

A01

F/TH/22/0732

PROPOSAL: Change of use from retail (Use Class E(a)) to a digital technology and education campus (Use Class F1a) with ancillary cafe facilities and co-working / studio space, cycle storage, refuse storage together with installation of plant at roof level, and elevational refurbishments

LOCATION:

53 - 57 High Street MARGATE Kent CT9 1DX

WARD: Margate Central

AGENT: Mr Reece Lemon

APPLICANT: EKC Group

RECOMMENDATION: Approve

Subject to the following conditions:

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

GROUND:

In accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Purchase Act 2004).

2 The proposed development shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted application and the approved drawings numbered 08695-LEP-SC-00-DR-A-20015 PA02 (received 23/06/22), 08695-LEP-SC-01-DR-A-20016 Revision PA02 (received 23/06/22), 08695-LEP-SC-02-DR-A-20017 Revision PA02 (received 23/06/22), 08695-LEP-SC-03-DR-A-20018 Revision PA02 (received 23/06/22), 08695-LEP-SC-04-DR-A-20019 Revision PA02 (received 23/06/22) and 08695-LEP-SC-XX-DR-A-20035 Revision PA02 (received 23/06/22)

GROUND:

To secure the proper development of the area.

3 The use hereby permitted shall only be carried out between the hours of 6am and 11pm on any given day.

GROUND:

To safeguard the residential amenities currently enjoyed by the occupiers of nearby residential properties in accordance with Policy QD03 of the Thanet Local Plan.

4 All external roof top mechanical plant hereby permitted shall only be operated between the hours of 7am and 11pm on any day

GROUND

To safeguard the residential amenities currently enjoyed by the occupiers of nearby residential properties in accordance with Policy QD03 of the Thanet Local Plan.

5 Noise from the running/operation of any mechanical plant shall not exceed at the façade of the nearest noise sensitive receptors: 44 dB LAr (day-time) / 45 dB LAr (up to 20.00 hrs) and 39 dB LAr (20.00 to 23.00hrs). All measurements shall be defined and derived in accordance with BS4142: 2014

GROUND

To safeguard the residential amenities currently enjoyed by the occupiers of nearby residential properties in accordance with Policy QD03 of the Thanet Local Plan.

6 An acoustic assessment of compliance with condition 5 shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority no later than two months after commencement of the operation of the development hereby permitted.

GROUND

To safeguard the residential amenities currently enjoyed by the occupiers of nearby residential properties in accordance with Policy QD03 of the Thanet Local Plan.

7 The area shown on ground floor plan 08695-LEP-SC-00-DR-A-20015 PA01 adjacent to ground floor windows to the High Street elevation shall be kept unobstructed of any internal structures to maintain views into the building.

GROUND

To maintain an active frontage and avoid visual fragmentation of the retail area to the detriment of the character of the area and the vitality and viability of the town centre, in accordance with Policies QD02 and E04 of the Thanet Local Plan.

INFORMATIVES

Information on how to appeal this planning decision or condition is available online at <https://www.gov.uk/appeal-planning-decision>

Please be aware that your project may also require a separate application for Building Control. Information can be found at:

<https://www.thanet.gov.uk/services/building-control/> or contact the Building Control team on 01843 577522 for advice.

This permission does not grant Listed Building Consent that may also be necessary for the development proposed.

It is important to note that planning permission does not convey any approval to carry out works on or affecting the public highway.

Any changes to or affecting the public highway in Kent require the formal agreement of the Highway Authority, Kent County Council (KCC), and it should not be assumed that this will

be a given because planning permission has been granted. For this reason, anyone considering works which may affect the public highway, including any highway-owned street furniture, is advised to engage with KCC Highways and Transportation at an early stage in the design process.

Across the county there are pieces of land next to private homes and gardens that do not look like roads or pavements but are actually part of the public highway. Some of this highway land is owned by Kent County Council whilst some is owned by third party owners. Irrespective of the ownership, this land may have highway rights over the topsoil.

Works on private land may also affect the public highway. These include works to cellars, to retaining walls which support the highway or land above the highway, and to balconies, signs or other structures which project over the highway. Such works also require the approval of the Highway Authority.

SITE, LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The application relates to a four storey building within Margate's High Street. The building fronts both the High Street and also Cecil Square and has pedestrian access from either side. The rear section of the building is Grade II listed (6-12 Cecil Square).

