiled roof panels and external canopies. The cedar cladding is shown in sections to the main public facing elevations and is designed to over-sail the roofline by 450mm. The Children's Centre building would be warranted for a period of at least 25 years to meet the applicant's requirements. The application sets out that the building would be designed to achieve a minimum Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) rating of GOOD.
10. The development would create approximately 396m<sup>2</sup> of floorspace and would contain a crèche / multi purpose meeting room for use by families attending the Centre as informal meeting space through to more formal seminar style learning. The building would also include a second smaller multi purpose room, an interview / treatment room, staff room, reception, office space, kitchens, associated toilets and cloakroom facilities, laundry and 2 nursery rooms for children aged 0-2 years and 2-5 years old. The second nursery room and the larger multi purpose room would have direct access to external impact absorbent play areas.
11. The Children's Centre aspect of the development would also include a cut and fill exercise to level the area of the footprint on which the building is proposed. A 1.8m

**Children's Centre, plus creation of replacement school car park at Priory Infant School, Cannon Road, Ramsgate – TH/08/384**

---

weld-mesh style security fence with landscaping to enhance the visual appearance of the scheme would enclose the Children's Centre and associated external areas.

12. The application has been made on behalf of the County Council's Children, Families, Health and Education Directorate. The scheme is one of a number of similar applications being proposed across the County as part of Central Government's National Sure Start Programme. The main aim of the Sure Start Programme is to increase the availability of childcare for all children, improve health and emotional development for young children, and support parents in their aspirations toward employment. It is the Government's intention to have a Children Centre in every community by 2010.
13. The aim of the proposed Children's Centre is to offer a range of health, adult education and family support services to the local community. The provision of services is determined by existing services in the area and the needs of the local community. The application states services offered in the Centre would include a range of health, adult education and family support services like antenatal classes, baby clinics and drop-in sessions for parents and children. The proposed facilities would also include full day care facilities for children under 5 years old.
14. The Children's Centre would operate as a separate community facility, independently from the Priory Infants School. The application proposes that the Centre would be open from 0800 to 1800 hours, Monday to Friday, 48 weeks of the year. The Centre would employ 3 members of staff in the community section (a manager, administrator and community development worker) with other professionals visiting from time to time as required. The nursery would employ 7 members of staff. The application states that staff would be employed from within the surrounding area and would be expected to walk to the centre. The application includes the provision of 8 dedicated car-parking spaces for the Children's Centre within the Cannon Road Car Park.
15. The application sets out that the Centre is expected to generate up to 30 visitors to the community facilities in a typical day. The movements are likely to be spread out over the 10 hours of operation, mainly by appointment. The Centre would also provide a potential venue for occasional educational events in association with the service, like seminar style training. The application advises that it is unlikely that these events would coincide with the peak school travel times. The nursery function would allow for a maximum of 52 children each day, 26 attending in the morning and 26 in the afternoon.
16. The application states that the Centre has been strategically located to minimise travel distances for most of the community it is intended to serve. The Sure Start programme puts emphasis on encouraging visitors to walk the Centres, highlighting the importance of the facility being within easy buggy pushing distance, approximately 20 minutes walk, from the community it is intended to serve.
17. The proposed construction of the Children's Centre and District Council promoted extension to the adjacent Sports Centre would result in the loss of the schools existing pedestrian and vehicle access arrangements from Cannon Road Car Park, including the schools on-site car park (21 spaces). The application includes mitigation measures to compensate for the changes. This would include a revised pedestrian access route from the Cannon Road direction. The proposal would ultimately move the existing arrangements approximately 25m to the south-west along the school boundary to allow

**Children's Centre, plus creation of replacement school car park at Priory Infant School, Cannon Road, Ramsgate – TH/08/384**

---

for the redevelopment of eastern corner of the school grounds as part of the extension to the adjacent Sports Centre.

18. The application also proposes a new school car park located adjoining the secondary vehicle access to the school off the High Street. The proposals would provide 22 new car parking spaces in compensation for those lost in the existing car park, including 2 disabled bays and cycle parking facilities. The area of land identified for this arrangement current consists of a small open grassed area to the rear of the Sport Centre and a derelict chapel. The chapel would be demolished as part of the redevelopment of the site. The secondary access would also form the only vehicle access to the site, including emergency vehicles.
19. The documents received with the application contain a report on ground conditions that identifies potential contaminants left by previous development. The application also includes an Ecology Scoping Assessment and an initial summary of findings following a Bat and Ecological Survey of the chapel carried out by Kent Wildlife Trust.

