

REPORT TO THE WESTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	07.09.2011		
Application Number	W/11/01826/REG3		
Site Address	Holt Primary School The Gravel Holt Wiltshire BA14 6RA		
Proposal	Planning permission for the retention of a single temporary unit with toilets (previous permission 04/00746)		
Applicant	Wiltshire Council		
Town/Parish Council	Holt		
Electoral Division	Holt And Staverton	Unitary Member:	Trevor Carbin
Grid Ref	386607 162055		
Type of application	Reg 3 Application		
Case Officer	Mr Kenny Green	01225 770344 Ext 15174 kenny.green@wiltshire.gov.uk	

Reason for the application being considered by Committee

Following the recent change to the scheme of delegation, since public representations have been received to this Council development, this application requires to be determined by the Elected Members of the planning committee.

1. Purpose of Report

To consider the above application and to recommend that planning permission be approved

Neighbourhood Responses

3 letters of representation received.

Parish Council Response - Supports the application, but welcomes the opportunity to be involved in resolving current access and parking constraints.

2. Report Summary

The main issues to consider are:

Planning History/Justification

Impact on Conservation Area and Surroundings

3. Site Description

The application site subject to this application forms part of the Holt Primary School, an unlisted building located along The Gravel, which is a predominantly residential street located within Holt's Conservation Area. The school is surrounded by residential properties and gardens.

This proposal relates to an existing mobile classroom which is sited toward the north-eastern corner of the Primary School site, physically detached from the main Primary School building and close to the pre-school mobile building.

4. Relevant Planning History

W/10/01070/REG3 - Relocation of single mobile classroom with adaptations for form new pre-school building - Permission 22.06.2010
W/09/01029/FUL - Extension of head teacher's and admin staff offices and extension of equipment store of main hall, extension of parking area - Permission 20.05.2009
06/02906/FUL - Extension to library and construction of a store on the main hall - Permission 20.11.2006
04/00746/WCC - Erection of single mobile classroom - Wiltshire County Council Permission 25.05.2004

5. Proposal

This application seeks to renew planning permission for the continued temporary siting of a mobile classroom which provides additional accommodation at the Holt Primary School.

The 7.9 x 9.2m mobile classroom is required to meet existing and forecasted increased pupil demand. The demand is borne out by the following figures in terms of past and predicted pupil numbers attending the school:

Date	No's on school roll
Sep 2006	114
Sep 2007	114
Sep 2008	107
Sep 2009	114
Sep 2010	126
Sep 2011	126
Sep 2012	123
Sep 2013	132
Sep 2014	140

The above predicted increase in the school roll justifies the need for the retention of all the existing accommodation on the School premises (both the permanent and temporary accommodation). Temporary permission is sought for the next five years as the school must accommodate the above demand and does not have the requisite funding in place to replace the temporary mobile classroom with a permanent facility. Notwithstanding the above, it is recognised that Wiltshire has over 300 temporary school units, and that there is an ongoing programme of replacing those in the worst condition. At this point in time, it must be recorded that the temporary unit subject to this application has not been identified for such replacement.

The School and the Council both recognise that the access and parking arrangements at Holt Primary School have caused nuisance and disturbance to local residents, especially those residing along the Gravel. Prior to this application being submitted and before local representations were submitted thereto, the School along with the Parish Council, and the Council's Highways Authority, highlighted

the need to investigate local resident's concerns. This led to a feasibility study which aims to improve road safety outside the school and encourage parents and pupils to walk or cycle to the School.

6. Planning Policy

Government Guidance

PPS1 - Delivering Sustainable Development
PPS5 - Planning for the Historic Environment

West Wiltshire District Plan - 1st Alteration

C17 - Conservation Areas
C18 - New Development in Conservation Areas
C31a - Design
C38 - Nuisance
CF1 - General Community Facilities and Services
T10 - Car Parking

7. Consultations

Parish Council - Supports this application. We have been aware for some time of the traffic problems at the School and how this has apparently been exacerbated by the move of the 'kindergarten' from the Village Hall. We have already facilitated a meeting of those involved and are awaiting formal suggestions as to how the situation may be alleviated. We welcome any assistance from Wiltshire Council to relieve what is clearly a difficult and dangerous situation.

Highways - It is evident from the comments received from local residents, that there are considerable difficulties arising on The Gravel during school opening and closing. It should be noted that highway network officers have been carrying out a Taking Action on School Journeys feasibility study for Holt Primary School, which aims to improve road safety outside the school and encourage parents and pupils to walk or cycle to the school.

The officers involved initially met with the School and the Parish Council in May to discuss ideas relating to road safety outside the school. Since then in July, a meeting was held with the residents of The Gravel and Mr Martin Moyes of the Parish Council to initially consult on what proposals may be possible to improve the parking / traffic situation at The Gravel.

The outcome of the meeting was that residents of The Gravel would write to the Parish Council detailing their concerns (by the end of August) by which the Parish Council will then let officers know the main concerns, so that this can be incorporated into the feasibility study.