The site is located within the confines of the Margate Conservation Area.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

L/TH/20/1586 Application for Listed Building Consent for replacement roof. Granted 21/01/2021

F/TH/07/1710 Renewal of previous planning permission F/TH/06/0878 for the use of building as a library for a further 3 years. Granted 28/01/2008

F/TH/06/0878 Change of use from retail (Use Class A1) to Library (Use Class D1) Granted 06/09/2006

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Full planning consent is sought for the change of use from retail (Use Class E(a)) to a digital technology and education campus (Use Class F1a) with ancillary cafe facilities and co-working / studio space, cycle storage, refuse storage together with installation of plant at roof level, and elevational refurbishments.

Within the supporting Design and Access Statement it is detailed that Margate Digital are envisaged to deliver T Level, HND and HNC levels in the following areas:

- Animation and Illustration
- Architecture and Interiors
- Computing (programming, coding, app design)

Creative Digital Technologies

Fashion

Graphics and Design

Marketing and Advertising

TV and Film

The main pedestrian access to the Margate Digital will be from the High Street with a secondary pedestrian access from Cecil Square. Both access are currently existing. Pedestrian access to the Margate School will be via a new gated door on Cecil Square. This new access will also lead to a service area comprising refuse and cycle storage.

The proposed refurbishment of the elevations include:

- on both sides of the building: existing windows to be refurbished and repaired as required, replacement signage;
- on the High Street elevation: new glazed façade system to match existing at ground floor, new fire escape door at ground floor, new entrance doors at ground floor;
- on Cecil Square elevations: new metal entrance gate to service area, bike, and refuse store;
- at roof level: new feature skylight at roof level; new plant and enclosure.

The proposed development is as a result of Levelling Up funding allocated to Thanet District Council by Central Government.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

Thanet Local Plan 2020

SP10 - Margate

SP35 - Quality Development

SP36 - Conservation and Enhancement of Thanet's Historic Environment

SP43 - Safe and Sustainable Travel

E04 - Primary and Secondary Frontages

HE02 - Development in Conservation Areas

QD01 - Sustainable Design

QD02 - General Design Principles

QD03 - Living Conditions

TP02 - Walking

TP03 - Cycling

TP06 - Car Parking

NOTIFICATIONS

Letters were sent to adjoining occupiers, a site notice posted close to the site and an advertisement placed in the press. As a result one letter of representation has been received. This details the following concerns:

- Conflict with local plan
- Inadequate access

- Inadequate public transport provisions
- Provision for cycle storage and parking is insufficient
- Green energy should be designed into the development at this stage

CONSULTATIONS

Kent County Council Highways: I refer to the above planning application and consider that there are no highway implications associated with the proposals.

This proposal is unlikely to generate a material increase in demand for on street parking when measured against existing use. The surrounding highways are subject to waiting restrictions and pay and display parking bays, and the site is well located in relation to public car parks and sustainable transport links. Therefore I do not wish to oppose this change of use.

TDC Environmental Health: The supporting acoustic report dated 21st June 2022 carried out by Sharps Redmore has been reviewed and EH offer the following comments and recommendations.

The assessment has been carried out by a competent acoustic consultant in accordance with appropriate methodologies and against relevant impact assessment criteria. The report has established acceptable limits and recommendations on mitigation needed to achieve these. Therefore the conditions are recommended in relation to the hours of use and plan and ducting systems.

TDC Conservation Officer: 53 - 57 High Street Margate is a substantial building located centrally to Margate's main commercial high street as well as being present within the conservation area. It is also partially listed, with the focus of significance being to the facade of the elevation facing onto Cecil Square under the listing reference 1088991.

Thanet's Local Plan, policy HE02, states within Section 7 'The character, scale and plan form of the original building are respected and the development is subordinate to it and does not dominate principal elevations.' As well as Section 8 which states 'Appropriate materials and detailing are proposed and the development would not result in the loss of features that contribute to the character or appearance of the conservation area. New development which would detract from the immediate or wider landscape setting of any part of a conservation area will not be permitted.'

NPPF Section 16, Paragraph 197 states, In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of (c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Under the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990, Section 16 Paragraph 2 it states In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Internally there is very little of historic importance to the property, the focus of the listing designation to the Cecil Square elevation of the site under the address 6-12, Cecil Square of

which this site is incorporated into. To this elevation there are limited changes, with the existing windows and facade to largely be refurbished. New doors are proposed at ground level to replace those existing and enable a usable fire escape from the property.