**Development Plan Policies**

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

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

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| Policy SP1  | Seeks to protect and enhance the environment and achieve a sustainable pattern and form of development.  |
| Policy SS6  | Seeks to improve the built and natural environment, functioning and appearance of the suburbs of the major urban areas, including the provision of services and facilities that serve local needs.   |
| Policy EN8  | Seeks to protect, conserve and enhance wildlife habitats and/or species.   |
| Policy QL1  | Seeks all development be well designed and of high quality that respond positively to the local character. Development, which would be detrimental to the built environment, amenity, function and character of settlements or the countryside, will not be permitted. Seeks development to consider the needs of the community, provide safe environment, protect residential amenity, and adopt sustainable construction techniques. |
| Policy QL6  | Seeks to preserve or enhance the special character or appearance of Conservation Areas.  |
| Policy QL8  | Seeks to preserve, protect and enhance the integrity and character of listed buildings and the character of their setting.   |
| 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.   |



**Children's Centre, plus creation of replacement school car park at Priory Infant School, Cannon Road, Ramsgate – TH/08/384**

---

Policy TP3 Local Planning Authorities should ensure that development sites are well served by public transport, walking and cycling.

Policy TP19 Seeks development proposals to comply with the respective vehicle parking policies and maximum standards adopted by Kent County Council and Medway Council.

Policy NR1 Seeks development to incorporate sustainable construction techniques and prudent use of natural resources.

Policy NR5 Seeks to conserve and enhance Kent's environment including visual, ecological, geological, historic and water environments, air quality, noise and light intrusion.

Policy NR8 Seeks to protect the quality of Kent's groundwater resources.

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

Policy TR1 Seeks development generating travel demand to be located within urban areas in locations which are highly accessible on foot, by bicycle or by public transport.

Policy TR12 Seeks development to provide convenient and secure cycle-parking.

Policy TR15 Seeks development to demonstrate through green travel plans specific measures to encourage walking, cycling and public transport in preference to private car travel.

Policy TR16 Seeks proposals for development to make provision for the parking of vehicles. Within the town centre areas new development proposals will not be required to provide on-site car parking spaces.

Policy TR17 Seeks to retain off-street public car parking. Development that would result in the loss of off-street public car parking will be refused unless satisfactory replacement is made available or the loss of parking spaces is a result of physical improvement measures.

Policy D1 Seeks development to provide a high quality of design that respects the character or appearance of the surrounding area, particularly in scale, massing, rhythm and use of materials. Seeks development that is compatible with neighbouring buildings and spaces and does not lead to unacceptable loss of amenity through overlooking, noise or light. Seeks accessible and secure forms of development.

Policy D2 Seeks landscaping as part of any proposals that enhances the development in its setting.

Policy HE1 Seeks to preserve Listed Buildings and their setting.

**Children's Centre, plus creation of replacement school car park at Priory Infant School, Cannon Road, Ramsgate – TH/08/384**

---

Policy HE4	Seeks all development in and adjoining Conservation Areas to preserve or enhance the special character and appearance of the area.
Policy HE6	Seeks applications for demolition in Conservation Areas to be acceptable in terms of the effect on the character and appearance of the surroundings.
Policy CF1	Planning permission will be granted for new community facilities if the proposals are not contrary to other Local Plan Policies and the use and location are demonstrated as appropriate

