

REFERENCE NO - 15/500171/COUNTY			
APPLICATION PROPOSAL KCC Regulation 3 - Renewal of planning permission for retention of three mobile buildings for a further period of 5 years.			
ADDRESS St Georges Church Of England Primary School, Chequers Road, Minster-on-sea Kent ME12 3QU			
RECOMMENDATION – No Objection			
SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR NO OBJECTION The proposed retention of the mobile buildings for a further 5 years would provide an important community facility and would not impact unacceptably upon visual amenities			
REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE Recommendation contrary to Parish Council views			
WARD Sheppey Central	PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL Minster	APPLICANT Mr H Fisher AGENT Kent County Council	
DECISION DUE DATE 10/02/15	PUBLICITY EXPIRY DATE 10/02/15	OFFICER SITE VISIT DATE 29/01/2015	
RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY (including appeals and relevant history on adjoining sites):			
App No	Proposal	Decision	Date
SW/09/0851	The creation of a new Pre-School and Nursery facility together with a school extended hours club using three existing mobile classroom buildings on site.	No Objection	5/10/2009

MAIN REPORT

1.0 DESCRIPTION OF SITE

- 1.01 St Georges Church of England Primary School occupies a large broadly rectangular plot, measuring 145m x 210m.
- 1.02 The site is located on a shared access road off Chequers Road and abuts Minster Cricket Club to the west and residential properties to the north. The site is bounded by agricultural land to the south and east.
- 1.03 The main school buildings and car park are located to the west of the site, close to the site entrance. Three mobile buildings are located towards the central part of the site, with footpaths providing access from the hardstanding located around the main buildings.
- 1.04 The ground level of the site gently rises towards the mobile buildings from the main school buildings and the car park.

2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.01 This is a KCC Regulation 3 application that Swale Borough Council has been consulted upon.
- 2.02 The proposal is for the retention of three mobile buildings on the site for a further 5 years.
- 2.03 The three mobile buildings each measure 7m x 20m and 3m in height. There is a 1.2m timber palisade fence around the three mobile buildings. The external walls are stoneflex panels.

3.0 PLANNING CONSTRAINTS

- 3.01 None

4.0 POLICY AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
Development Plan: E1, E19 and C1 of the Swale Borough Local Plan 2008

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF was released on 27th March 2012 with immediate effect, however, para 214 states “that for 12 months from this publication date, decision-makers may continue to give full weight to relevant policies adopted since 2004 even if there is a limited degree of conflict with this Framework.”

The 12 month period noted above has now expired, as such, it is necessary for a review of the consistency between the policies contained within the Swale Borough Local Plan 2008 and the NPPF.

This has been carried out in the form of a report agreed by the Local Development Framework Panel on 12 December 2012. Policies E1, E19 and C1 are considered to accord with the NPPF for the purposes of determining this application and as such, these policies can still be afforded significant weight in the decision-making process.

6.0 LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

None

7.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 7.01 *“Minster-on-Sea Parish Council objects in principle to the plan for temporary accommodation being used for a further five years when permanent accommodation is required. This together with the lack of a promised travel plan and unsafe routes due to the lack of footpaths connecting the site to Chequers Road, the Kingsborough development and the Thistle Hill Estate means that the proposal has to be deemed unsustainable.”*

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS AND PLANS

8.01 Application papers and drawings referring the application reference 15/500171/COUNTY.

9.0 APPRAISAL

9.01 In my opinion there are two key issues to consider as follows:

- The impact upon visual amenities;
- The need for the mobile buildings as part of the wider educational offering of the school.

Impact upon Visual Amenities

9.02 The buildings are located towards the middle of the large site which the school occupies. However, on the approach to the main school entrance the mobile buildings are largely screened by the existing school buildings. Further to this, to the north is a row of residential properties, also impeding the view towards the buildings from public vantage points on Chequers Road.

9.03 Although the site gently rises from west to the east the mobile buildings are located in an otherwise open vista when looking from the west, when the school playing fields are considered along with the adjacent agricultural land. However, the limited height and the neutral colours of the buildings mean that they do not have a dominant impact. As such I do not consider that this proposal would give rise to an unacceptable impact upon visual amenities.

9.04 It is also worth noting that the site does not fall within a protected or designated area and in light of this I consider that no objections to this application should be raised on the grounds of visual amenities.

The need for the mobile buildings

9.05 The Design and Access Statement submitted with the application states the following:

“The Breakfast Club and Nursery have become an important part of the overall school site and the facilities that they provide to the users of the school and local community.

It was considered beneficial by the KCC Early Years team and the school to have the nursery at the school as it provides the opportunity for a combined learning experience, in that children attending the nursery facility can move straight over to the main school (subject to the admissions policy of the school) i.e. schooling from 3 months – 11 years old can be achieved from one site. The change in buildings is easier as the children are familiar with the surroundings. It is also considered beneficial for families with your children as they only need to attend a single site.”

9.06 The above details clearly outline the need for the retention of the mobile buildings and I am of the opinion that they provide a well used and important facility when considered as part of offer of the site as a whole. In my opinion there is no question that the existing buildings provide an important community facility and their loss, without alternative accommodation being available would have a detrimental impact upon the existing users of the nursery and breakfast / after school club.

Other Matters

9.07 Minster Parish Council have objected to the principle of the development and that due to a lack of a travel plan the proposal is unsustainable.

9.08 In response to this policy C1 states that *“The Borough Council will not permit proposals that involve the loss, or change of use, of a local community facility, where this would be detrimental to the social well being of the community.”* In this case I believe that the loss of the Nursery and Breakfast / After School Club would have a detrimental impact upon the social well being of the community. As such I believe that the principle of the application is compliant with this policy and is accepted.

9.09 In terms of the travel plan the application does not propose an increase in places at either the Breakfast / After School Club or the Nursery. It is also worth noting that the session times are staggered to try and alleviate issues with congestion. As such I do not consider that the retention of the mobile buildings would have any additional impact.

10.0 CONCLUSION

10.01 Although it would be beneficial if the facilities could be provided within permanent structures, this has not been presented as an option at the current time. As such, the facilities provided by the mobile buildings are an important part of the school and their loss, by virtue of not extending the permission for a further 5 years would have a detrimental impact upon the educational offering at this site. When this is considered along with opinion the mobile buildings not having an unacceptable impact visual amenities in this undesignated located then I recommend that no objection be raised to the application.

11.0 RECOMMENDATION – Raise No Objection to renewing temporary planning permission for a further 5 years

NB For full details of all papers submitted with this application please refer to the relevant Public Access pages on the council’s website.
The conditions set out in the report may be subject to such reasonable change as is necessary to ensure accuracy and enforceability.