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**CEDARS 1ST & MIDDLE SCHOOL  
WHITTLESEA ROAD  
HARROW HA3 6LS**

**Item: 1/01  
P/0698/07/CFU/DT2**

Ward HARROW WEALD

PROPOSED CHILDREN'S CENTRE AND NURSERY

**Applicant:** Harrow Council  
**Agent:** ATP Group  
**Statutory Expiry Date:** 07-JUN-2007

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

Plan Nos: 06.242/PA01, 06.242/PA02, 06.242/PA03, 06/242/PA04, 06/242/PA05,  
06/242/PA06

**GRANT** permission for the development described in the application and submitted plans, subject to the following condition(s):

1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.

2 The development hereby permitted shall not commence until there has been submitted to, and approved by, the local planning authority, a scheme of hard and soft landscape works which shall include a survey of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land, indicating those to be retained and those to be lost. Details of those to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of the development, shall also be submitted and approved, and carried out in accordance with such approval, prior to any demolition or any other site works, and retained until the development is completed. Soft landscape works shall include: planting plans, and schedule of plants, noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities.

REASON: To safeguard the appearance and character of the area, and to enhance the appearance of the development.

3 The development hereby permitted shall not commence until details of a scheme to provide (insert facility, e.g. a level entrance) in order to facilitate access for disabled people, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be occupied or used until the works have been completed in accordance with the approved details and thereafter retained.

REASON: To ensure adequate provision of facilities for use by disabled people in accordance with the policies of the Harrow Unitary Development Plan.

4 The development hereby permitted shall not commence until a scheme for:-

(a) The storage and disposal of refuse/waste

(b) and vehicular access thereto

has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The development shall not be occupied or used until the works have been completed in

accordance with the approved details and shall thereafter be retained.

REASON: To ensure adequate standards of hygiene and refuse/waste collection without prejudice to the enjoyment by neighbouring occupiers of their properties.

5 Development of any buildings hereby permitted shall not be commenced until surface water drainage works have been carried out in accordance with details to submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Prior to submission of those details, an assessment shall be carried out into the potential for disposing of surface water by means of a sustainable drainage system (SuDs) in accordance with the principles of sustainable drainage systems set out in Appendix E of PPG25, and the results of the assessment shall be provided to the Local Planning Authority with the details. Where a SuDs scheme is to be implemented, the submitted details shall:

a) provide information about the design storm period and intensity, the method employed to delay and control the surface water discharged from the site and the measures taken to prevent pollution of the receiving groundwater and / or surface waters; and

b) specify the responsibilities of each party for the implementation of the SuDs scheme, together with a timetable for that implementation; and

c) provide a management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development which shall include the arrangements for adoption by any public authority or statutory undertaker or any other arrangements to secure the operation of the scheme throughout its lifetime.

The scheme shall be implemented, maintained and managed in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: To ensure that adequate and sustainable drainage facilities are provided, and to prevent any increased risk of flooding.

6 The facilities hereby approved shall not be open for use outside of the hour's 8.00am to 8.00pm Monday to Friday and 8.00am to 1.00pm Saturdays and not at all on Sunday.

REASON: To safeguard the amenity of neighbouring residents.

## **INFORMATIVES**

### **1 INFORMATIVE:**

#### **SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR GRANT OF PLANNING PERMISSION:**

The decision to grant permission has been taken having regard to the policies and proposals in the Harrow Unitary Development Plan set out below, and to all relevant material considerations including any comments received in response to publicity and consultation, as outlined in the application report:

Harrow Unitary Development Plan:

SD1 Quality of Design

D4 Standard of Design and Layout

D5 New Residential Development – Amenity Space and Privacy

C7 New Education Facilities

SEP1 Energy Use and Conservation

EP7 Renewable Energy

EP10 Sustainable Urban Drainage-

T6 The Transport Impact Of Development Proposals

T13 Parking Standards

**2 INFORMATIVE:**

The applicant's attention is drawn to the requirements in the attached Considerate Contractor Code of Practice, in the interests of minimising any adverse effects arising from building operations, and in particular the limitations on hours of working.

**3 INFORMATIVE:**

In June 2006 Harrow Council adopted two Supplementary Planning Documents: "Access for All" and "Accessible Homes", containing design guidelines for the provision of safe and convenient access for all disabled groups. Both documents can be viewed on the Planning pages of Harrow Council's website - the URL address is <http://www.harrow.gov.uk/ccm/content/housing-and-planning/planning/news-letter.en>

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**MAIN CONSIDERATIONS AND POLICIES (2004 UDP)«INNERQUERYBEGIN»**

- 1) Effect on the townscape of the locality (D4, C7)
- 2) Neighbouring Residential Amenity (D5)
- 3) Parking Standards/ Transport Impact (T6, T13)
- 4) S17 Crime & Disorder Act
- 5) Consultation Responses

**INFORMATION**

The proposal was deferred from the last meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee so that the applicants could provide additional information on the proposed use of the Children's Centre. This information has now been included in the 'Applicant Statement' section of the report.