**Consultations**

21. **Thanet District Council** – raises no objection.
22. **Environment Agency** – raises no objection in principle subject to conditions to protect the groundwater quality. The site lies on head deposits that in turn overlie the upper chalk formation, which is classified as a major aquifer. The site does not lie in a Source Protection Zone. The Agency's comments draw attention to Planning Policy Statement 23: Planning and Pollution Control that requires the potential for contamination to be considered, any risks assessed and remediation taken to deal with unacceptable risk. The Agency notes that a report on ground conditions submitted with the application identifies ground contamination, but does not contain sufficient information to fully assess the site or the risk to groundwater. The Agency's recommendations include conditions requiring further site investigations, the submission reports verifying any necessary remediation work, no infiltration of surface water drainage into the ground without express consent, piling or foundation designs using penetrative methods shall not be permitted other than with express consent. Without the recommended conditions, the Agency considers the proposed development of the site poses an unacceptable risk to the environment and would wish to object to the application.
23. **Divisional Transportation Manager** – Following negotiation over the number of car parking spaces proposed and the access arrangements, raises no objection to the application, subject to the provision of cycle parking, wheel washing facilities to be provided on site during construction and construction vehicles and plant to be stored within the site. The consultees' comments confirm that the 22 replace car parking spaces proposed for the school and 8 spaces proposed for the Children's Centre would be acceptable and in accordance with the Kent Vehicle Parking Standards. The comments received also note that the site is extremely sustainable with excellent public transport connections, and that it abuts a large public car park.
24. **County Archaeologist** – raises no objection to the application subject conditions seeking a programme of building recording and the implementation of a watching brief to record any remains that maybe encountered during groundworks. The County Archaeologist notes that the chapel identified in the application for demolition dates from between the First and Second World Wars and would appear to be connected with the Holy Cross Convent on the 4<sup>th</sup> Edition OS map. The consultee recommends that the concentration of nineteenth and twentieth century ecclesiastical institutions in the District does have cultural significance in terms of Thanet's social history and as such some recording of the structure would be appropriate prior to demolition.

**Children's Centre, plus creation of replacement school car park at Priory Infant School, Cannon Road, Ramsgate – TH/08/384**

---

25. **County Conservation Architect** – raises no objection, and comments as follows:

*“The chapel appears to have been constructed between the Wars. Certainly the style of window openings indicates this period. Access to the interior was not possible and it is therefore difficult to form a complete opinion of the quality of the building and its historic significance, which is likely to be marginal. The building offers little to the locality because of its seclusion and to this end it would be difficult to support its retention unless the interior was found to be worthy of saving. I would not anticipate finding anything of quality inside the building but could not categorically rule this out until an inspection of the interior has been undertaken.”*

**Representations**

26. The application has been publicised by two site notices and the notification of 95 neighbouring properties. 3 letters of representation have been received commenting on and/or objecting to the application. The main observations and objections raised to the proposal can be summarised as follows:

- Remarks that bats have been observed in the area of the disused Chapel and that the building may provide a potential roost. Draws attention to the protection afforded bats and their places of shelter.
- Raises no objection to the construction of the Children’s Centre, which would be a worthwhile improvement, and benefit to the local Community. Raises concerns over the proposed demolition of the Chapel. Considers the building could be converted into housing despite the internal fire damage, and that demolition for car parking would be wasteful. Considers the land adjacent to the building and within the school grounds could provide sufficient space for the parking needs.
- Notes the building is adjacent to the Conservation Area and its demolition would have an impact on the locality. Considers that whilst some may consider the building an eyesore, it is in its own way appealing with some interesting features including the tall windows and curved end of the building.
- Questions whether the number of car parking spaces proposed is necessary? Notes that not all staff and visitors drive to the site and that there is ample of parking available in Cannon Road Car Park.
- Raises concern about the potential for misuse of the car park out of school hours, and requests that the area be fenced and gated.
- Objects to the demolition of the Chapel on local heritage grounds. Considers the chapel should be preserved as a historic sacred building.
- Considers the demolition of the Chapel would be financially wasteful, offers to purchase the building with a view to converting it into a house.

**Local Member**

27. The Local County Members for Ramsgate, Mrs E. Green and Mr A. Poole were notified of the application on 20 March 2008.

**Children's Centre, plus creation of replacement school car park at Priory Infant School, Cannon Road, Ramsgate – TH/08/384**

---

**Discussion**

28. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires that applications are 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. In considering this proposal the Development Plan Policies outlined in paragraphs (20) above are particularly relevant.

29. In my opinion, the main determining issues relate to the following points:

- location;
- design, layout and appearance;
- highway considerations;
- amenity impacts;
- ecology;
- environmental considerations; and
- security.

**Location**

30. Whilst the application site is not identified as being subject to any site specific Development Plan Policies. The proposed development would involve the loss of part of the Cannon Road Public Car Park, and therefore is subject to Thanet Local Plan Policy TR17 that seeks to preserve off-street public car parking unless satisfactory replacement parking is made available or the loss is a result of physical improvement measures. The position of the footprint of the building proposed would result in the loss of manoeuvring space and approximately 9 spaces from the west corner of the Cannon Road Car Park.

