

**AMESBURY: PROPOSED SINGLE STOREY CHILDREN'S CENTRE AT  
AMESBURY CHURCH OF ENGLAND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED PRIMARY SCHOOL,  
KITCHENER ROAD, FOR WILTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL  
(Application No. S.06.8020)**

**Purpose of report**

1. To consider the above application and to recommend that planning permission for a new Children's Centre be granted subject to conditions.

**The Site**

2. Amesbury Primary School is located off Kitchener Road in the centre of the town of Amesbury. It is proposed to locate the Children's Centre to the north of the main school building where it would be easily accessible and visible to potential users of the Centre. The site at present constitutes a tarmac playground area, random car parking facilities and a number of mobile classrooms sited on hard-surfaced areas. There are residential properties to the north-west beyond Kitchener Road and the site is separated from the adjacent highway by a brick retaining wall, wire fence and a number of mature trees. It sits at a lower level to the road, sloping downwards to the south-east towards the main school buildings. The school playing field is located to the north-east.
3. The designated Amesbury Conservation Area is located to the south-west of the application area and the site is also within 350 metres of the River Avon Special Area of Conservation (SAC) which is afforded protection under the Habitats Regulations (1994).
4. A location plan is attached at **Appendix 1** and a site plan at **Appendix 2**.

**Planning History**

5. In brief the history of the site is as follows:

<u>S.03.1448</u>	In 2003 planning permission was granted for a County proposal for a new sports hall and supporting accommodation at Amesbury Infants School.
<u>S.05.8004</u>	In 2005 planning permission was granted for a County proposal for the retention of a single mobile classroom with toilets at Amesbury Infants School.
<u>S.06.8018</u>	In 2006 planning permission was granted for a County proposal for the replacement of glazed curtain walling to the front elevation of the assembly hall at Amesbury Primary School.

## **The Proposal**

6. Sure Start Children's Centres are at the centre of the Government's *Every Child Matters: Change for Children Programme* which seeks to provide support for families with children under the age of five.
7. Amesbury Primary School has been selected as a site for a Children's Centre because Amesbury has been identified as being in the top 70% of the most disadvantaged areas in the country. It has been judged as being well placed for the delivery of services not only for the children and families of Amesbury but to co-ordinate outreach across the Amesbury community area. The Children's Centre would provide a range of multi-agency services covering aspects of Early Years Provision, family support and parental outreach, child and family health services, parental involvement and links with Jobcentre Plus.
8. The Centre would provide new accommodation for an existing Early Years provider already operating from a mobile on the school site. The proposal includes a large meeting room that would be available for use by childminding networks, community groups, health and social workers to meet families and a space to allow drop-in services for parents and carers. In addition there would be an interview room for private consultations and office/reception accommodation for staff.
9. Additional car parking spaces, including disabled parking, are proposed to accommodate the Centre Manager and visiting professionals.

## **Planning Policy**

10. The following policies are considered relevant to this application:
  - Policy DP1 of the Adopted Wiltshire Structure Plan 2016
  - Policies C10, CN8, D3, G1, G2, PS1, PS5, PS6, R5 and TR1 of the Adopted Salisbury District Local Plan (June 2003)
11. All relevant planning policies are set out in the attached **Appendix 3**.

## **Consultations**

12. **Salisbury District Council** – no objections but states that conditions pertaining to traffic calming, hours of operation and materials should be attached to any permission granted.
13. **Amesbury Town Council** – no objections.
14. **Countryside Section** – no objections to the proposal but requests more information relating to landscaping and tree protection and that a Construction Method Statement (CMS) be submitted in order to demonstrate 'no likely significant effect' on the River Avon SAC.
15. **Highways Development Control** – no objections but raises concerns regarding the additional car parking and the need for a Travel Plan.
16. **County Archaeologist** – no objections.
17. Copies of consultation replies referred to above are available for inspection in the **Members' Room**.

## **Publicity**

18. The application has been advertised in the local press and by notices displayed on site. A neighbour notification exercise was also carried out. Three letters of representation have been received raising the objections and concerns outlined below:

- (i) Materials
- (ii) Hours of operation
- (iii) Traffic generation
- (iv) Car parking
- (v) Location of the building within the school site
- (vi) Layout of building