**a) Summary**

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Statutory Return Type: | Major development, all other                                  |
| Site Area:             | 2.0835.ha   |
| Car Parking:           | Standard: On merit within context of restraint based standard |
|                        | Justified: 34   |
|                        | Provided: 34 (current provision)                              |
| Council Interest:      | Freehold  |

**b) Site Description**

- The site has a broadly rectangular configuration and has a continuous boundary with the rear gardens of houses on Boxtree lane, Whittlesea Road and Stafford Road. The upper school entrance is at the northern entrance to the site on Whittlesea Road and the pupil entrance and the car parking entrance are at the north western corner of the site.
- The car park area is a narrow strip of land on the western side of the site between the playing fields and the rear gardens of houses on Whittlesea Road that becomes wider towards the southern end of the site. The existing buildings have a north-south orientation.
- The school dates from the 1940's and comprises a number of single storey flat roofed brick buildings (with the exception of the assembly hall and dining room that are effectively two storeys in height). The footprint has increased over the years by the addition of a number of mobile classroom

- units, but is set in large open spaces for recreational use.
- The Upper School entrance and the Lower school entrance that is at the southern end both have cramped, unsatisfactory reception areas. The access to the upper school is via an intercom system that allows access into the lobby and a further controlled door that leads into the school foyer where the school office is located. Access to the lower school is via a narrow path between two houses at the southern end of Whittlesea Road that leads into a tarmac playground.

**c) Proposal Details**

- Erection of single storey children's centre at north western end of the site to include new nursery towards Whittlesea Road frontage, part demolition of school administration building and provision of free standing 'feature wall' on remainder of northern boundary, together with new planting to provide screening.

**d) Relevant History**

None recorded.

**e) Applicant Statement**

- It is proposed to build a children's centre and a 52 place nursery towards the north western end of the site, one of nine Government 'Sure Start' schemes that is scheduled to be built in schools across the borough by 2008.
- The object of the scheme is to provide pre school 'early learning' for children and a resource centre supervised by childminders in which parents would have a participatory role in educational and play activity.
- On 31 August the Cedars First and Middle Schools are to be discontinued by the Council under the provisions of S29 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and are to be amalgamated into a new community primary school with effect from 1 September 2007. This will mean that henceforth the number of forms will be reduced from three to two and the total number of pupils will decrease by 180.
- The preferred site location was chosen because it is an open area that has an active frontage on Whittlesea Road.
- This has necessitated rotating the year bases within the school in which the early years block would be moved towards the northern entrance to be near to the proposed children's centre and the upper years block would be moved to the southern part of the site. The Council would carry out the work, which would not involve any extensions or alterations requiring planning permission.
- The new shared walk in entrance will replace the existing two separate entrances to the school, providing a clearer and more cohesive entrance to the site as a consequence of the reorganisation of the school, replacing the existing facilities that are scattered across the site.
- The new nursery within the children's centre will supersede the existing nursery that is located in the middle of the site and is separated from the reception years classroom, raising security problems in relation to parental access. Furthermore, the existing nursery is undersized and does not meet current standards.
- In the proposed scheme the under 4's Pre School, nursery and reception

years will be unified at the northern entrance to the site. This will involve bringing the existing reception area from the south western corner of the site to the northern, walk in area, thereby reducing movement within the site and reducing the potential for unauthorised access to take place. The existing under 4's pre school facility is prone to subsidence and is generally dilapidated.

- Existing galvanised palisade fencing on northern boundary to be replaced by 'feature wall' and landscaped screening to provide a softer appearance to the site that would complement the human scale of the children's/nursery facility.
- The wall 'knits into' the new entrance by creating a framed walkway into the school complex. The entrance foyer is of equal height to the assembly hall and has an over-sailing roof that articulates the entrance as a focal point. The roof to the children's centre wraps in front of the new entrance, encompassing and giving unity to the centre, the entrance, the freestanding wall and the retained assembly building.
- The children's centre and nursery is designed with curved interlocking roofs separated by a hidden flat roof that has large glazed roof lights. On the Whittlesea Road frontage the new building would have a curved mono pitched roof with varying roof levels. Two of the roofs would have a sedum finish, which, in environmental terms is one of the positive aspects of the development because it would mean that water discharge to local sewers would be reduced by an estimated 50 to 75%.
- Proposed development will have a sustainable, environmentally friendly design. The building will have a timber frame construction, sourced from local forestry sources and the windows will have solar shading through the design of the large overhanging eaves. The building will be heated via condensing boilers installed under the flooring with controllable thermostats to each room.
- Building will be designed to meet current acoustic standards so that noise levels are minimised.
- Because the two schools are to be amalgamated car travel to and from the site is expected to decline. The children's centre is to be a local community resource and users will travel on foot.
- Additional security features will enhance existing arrangements. The school boundary abuts the rear gardens of adjoining houses. The school has only three areas of connection with existing highways and 2m high non-climbable metal fencing will continue the main northern building line.
- CCTV cameras and panic buttons are to be installed in the reception areas. They will be linked to the Council's control room in the Civic Centre. The adjacent main entrance overlooks both the school and children's centre reception areas and the outer doors are operated from there by electronic release.
- The proposed roof glazing will be laminated glass and not the polycarbonate sheeting that is the roof cladding of the existing buildings, as it has been reported in the past that access has been gained to the roofs outside school hours.
- Facility will be accessible and will comply with Part M of the Building Regulations and DFES Building Bulletin 91.