31. I note that neither Thanet District Council (which is responsible for local car parking provision) nor the Divisional Transportation Manager has raised concerns over the loss of spaces from this car park. Considering the above comments and the size of the car park, I am satisfied that the loss of spaces would not cause a problem in the locality. There would still be a large number of spaces retained in the public car park and there are a number of other options for off-street parking in the locality. In my opinion the proposed development would provide a new facility to meet the needs of the local community and as such consider that this would be sufficient justification to allow favourable consideration of the redevelopment of part of the public car park.

**Design, Layout and Visual Appearance**

32. Kent and Medway Structure Plan Policy QL1 seeks all development to be of high quality and respond positively to the local character and take account of the needs of the community, amongst other matters. Both parts of the application site are close to the Ramsgate Conservation Area and the proposed Children's Centre would be located opposite a Listed Building. Structure Plan Policies QL6 and QL8 and Local Plan Policies HE1, HE4 and HE6 seek to preserve the character of Conservation Areas and their setting, along with the setting of any Listed Buildings. Thanet District Local Plan Policies

**Children's Centre, plus creation of replacement school car park at Priory Infant School, Cannon Road, Ramsgate – TH/08/384**

---

D1 and D2 seek development that provides a high quality design that respects the character of the surrounding area and neighbouring properties, particularly in scale, massing, rhythm, use of materials and through the provision of appropriate landscaping.

33. Given the location, consideration should be given to the potential visual impact of the proposed development, and its impact on the setting of the adjacent Conservation Area and Listed Building. The design of the building proposed is similar in nature to a number of Children's Centre applications that the County Planning Authority has considered across the county. The application proposes a modular style building that would include the provision of a white rendered finish, vertical cedar cladding to sections of the main elevations, and brown coloured UPVC windows. The applicant states that the materials selected draw on the design approach taken with the building opposite the site. The proposals include provision of weld-mesh fencing and landscaping to the prominent boundaries.
34. I note that there is a mixture of architectural styles in the locality of the site including a Listed Building and similar modular style buildings, albeit on temporary consents. I consider that the location proposed for the Children's Centre building, to the rear of Cannon Road Car Park adjacent to the rear boundary of properties in Poplar Road and a garage block to the rear of Ellington Road, would position the structure in such a way that it would not affect views of, or into the Conservation Area. The provision of fencing and appropriate landscaping to the prominent bounds would serve to soften the views of the structure. In my opinion, the use of materials informed by local buildings would help to integrate the development into its surroundings, and the variety of materials and contrasting colours should help to break up the uniform structure and generate interest.
35. The application includes a proposed reduction in the overall height of the land to the north-west of the site, and the raising of the footprint of the building to the south-east. Taking this into consideration along side the scale of the proposed structure, whilst the building is close to the rear façade with property in Poplar Road (approximately 18m at the closest point), the properties in Poplar Road sit above the site, and would overlook the development. I considered that the development is appropriate in scale and massing in relation to the surrounding buildings.
36. Local residents have raised objections concerning the proposed demolition of the derelict chapel. The building is situated on the land identified to be redeveloped as the school's new car park, and is positioned adjacent to the Conservation Area. Comments have been received concerning this building from both the County Archaeologist and the County Council's Conservation Architect, neither raise objection to the demolition of the building. The County Archaeologist notes that the structure may have some local interest and recommends a programme of building recording prior to demolition. I note that the Conservation Architect has indicated that it would be difficult to support the retention of the chapel on heritage grounds. The chapel building has remained derelict for a number of years and was burnt out at some point in its history. Whilst the Kent and Medway Structure Plan Policy QL6 and Local Plan Policy HE4 seek to preserve the special character of the Conservation Area, I also note that the Chapel is technically outside the boundaries of this area and such could potentially be demolished without an express consent. In addition, I note that the location of the Chapel at the end of an access road means that the structure is remote from the street-scene and contributes little to the character of the area. The suggestions made by nearby residents about redeveloping the Chapel are large academic as it is down to the owner of the land to



**Children's Centre, plus creation of replacement school car park at Priory Infant School, Cannon Road, Ramsgate – TH/08/384**

---

propose how they wish to use the space. I can only consider the acceptability of the scheme proposed in the application. In this instance, given the points set out above and that no objection has been received from Thanet District Council, subject to a programme of building recording I raise no material objection to the demolition of the Chapel.