The elevation facing onto the high street also has minimal changes resulting in a neutral to positive implication on the setting and appearance of the surrounding conservation area. The windows are being repaired where possible and the shop front replaced to match existing. This elevation is not listed so the significance of this elevation is slightly lesser, although its implication to the conservation is still relevant. With this in mind it would appear through the minimal change proposed that preservation of its setting and appearance has been considered.

Air vents and other services required to facilitate the functioning of the building have been kept out of sight to internal elevations which cannot be seen from the public realm. This is a positive as they could appear negatively amongst the surrounding historical environment.

On both elevations the scheme proposed to install new signage to the building. I am happy for this in principle, however, greater detail needs to be submitted detailing exactly how large this will be as this will dictate how it will be perceived amongst the context of the historic environment. I am happy for this element to be further submitted through the condition process.

In principle I largely support the conversion and renovation of this building through this application as it will ensure its continued maintenance and sustained use, which will subsequently ensure the protection and preservation of the listed aspects of this site. In conclusion I believe that the proposed use is appropriate given the form, location and condition of the building as it will improve its overall appearance and preserve its historical integrity for the foreseeable.

Kent Police - Applicants/agents should consult us as Designing out Crime Officers (DOCO's) to address CPTED and incorporate Secured By Design (SBD) as appropriate. We use details of the site, relevant crime levels/type and intelligence information to help design out the opportunity for Crime, Fear of Crime, Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), Nuisance and Conflict.

There is a carbon cost for crime and new developments give an opportunity to address it. Using CPTED along with attaining an SBD award using SBD guidance, policies and academic research would be evidence of the applicants' efforts to design out the opportunity for crime.

We request a condition for this site to follow SBD guidance to address designing out crime to show a clear audit trail for Designing Out Crime, Crime Prevention and Community Safety and to meet our Local Authority statutory duties under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

1. Perimeter, boundary and divisional treatments must be 1.8m high. Any alleyways/ side entrances must have secure side gates, which are lockable from both sides, located flush to the front building line to optimise surveillance to prevent anyone other than those permitted to access the communal areas.

2. Parking - To help address vehicle crime, security should be provided for Motorbikes, Mopeds, Electric bikes and similar. SBD or sold secure ground or wall anchors can help provide this. To minimise the opportunity for crime, vehicle should be parked in areas with natural surveillance, where they can be seen from an "active" window. We strongly advise access controlled gates be installed if possible with access via a fob/ pin to prevent unauthorised access, nuisance parking, misuse and conflict.
3. For cycle storage, we advise on the use of ground/ wall SBD or sold secure anchors within a lockable shed or storage area. Bin storage must also be secure with access control.
4. All external doorsets (a doorset is the door, fabrication, hinges, frame, installation and locks) including internal flat entrance and individual bedroom doors to meet PAS 24: 2016 UKAS certified standard, STS 201 or LPS 2081 Security Rating B+. Please Note, PAS 24 2012 tested for ADQ (Building Regs) has been superseded and is not suitable for this development.
5. Windows on the ground floor or potentially vulnerable e.g. from flat roofs or balconies to meet PAS 24: 2016 UKAS certified standard, STS 204 Issue 6:2016, LPS 1175 Issue 8:2018 Security Rating 1/A1, STS 202 Issue 7:2016 Burglary Rating 1 or LPS 2081 Issue 1.1:2016 Security Rating A. Glazing to be laminated. Toughened glass alone is not suitable for security purposes.
6. Mail delivery to meet SBD TS009 are strongly recommended with a freestanding post box of SBD/Sold Secure approved Gold standard, unless there will be dedicated personnel for accepting mail.
7. Lighting. Please note, whilst we are not qualified lighting engineers, any lighting plan should be approved by a professional lighting engineer (e.g. a Member of the ILP), particularly where a lighting condition is imposed, to help avoid conflict and light pollution. Bollard lighting should be avoided, SBD Homes 2019 states:
"18.3 Bollard lighting is purely for wayfinding and can be easily obscured. It does not project sufficient light at the right height making it difficult to recognise facial features and as a result causes an increase in the fear of crime. It should be avoided."
Lighting of all roads including main, side roads, cul de sacs and car parking areas should be to BS5489-1:2020 in accordance with SBD and the British Parking Association (BPA) Park Mark Safer Parking Scheme specifications and standards. TBC
8. Access Control and Security Compartmentalisation is required to segregate areas used by the school and the EKC Group. It is vital that members of the public cannot freely walk around the building, they must be let in via reception and must be limited to what areas they can access.
9. CCTV is advised for all entry points to monitor who enters/ exits the premises. Additional areas we could recommend CCTV would be the communal external space, parking areas, stairwells, doors which join from areas used by the EKC group and the school.
10. We also recommend intruder alarms be fitted on each external door, preferably with an auto-dial function.

