

For: PLANNING & REGULATION COMMITTEE – 3 DECEMBER 2012

By: DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY (STRATEGY & INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING)

Development Proposed:

Renewal of consent and continued use of two relocatable classroom units ref T1 (E223) & T3 (E237) for a further period of 5 years

Division Affected: Cowley

Contact Officer: Nick Fagan **Tel:** 01865-815584

Location: Church Cowley St James Primary School, Bartholomew Road, Oxford, Oxfordshire, OX4 3QH

Applicant: Oxfordshire County Council

Application No: R3.0158/12

Application received date: 13 September 2012

Consultation Period: 28 September – 19 October 2012

District Council Area: Oxford City

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Recommendation

The report recommends that the application be **approved**.

Part 1 – Facts & Background

Proposed Development & Site Location (see Plan 1 attached)

1. The School is located in this suburban residential street in Church Cowley. There are two mobile classrooms (one single and one double unit) at the rear of the school linked to it by a covered walkway. These classrooms are in good condition and provide high quality teaching floor space. They back onto the rear fence that separates the school from the houses in the two cul-de-sacs leading north of Van Diemens Lane. There is no access to the school from this southern side – all access is from the front on Bartholomew Road. The proposal is to retain these temporary classroom buildings for another 5 years.

Relevant Planning History

2. A number of permissions in the 1990s leading up to 2009 have been granted for temporary classrooms and canopies. In particular permission was renewed for T1 (E223) on 07 November 2008 and T3 (E237) on 25 May 2007. The free standing canopies at the rear of the school were granted permanent permission on 18 July 2011[R3.0070/11] and the boundary fencing was renewed under permission R3.0075/11 granted 29 July 2011.

Part 2 – Other Viewpoints

Representations

There have been no third party representations.

Consultations

3. Oxford City Council: Objection: “Whilst a need has been demonstrated for the retention of the buildings this need has been continuous for more than five years where, for the purpose of policy CP25 of the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016, short term is defined as up to five years. In this respect the City Council cannot continue to support the retention of the buildings as the proposal is contrary to policy CP25 in the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016.”
4. Transport DC Team: No objection to this application as proposed. There are no transport impacts or highway safety concerns for the continued use of two re-locatable classroom building units. Recommend an informative regarding School Travel Plan.

Part 3 – Relevant Planning Documents

Relevant Planning Policies

5. Planning applications should be decided in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

6. The following policy in the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 is particularly relevant:

POLICY CP.25 - TEMPORARY BUILDINGS

Planning permission will only be granted for temporary or portable buildings where short-term need has been clearly demonstrated, such as on sites already allocated for permanent development, buildings to house short-term or trial projects, to meet seasonal or peak demands, for urgent operational requirements, or in connection with major site development work.

Planning permission for temporary or portable buildings will not be granted where:

- a. buildings would adversely affect visual attractiveness, trees or parking provision; and
- b. proposals do not adequately address, where appropriate: landscaping; noise insulation; access for people with disabilities; relationship to existing buildings; prejudice future developments; access points; or provide a suitable external appearance.

Planning permissions for temporary buildings will be subject to a planning condition that requires the removal of the buildings within a specified time period.

The following policies are also relevant:

Oxford Local Plan Policies

- CP1 (key criteria for new development proposals).
- CP6 (requires development to make maximum & appropriate use of land).
- CP8 (sets out criteria required from development in order to respect its local context).
- CP10 (criteria required from development to ensure functional need is met).
- CP13 (requirement for adequate disabled access).
- HS19 (development to safeguard amenity of adjoining property).

Oxford Core Strategy (adopted March 2011)

- CS16 (access to education facilities).
- CS18 (sets out urban design principles & requires development to respect Oxford's unique townscape & historic environment).

7. There are no particular policies in the SE Plan or in the NPPF relevant to the determination of this application.

Part 4 – Analysis & Conclusions

Planning Analysis – Comments of the Deputy Director for Environment & Economy (Strategy & Infrastructure)

8. The area within which the school is situated is typical of mid-twentieth century suburban south Oxford. Its predominant character is determined by pairs of two-storey houses. The site and adjoining streets do not form part of a conservation area nor are there any nearby listed buildings or other heritage assets and so there is no impact on the visual attractiveness of the area, especially given the relocatable classrooms are well maintained and not unattractive. The portable classrooms are also situated at a lower level than the houses situated to the south and have no effect on them whatsoever in terms of overlooking, aspect or impact on their sunlight or daylight.
9. These classrooms provide good quality teaching space and are clearly relatively new. They are being maintained properly and there is no reason to require their removal. They have been successfully linked to the main school building by the rear free-standing canopies which allow ease of movement for pupils and teaching staff in inclement weather. They have no detrimental impact on the amenity of adjacent residents or character of the school or the surrounding area and there are therefore no grounds for refusing this application. The City Council is basing its comments on the supporting text to this policy [Paragraph 2.23.1 in the Local Plan] that states: *“for the purposes of this policy, short term is defined as up to five years”*. However, because they do not affect the visual attractiveness of the area and adequately address the relationships with adjoining houses it is not considered that they conflict with Policy CP.25, notwithstanding the City Council’s comments.

Conclusion

10. The proposal to retain these classrooms for a further 5 years is in the interests of the pupils of this school, does not harm any interests of acknowledged importance and complies with relevant development plan policies.

RECOMMENDATION

11. **It is RECOMMENDED that planning permission be approved for Application R3.0158/12 subject to conditions to be determined by the Deputy Director (Strategy & Infrastructure Planning) but to include the following:**
 1. **The development shall be carried out solely in accordance with details submitted with the application.**
 2. **Temporary buildings to be removed by 31 December 2017.**

Informative:

The Planning Application Justification Statement submitted with this planning application indicates a forecast increase in the number of pupils. An increase in the number of pupils is likely to have implications for the local transport and highway network and in the light of this an up-to date School Travel Plan should be produced. The applicant is advised to contact Oxfordshire County Council's Travel Choices and School Travel Plans Team who would assist in updating the plan.

MARTIN TUGWELL

Deputy Director for Environment & Economy (Strategy & Infrastructure Planning)

October 2012