**Highway Considerations**

37. The Children's Centre proposed would operate a drop in style facilities to support of the Government's Sure Start Programme for young families in the local community. The Centre would offer a range of health, adult education, family support services including a nursery. The application sets out that the Centre would employ 10 members of staff on permanent basis, with an estimated 30 visitors to the community function across a normal day, alongside the provision of 52 nursery places. The application sets out that the use of the Centre would normally be spread across a 10-hour day, and only at the beginning and end of the nursery sessions and when training events, like occasional seminars and group sessions, are being held would there be several people arriving at one time.
38. Kent and Medway Structure Plan Policy TP3 and Thanet District Local Plan Policies TR1, TR12 and TR15 require that any new development be well located to minimise the need to travel, and ensure access to move sustainable means of travel, like public transport, walking and cycling. The proposed location directly adjacent to Ramsgate town centre is highly sustainable with good access to a range of public transport opportunities. The proximity of the Cannon Road Car Park would also allow facilities for those who may choose to travel by car.
39. The proposed Children's Centre has been located to serve the needs of the local community, proposed alongside an existing community service where there is likely to be crossover in terms of the people using the school with those that would use the proposed Centre. The access and traffic congestion surrounding the school are mainly centred on the peak movement times at the start and end of the school day. The size and proximity of the Cannon Road Car Park to the school, and in turn the application site, helps to reduce the impact of traffic associated with the site on the local area by removing vehicles and congestion from the public highway. The facility proposed would not be directly linked to the existing school operating hours with movements spread more evenly across the day, rather than centred on regular peak times.
40. The proposed building would be positioned on part of the existing school car park resulting in the loss of 21 spaces on-site. However, in mitigation for this loss the application proposes a replacement car park providing 22 spaces. The Centre itself would benefit from 8 designated spaces within the adjacent public car park. I note that one of the representations received from nearby residents raises the question of the number of car parking spaces proposed and considers that sufficient car parking could be accommodated without the demolition of the chapel building. The applicant was asked to explore this option, however it was found that there would not be sufficient space available to accommodate the number of spaces required without the removal of the Chapel.
41. The Divisional Transportation Manager has advised that the proposed car parking arrangements would be in accordance with the Kent Vehicle Parking Standards for the

**Children's Centre, plus creation of replacement school car park at Priory Infant School, Cannon Road, Ramsgate – TH/08/384**

---

proposed land uses. The number of spaces in the replacement school car park was subject to negotiation resulting in a reduction in the overall number proposed down from 29. Due to the sustainable central location the Transportation Manager was not prepared to support an overall increase in the number of spaces on-site, and in addition the provision of 29 spaces would have exceeded the recommended level of car parking for the size of school.

42. All visitors to the Children's Centre would be encouraged to walk or cycle. This could be monitored and facilitated through the development of a Travel Plan for the Centre and the provision of cycle parking facilities. Whilst, it is inevitable some visitors would choose to drive, taking account of the Divisional Transportation Manager's views, I do not consider that the level of movements that are likely to be generated would have an unacceptable impact on the area. Further to the above, I note that the temporary library building that occupies part of Cannon Road Car Park and generates movements in its own right would in time be removed from the area with the associated traffic movements migrating back to the permanent library building once it has been redeveloped.
43. Therefore, subject to conditions including submission of details of cycle parking and a Travel Plan for the Centre, I consider that the application would accord with the appropriate Development Plan Policies and raise no objection to the application on highway grounds.

**Amenity Impacts**

44. In my opinion the type of use proposed is unlikely to generate an unacceptable increase in the existing background noise levels already generated by the school during its day to day activities. The hours of use proposed, 0800 to 1800 hours Monday to Friday, would not substantially extend the normal hours of operation from that of the adjoining school. Due to the changes in ground level, and even though the closest properties are located within 20m of the proposed building, in my opinion there would not be opportunity for an unacceptable loss of privacy, nor concerns about overshadowing or the massing of the building. Given the size of the Centre and the numbers of potential visitors suggested in the application, I am satisfied that the Centre would not cause an unacceptable impact to adjoining residential properties as a result of its location or the hours set out above.
45. The provision of a new 22-space school car park would add additional vehicle movements to the access drive off the High Street. This route runs adjacent to residential property on the High Street, and the proposed car parking would be positioned opposite the rear of properties in Belgrave Road. Considering the use would primarily be tidal with, for the most part, staff using the facilities, and given the size of the car park proposed, I do not consider that the use would result in an unacceptable impact on residential properties. I note that no concerns have been received from nearby residents relating to this issue.