If approved, site security is required for the construction phase. There is a duty for the principle contractor "to take reasonable steps to prevent access by unauthorised persons to the construction site" under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007. The site security should incorporate plant, machinery, supplies, tools and other vehicles and be site specific to geography and site requirements.

COMMENTS

This application is referred to the Planning Committee as it is contrary to policy E04 (Primary and Secondary Frontages) and furthermore the building is under the ownership of the Council.

The main considerations in assessing the submitted scheme are the principle of development, the impact upon the character and appearance of the area, the impact upon living conditions of neighbouring property occupiers and the impact upon highway safety.

Principle

In line with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2014, planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the 'development plan' unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are a significant material consideration in this regard.

The application relates to 53-57 High Street Margate, a four storey building within the core town centre of Margate and within both the primary (High Street) and secondary (Cecil Square) frontages as well as being within a primary shopping area as identified by the Local Plan.

This application proposes the change of use of the building from retail to to a digital technology and education campus (Use Class F1a) with ancillary cafe facilities and co-working / studio space as well as some external works.

Policy SP10, which relates specifically to Margate, this policy states the Local Planning Authority will direct main town centre uses to the town centre area in accordance with policies E04 and E05.

Policy E04 states that within the Primary Frontages the following development will be permitted:

- 1) Use Classes falling within A1, A2, A3, A4 and A5.
- 2) residential and other main town centre uses will be permitted above ground floor level only.

Within the Secondary Frontages the uses referred to in the preceding clauses will be permitted at ground and upper floor level where this would not fragment or erode the active frontages to a degree that would undermine the function of the centre.

The preamble to the policy notes the importance of retail uses being close together and not fragmented in terms of their positions, with concerns that non-retail businesses in primary shopping areas reduces the range of shops, and thereby potentially reducing the number of people visiting the centre, as well as making the centre less compact and therefore less convenient. The context to the policy also does note that town centres perform a greater function than just retail centres. They are hubs of the community and encompass cultural, leisure, arts and heritage uses that in turn support the tourism industry.

The primary retail/town centre frontage is along the High Street frontage not the Cecil Square frontage, although this is a secondary frontage. Due to the nature of the proposal; that it proposes a non-retail use at ground floor in a primary frontage it would directly conflict with this policy.

It is recognised that this is a large retail unit within Margate in a key position within the High Street. Furthermore its position within the Conservation Area and the rear section being listed, as well as being currently vacant, also weigh in the planning balance.

The agent has clarified that for safeguarding and security reasons public access to the site would be limited. However, as the main access into the building for students, staff and visitors would be from the High Street elevation, meaning that the building would be in active use. In addition the ground floor elevation would still have a glazed treatment to the High Street and from the street pedestrians walking past would be able to see into the building. The applicant's agent has also confirmed that there would be no shutters installed that would inhibit this. It is acknowledged that the proposed use would increase footfall to the site over existing levels (as a vacant unit), with students and staff accessing the site increasing the economic activity within this section of High Street from linked trips (visiting other businesses when attending the site). Therefore the proposed use, whilst contrary to E04, would result in an economic benefit to the town centre.

It is also appreciated that the proposed use would fall within Class F of the Use Classes Order. Within Class F other uses include museums, public libraries, places of worship or law courts. In general terms these other uses would be classed as town centre uses, although it is appreciated that education type uses are normally located around housing, although further education uses can be located within specific town centre sites although not necessarily in the primary shopping areas.

Taking the above into account, whilst there is a clear conflict with the policy, positive weight is given to the economic benefits of the use to the High Street, bringing the building back into active use within a Conservation area, and the presence of an active front facade (with a window that pedestrians will be able to look into).

In summary the proposed development would be contrary to Policy EC5 however the development would be an acceptable departure from the policy subject to the detailed consideration of all other material issues including the impact upon the character and appearance of the area, living conditions of neighbouring and future property occupiers and highways matters.