19. Copies of the representations received are available in the **Members' Room**.

## **Planning Considerations**

20. This planning application must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
21. Local residents and Salisbury District Council have expressed concern regarding traffic connected with the Amesbury School site. The need to introduce traffic calming measures to address the existing vehicular congestion cannot be reasonably managed through this planning application. Highways Development Control has not objected to the proposal on the grounds of an inadequate or dangerous access. The proposal site and existing school is well served by the footpath network and local bus services. The planning application proposes four additional car parking spaces and four disabled bays. It is anticipated that staff within the building would be predominantly locally employed, but this element of parking would be provided for visiting staff such as travelling health visitors and specialist teachers. It is understood that there is a pressing need to move away from car trips and encourage parents and pupils to walk to school, hence the formulation of a revised School Travel Plan (STP) to encompass the new Children's Centre development is expected. Officers will encourage the formulation and implementation of a revised STP at Amesbury Primary School in conjunction with the STP Advisor for Salisbury District. This approach is in accordance with Policy TR1 of the Salisbury District Local Plan.
22. The Children's Centre has been proposed in this location following consideration of the planning constraints on the site, topography, safe access, recreational need and its functional relationship with the school itself. The building has been designed to meet the criteria set out by the Government as detailed in the submitted Design and Access Statement. The proposal includes a large meeting room that would be available for use by childminding networks, community groups, health and social workers to meet families and a space to allow drop-in services for parents and carers. The initial application documents proposed a metal roof for the Children's Centre but following objections by residents the proposal has been revised to incorporate a Decra Parctile roof. The selection of alternative materials was limited due to the need to keep the pitch of the roof as low as possible to reduce any impact on adjacent residents. The Decra material offers an appearance of a traditional concrete pantile which will be more in keeping with the surrounding buildings. Due to its distance from the boundary of the designated Amesbury Conservation Area, officers consider that the proposal would not have a negative impact on its character and that the new Children's Centre would accord with design Policy D3.

23. Policy PS1 of the adopted Salisbury District Local Plan supports proposals for health and community facilities in line with Structure Plan Policy DP1 which promotes the viability and vitality of local communities. Policy G2 of the Local Plan states that new development should avoid unduly disturbing adjoining dwellings. In accordance with this policy, the operating hours of the Children's Centre would be restricted to between 8.00 am and 6.00 pm Monday to Friday. The proposed operating hours, together with the low profile design of the building and screening afforded by existing trees along the site boundary, would minimise the impact on the amenity of the neighbouring properties.
24. The proposal site sits partly within land designated under Policy R5 as land protected for recreational open space. The application is considered to be in accordance with Policy R5 as the recreational land that would be lost to development would be retained and enhanced through the redevelopment of an area adjacent to the proposed building forming a number of new formal tarmac play spaces.
25. The County Landscape Officer does not object to the proposal but requested more information relating to landscaping and tree protection and that a CMS be submitted in order to demonstrate 'no likely significant effect' on the River Avon SAC. The applicant has submitted a CMS which satisfactorily outlines the measures that would be put in place to protect the River Avon SAC and plans illustrating new planting and tree protection measures. Consequently, officers consider the proposal to accord with Local Plan Policy C10.

### **Conclusion**

26. In view of the above, it is considered that the proposal is fully compatible with Development Plan Policy and there are no other overriding planning considerations to warrant a refusal of planning permission.

### **Recommendation**

27. That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:
1. The development hereby granted shall commence within three years of the date of this permission.  
  
*Reason: To comply with Section 51(1) of the Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.*
  2. No development shall take place until samples of materials to be used in the construction of the development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. Development shall be in accordance with approved details.  
  
*Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.*
  3. The Children's Centre shall be occupied only between the hours of 8.00 am and 6.00 pm Monday to Friday.  
  
*Reason: To safeguard the amenity of adjacent residents.*

4. If development works commence on site between mid-February and the end of August, an ornithological survey of the part of the hedge to be removed shall be carried out to assess the presence of nesting birds. The results of the survey and any mitigation shall be agreed in writing with the County Planning Authority.

*Reason: In the interests of wildlife conservation.*

5. All existing trees and shrubs shall be retained unless shown on the approved drawing 2979-01 Rev C as being removed. All trees and shrubs on and immediately adjoining the site shall be protected from damage during the course of works on the site. This shall be in accordance with the relevant British Standards (BS 5837:2005). In the event that trees become damaged or otherwise defective during such period the County Planning Authority shall be notified within seven days and a programme of remedial action shall be submitted for approval and thereafter implemented as approved.

*Reason: To ensure the continuity of amenity afforded by existing trees and hedges.*

6. Within three months of this permission a scheme of landscaping shall be submitted for the written approval of the County Planning Authority. Details of tree and shrub planting shall indicate the position or density, species and planting size. The approved scheme shall be implemented in accordance with those approved details in the first available planting season following completion of the development.

*Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and wildlife conservation.*

7. Trees, shrubs and hedges planted in accordance with the approved scheme shall be maintained and any plants which within five years of planting die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species.

*Reason: To ensure the continuity of amenity afforded by existing trees and hedges.*

**GEORGE BATTEN**

Director of Environmental Services

Report Author

**MARI WEBSTER**

Senior Planning Officer

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**The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this Report:**

Consultation replies and correspondence