**Ecology**

46. Members will note that comments have been received from a local resident about the potential for bats in the locality of the Chapel. The applicant has commissioned a survey of this structure and surroundings to establish the potential for protect species and any impact the demolition of the building would have. Whilst the formal report had not been made available when writing this report, initial comments have been received concerning

**Children's Centre, plus creation of replacement school car park at Priory Infant School, Cannon Road, Ramsgate – TH/08/384**

---

the work carried out by the Kent Wildlife Trust on behalf of the applicant. The comments include confirmation that no evidence of bats was found during the survey. The comments suggest that the smoke damage to the interior would probably deter bats from using the building. The only constraints identified were in relation to the potential for nesting birds using the vegetation climbing up the walls of the church. In my opinion, subject to a second bat survey of the structure closer to the time of demolition, and best practice to be followed in relation to the potential for nesting birds, the application as proposed would be acceptable in terms of ecology issues in accordance with Kent and Medway Structure Plan Policy EN8.

**Environmental Considerations**

47. The application includes a report on ground conditions at the proposed site. The findings demonstrate that contamination exists on-site that could result in a potential risk to the end-users. The Environment Agency's comments confirm that investigations undertaken to date are not adequate to fully assess the potential contamination or the risk to groundwater. On this basis the Agency has recommended conditions requiring survey work and appropriate mitigation to take place prior to the development of the site. Given the Agency's comments, in accordance with Kent and Medway Structure Plan Policies NR5 and NR8, I would recommend that the suggested conditions covering further site investigations, mitigation measures, surface water drainage and foundation design be imposed on any planning consent to avoid any unacceptable risk to groundwater resources and human health.

**Security**

48. Concern has been raised by a local resident about the potential for misuse of the proposed car park after school hours. The representations request that the area be gated to deter entry when the site is not in use. Given the relatively secluded nature of the area, I would consider that this request to be appropriate. Therefore, should planning permission be granted I would recommend that a condition requiring the applicant to provide details of appropriate arrangements to secure the access after hours be imposed on any consent.
49. I note that one of the main requirements under the Sure Start Programme is the security of the Centre and its end users. Given the location proposed is a relatively high-density area of mixed uses it is important that the development is secure. The application site would be overlooked by a number of residential properties which would assist with surveillance on site. The provision of lighting on site would also assist with site security, however this would also have the potential to impact on residential properties. Therefore, I would recommend that any security lighting be subject to prior approval before being installed on-site. The application also includes the provision of 1.8m security fencing that would assist in securing the site. I am satisfied that subject to the conditions set out above and summarized below that the arrangements would be acceptable.

**Conclusion**

50. I consider that the design and layout of the development as proposed accords with the Development Plan and would not cause harm to the setting of the adjacent Conservation

**Children's Centre, plus creation of replacement school car park at  
Priory Infant School, Cannon Road, Ramsgate – TH/08/384**

---

Area or Listed Building. There are no material considerations that indicate I should recommend otherwise. I note that the proposed demolition of the derelict Chapel has caused some local concern to local residents, however subject to a programme of building recording, I would not raise a material objection to the application as proposed on these grounds. The Divisional Transportation Manager has considered the highway implications and is not raising an objection to the proposal. The proposed use would increase the number of visitors to the site, however I consider that the type of use would distribute these movements across a normal day and would not have an unacceptable impact on the congestion experienced at peak travel times. I therefore consider that, subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions, the benefits associated with the provision of a community facility outweigh any detrimental impacts the proposals may have and that planning permission should be granted.

**Recommendation**

51. I RECOMMEND that PERMISSION BE GRANTED SUBJECT TO the imposition of conditions including (amongst others) the following:-

- the standard time limit;
- the development to be carried out in accordance with the permitted details;
- implementation of a programme of building recording;
- implementation of an archaeological watching brief;
- details of a scheme of landscaping to be submitted;
- details of cycle parking to be submitted;
- details of a gate to secure the proposed school car park;
- no external lighting to be installed on site without prior approval;
- conditions as recommended by the Environment Agency relating to contamination and mitigation measures;
- the provision of adequate wheel washing facilities during construction;
- all construction vehicles and plant to be stored on site;
- hours of use for the Children's Centre to be restricted to 0800 to 1800 Monday to Friday;
- the use of the building to be restricted specifically to use as a Children's Centre only; and
- submission, implementation and ongoing review of a Travel Plan for the Children's Centre.

Case officer – James Bickle
-----------------------------

01622 221068
--------------

Background documents - See section heading
--