Character and Appearance

The site is located within the Conservation Area. The Council must therefore take into account Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which requires that in relation to conservation areas, 'special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area.' Paragraph 197 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local planning authorities to take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage

assets, and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. The NPPF requires that where a development causes substantial harm, or less than substantial harm but where the harm is not outweighed by public benefit, permission should be refused.

Policy HE02 of the Thanet Local Plan requires that appropriate materials and detailing are proposed and that developments would not result in the loss of features that contribute to the character or appearance of the conservation area. New development which would detract from the immediate or wider landscape setting of any part of a conservation area will not be permitted.

Paragraph 130 of the NPPF states decisions should ensure that developments will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping, sympathetic to local character and history, establish or maintain a strong sense of place, and optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible. Policy QD02 of the Thanet Local Plan outlines that the primary aim of new development is to promote or reinforce local character and provide high quality and inclusive design that is sustainable in all other respects. Proposals should therefore relate to surrounding development, form and layout, be well designed, pay particular attention to context and identity of location, scale, massing, rhythm, density, layout and materials, and be compatible with neighbouring buildings and spaces. Any external spaces and landscape features should be designed as an integral part of the scheme.

The application site is located within Margate High Street which is characterised by three and four storey buildings with commercial uses and shop fronts at ground floor level and office/storage/residential uses above. The application property is a mid terrace building with a shopfront at ground floor level (High Street side). The building fronting the High Street is more modern than the Cecil Square frontage, which is traditional in style constructed in red brickwork with traditional fenestration. Window openings to the ground floor have been blocked up save for one pedestrian doorway.

The application proposes on both elevation the existing windows to be refurbished and repaired as required and replacement signage. As this is refurbishment work there is no objection. The advertisements proposed may require advertisement consent when their precise nature is known, with deemed advertisement consent outlined within the Advertisement Regulations 2007.

In terms of alterations to the High Street elevation, a new fire escape door installed to the side of the existing main entrance doors with new entrance doors to be installed. In general terms the changes proposed are not dissimilar to the existing shopfront and whilst a new fire escape door is proposed this would not appear out of character with the front facade or the wider Conservation Area.

As outlined above in the principle section, the proposal includes the retention of large shopfront windows with views into the teaching space. To ensure that this visibility into the building is retained as an important feature of the building in this High Street location, it is

considered appropriate to condition the floor plans of the development to restrict the ability to insert internal structures within close proximity of the window.

In terms of the Cecil Square elevation it is proposed to replace the fire escape doors, insert new metal entrance gate to service area, bike, and refuse store is proposed as well as new feature skylight at roof level; new plant and enclosure. The proposed fire escape door is not dissimilar to the existing and the alterations at roof level would not be clearly visible from the street scene. The new gates to the service area would be seen - at the current this is an arched opening with roller shutter inset. The use of metal entrance gates is considered to be more sympathetic to the Conservation Area. It is therefore considered the works would not impact negatively on the building or wider Conservation Area.

It is confirmed that the Conservation Officer does not raise an objection to the proposal.

As the proposal involves the installation of a gate to the pedestrian access off Cecil Square, new plant at roof level in the rear section of the building as well as internal changes, listed building consent will be required for these elements to assess the impact on the significance of the designated heritage asset.

The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with Policies SP35, SP36, HE02 and QD02 of the Thanet Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Living Conditions

Paragraph 119 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.

Local Plan policy QD03 is also relevant to this application. Policy QD03 (Living Conditions) states that All new development should be compatible with neighbouring buildings and spaces and not lead to the unacceptable living conditions through overlooking, noise or vibration, light pollution, overshadowing, loss of natural light or sense of enclosure. 2) Be of appropriate size and layout with sufficient usable space to facilitate comfortable

The proposed building works in themselves would not harm neighbour amenity due to their nature and location.

In terms of the use, this has the potential to result in some level of harm due to the general activity and nature of the proposed use. It is acknowledged that this is a town centre location and a retail user could use this space without planning permission. There is therefore a general level of activity expected from the use and town centre location.