The children's centre will have hours of operation from 8am to 8pm

weekdays and 8am to 1pm Saturdays.

- The Children's Centre will not be admitting any additional Early Provision beyond that which is already in place, which comprises
  - i) A voluntary pre-school for 16 children in the morning and the afternoon
  - ii) The school Nursery class
  - iii) The school reception classes
- The pre-school class has operated from a classroom within the school for the past three months. Previously it met at the Cedars Youth Centre.
- It is anticipated that the staffing of the new Children's Centre will comprise a manager, an administrator, children's information staff x 3, along with staff who will be providing specific services, such as a midwife, health visitor and a librarian. Overall staffing numbers would be small, broadly within a range of 3 to 13.
- The travel pattern and levels of car usage associated with the new facility are not expected to alter. This is because the Government 's objective for 'Sure Start' children's centres is that they are a localised facility which provides services for families within 'pram pushing distance', which is assessed as roughly a mile or a twenty minute walk from the site. For this reason the service is provided with the expectation that users will not necessarily have the use of a car. This is consonant with HUDP policies on sustainable development.
- In this respect, the services provided on the site on Saturday mornings, i.e. outside the normal hours of operation of an educational facility, will be those where car users can use the existing staff car parking area. It is anticipated that in such circumstances e.g. a training course, the maximum number of users would not exceed 25.
- The current footprint of the site is 5,108.9m<sup>2</sup>. Demolition and the removal of the temporary portacabins at the south eastern corner of the site will result in a reduction in the overall footprint of the site by 312m<sup>2</sup> to 4,796.9m<sup>2</sup>.
- The proposed Children's Centre, a separate facility from the school but reached from the new shared entrance, will have a footprint of 525m<sup>2</sup> including 65m<sup>2</sup> of floor space for the shared entrance to the school, and 125m<sup>2</sup> for the nursery.
- There are three similar, designated centres in Harrow already. They are at Hillview, Grange and Stanmore Park. Whitefriars Children's Centre and Chandos Children's Centre are currently at the construction stage. These Centre's and the proposed scheme need to be open to meet the Government's minimum requirements. These are that Children's Centres be open for at least 10 hours per day, 48 hours per week, and at least 5 days a week. This is why Saturday morning usage is requested along with hours of opening until 8.00 pm on weekdays. These hours reflect the Government's emphasis on continuous usage and access for the local community.

**f) Consultations:**

**Advertisement:** | General Notification | Expiry: 06-04-07

**Notifications:**

Sent: 16                      Replies: 0                      Expiry: 06-04-07

**Summary of Response:**

None received.

**APPRAISAL**

**1) Effect on the townscape of the locality**

The proposed building is of a similar height and scale as the existing school buildings and can be easily contained within the existing footprint of the site. It is not considered therefore that the building would be visually obtrusive in the townscape of the locality.

Nor is the design of the building regarded as being out of keeping with the character and appearance of the school buildings which are of a functional and rather bland nature, whereas the proposed development is a lively, well articulated design that employs a varied palette of materials that are environmentally friendly. The appearance of the building will be enhanced by the replacement of the existing galvanised palisade boundary fencing by the 'feature wall' and by the quality of the elevational treatment of the new buildings. As such the design and appearance of the proposal complies with the advice in HUDP Policy D4.

**2) Neighbouring Residential Amenity**

The school site is surrounded by housing but is set in lavish grounds that extend around the core of the buildings. The nearest houses are a distance of roughly 24m from the area where the children centre would be built. Because of this and the fact that the proposed buildings are effectively one and a half storey in height, the proposal would not have any harmful effect on the existing amenity of residential properties on the far side of the Whittlesea Road frontage to the north of the site. Therefore no conflict with HUDP Policy D5 would arise.

**3) Parking/Highway Issues**

The proposed development would greatly enhance the existing facilities on site for staff, pupils and parents. The additional facilities do not involve an increase in the school intake; indeed, the reorganisation of the school in the autumn will mean that the overall complement of pupils will decrease and, it is likely, as a consequence of the reorganisation that the number of car trips to and from the school will also decrease. Therefore no additional parking space would be needed and no conflict with HUDP Policy T13 would arise.

**4) S17 Crime & Disorder Act**

The open design of the new buildings, e.g. the generous use of glazing, that provides natural surveillance of entrances and focal points in the site, along with the additional security arrangements that are proposed would enhance both the existing and the proposed facilities within the site, particularly in terms of concern for the vulnerability to crime of the existing flat roofed buildings. This is in line with the advice in 'Secure By Design' and 'Safer Places'.

**5) Consultation Responses:**

Apart from the points raised in the above sections, other issues raised are:

- None received

**CONCLUSION**

For all the reasons considered above, and weighing up the development plan policies and proposals, and other material considerations, including any comments received in response to publicity and consultation, as set out above this application is recommended for grant.