The application has been accompanied by an acoustic report. This identifies that the main noise impact will be from the mechanical plant on the roof to the closest noise sensitive premises which are residential. It details this impact will primarily only be day-time, but will require significant noise control of the associated air source heat pumps (ASHPs). The

associated relationship with adjacent premises are not anticipated to result in significant issues, once making good works have been completed to party walls

The Council's Environmental Health team have reviewed this report and consider that it establishes acceptable limits and recommendations on mitigation and as such no objection is raised subject to conditions relating to hours of use, hours of use for mechanical plant, noise level from operation of mechanical plant and the submission of an acoustic assessment of the noise from plant to establish compliance. This is considered reasonable.

The proposed development is, therefore, considered to be acceptable in terms of its impact on the living conditions of adjacent properties, in accordance with Policy QD03 of the Thanet Local Plan and paragraph 119 National Planning Policy Framework subject to safeguarding conditions.

The proposal includes an enclosed bin storage area that would not be visible from the street scene. This is considered suitable and would not result in harm to adjoining properties.

The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable with regards to residential amenity in regard to existing residents, and in terms of space standards and provision of gardens for future residents in accordance with Policy QD03 of the Thanet Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Transportation

Paragraph 110 of the NPPF states that In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that amongst other aims: a) appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be - or have been - taken up, given the type of development and its location and b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users.

Policy SP43 of the Local Plan states that the Council will work with developers, transport service providers, and the local community to manage travel demand, by promoting and facilitating walking, cycling and use of public transport as safe and convenient means of transport. Development applications will be expected to take account of the need to promote safe and sustainable travel. New developments must provide safe and attractive cycling and walking opportunities to reduce the need to travel by car. Whilst policy SP44 states development generating a significant number of trips will be expected to be located where a range of services are or will be conveniently accessible on foot, by cycle or public transport.

Under Policy QD01, all developments are required to: 1) Achieve a high standard of energy efficiency to the equivalent of Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes (subject to HE05 where applicable), 2) Make the best use of solar energy passive heating and cooling, natural light, natural ventilation and landscaping, 3) Provide safe and attractive cycling and walking opportunities to reduce the need to travel by car. Policy QD02 relates to general design principles and states amongst other principles that developments must incorporate a high degree of permeability for pedestrians and cyclists, provide safe and satisfactory access for pedestrians, public transport and other vehicles, ensuring provision for disabled access and Improve people's quality of life by creating safe and accessible environments, and promoting

public safety and security by designing out crime. Policy TP03 states new development will be expected to consider the need for the safety of cyclists and incorporate facilities for cyclists into the design of new and improved roads, junction improvements and traffic management proposals. Policy TP06 states that proposals for development will be expected to make satisfactory provision for the parking of vehicles, including disabled parking. Suitable levels of provision will be considered in relation to individual proposals taking account of the type of development, location, accessibility, availability of opportunities for public transport, likely accumulation of car parking, design considerations.

The application site is located within Margate Town Centre and as such, development is not required to provide off street parking provision in accordance with TP06. The site is in a highly sustainable location, in close proximity to a range of public transport and is sited close to a public car park. The proposal also makes provision for a secure cycle storage area for up to 16 bicycles. A representation has been received raising concerns about the number of spaces proposed but given the public transport options available in this location the provision is considered to be sufficient, with not no objection raised by KCC Highways.

The impact upon highway safety is therefore considered to be acceptable.

Other Matters

Kent Police have offered comments in relation to the proposal they have requested that a condition be attached to any approval for this site to be secured by design guidance. Whilst some matters cannot be addressed through the planning system such as doorsets and windows and could also have implications to the wider Conservation Area and Listed building. It is confirmed that the bicycle store will be secured. As this site will be used for education purposes; there will be a level of security into the building to safeguard access into the building and the welfare of the users.

Conclusion

The proposed change of use is in conflict with Local Plan policy E04 (primary and secondary frontages) however on this occasion the policy is weighted against the fact that an active frontage is retained subject to condition, this a large vacant retail unit within the Conservation Area with the rear section being listed. The reuse of this building would increase footfall to the site which would increase the economic activity in this section of the High Street through linked trips bringing a positive economic benefit. For these specific reasons it is not considered that the proposal would fragment the High Street to result in severe harm to the principles of Policy E04 or town centre strategy as enshrined in the Local Plan.

The proposed alterations and additions required to facilitate this change of use would not impact upon neighbours subject to conditions. Impacts relating to highway and crime matters are considered acceptable. It is therefore recommended that this application is approved as an acceptable departure to Policy E04.

Case Officer

Gill Richardson

TITLE:

F/TH/22/0732

Project

53 - 57 High Street MARGATE Kent CT9 1DX