From initial investigations, the School and the residents would both like to see The Gravel completely traffic free at School start and finish times and have an official dropping off point and walk to the School. The dropping off point suggested was Station Road, however, concerns have been raised about this as there is nowhere safe for cars to turn around at the junction of Station Road and The Gravel, since part of the land directly opposite The Gravel on Station Road is not Highway, it would therefore be difficult to design and form a turning circle.

Another possible option may be to make The Gravel officially a One-Way road, with some parking bays incorporated along the length of The Gravel or put some white bar markings along the entrances to people's driveways to discourage inappropriate parking.

Such suggestions are at a rather early stage at present as we are waiting to hear back from the Parish Council at the end of August, before we decide the best options on how to move forward. The School obviously will play an important role in this as the parents and the pupils need to be educated and encouraged on a regular basis to park appropriately and walk/cycle to school if feasible.

8. Publicity

The application was advertised by site notice/press notice/neighbour notification.

Expiry date: 29.07.2011

Summary of points raised:

3 letters of representation received raising the following concerns:

Concerns raised about the access and safety of the pupils to the above School. In recent years, there has been a great increase in the vehicular access to the School by the Mums and the often inconsiderate and dangerous parking of the same.

Access to and from neighbouring properties has occasionally been barred by inconsiderate vehicle parking/abandonment.

They not only totally block The Gravel, but children have been seen running in and out of the cars to find their parents. Some mothers even park on private property in order to collect their children. Should there ever be an accident either at the school or in The Gravel, the emergency vehicles simply would be unable to attend.

Residents in the Gravel have adopted an unofficial one-way system through the Gravel, i.e. entering at the top by Lenton House and exiting into Station Road. Not only is the corner opposite the school "blind" but it is dangerous pulling directly out of The Gravel into The Street and yet cars are regularly doing so thus turning into the path of "walking" parents and children.

Adequate parking should be provided by the School to meet these needs. Since the erection of the Nursery building, there has been even more traffic despite the assurances that only the alternative entrance in Bradley Lane would be used by parents taking children to this building. This is not the case to date.

The Gravel should be formally made one-way and that parking outside the school be prohibited and that access is made on foot only.

Objections raised to further development on the School property.

The School's lack of parking for workers and visitors and a lack of safety and traffic management outside of the school gates and in The Gravel should be investigated. In the 23 years that we have lived in this property all residents and former school staff have used the Gravel in a one way system entering at the top end and exiting on to Station Road which has worked very well and has been a benefit to the safety of the children.

In recent times this is totally disregarded. At certain times of the day it is made impossible for emergency vehicles to access the school or any properties.

9. Planning Considerations

Planning History/Justification

The Council recognises the fact that the Primary School required additional classroom accommodation back in 2004 and that permission was granted on a temporary basis to ensure the school had adequate space for increasing pupil demand. As part of this renewal application, a supporting statement has been submitted which shows that the forecasted pupil numbers will increase further from 126 on the roll for September 2011 to 140 in September 2014. The existing five classroom structure needs to be maintained for the highlighted 5 year period (2011-2016). The School currently does not have the funding to make the temporary accommodation into permanent floor space through an extension to the school premises, which is why the Council seeks to extend the temporary period for retaining the mobile unit.

Impact on the Conservation Area and Surroundings

The temporary single classroom with toilets has been a feature of the school grounds for several years and whilst a permanent solution would be preferred, the lack of funding at the present time to action such a change is duly noted. Subject to addressing the off-site access and parking constraints, there is no policy objection raised to the continued siting of the temporary classroom unit (in principle) for another 5 years in order to satisfy growing pupil demand.

The mobile unit is sympathetically sited within the School grounds so as not to cause detriment to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

It is however duly acknowledged that local residents are understandably upset about the alleged actions of some parents when dropping off/picking up their children and the consequences and impacts this has upon local residents. Having regard to the above concerns, it is recommended that any renewed temporary permission should be subject to a condition requiring the School to continue with the above mentioned feasibility study and action a full review of the School's Travel Plan and submit definitive plans to the Council within a specified timeframe, following a full consultation with the Parish Council, local residents and the Council's highway officers and to outline the measures to be adopted to address the raised concerns.

Providing the stated conditions are followed and satisfied, the raised local concerns could be resolved.

Recommendation: Permission

For the following reason(s):

The proposed development conforms to the Development Plan and there are no objections to it on planning grounds.

Subject to the following condition(s):

- 1 The temporary mobile building hereby permitted shall be removed and the land restored to its former condition on or before 7 September 2016, in accordance with a scheme of work to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: Planning permission has been granted on a temporary basis to allow the Local Planning Authority to review the functional need for the mobile classroom at the end of the expiration of the period referred to.

POLICY: West Wiltshire District Plan - 1st Alteration Policy CF1.

- 2 That within 2 months of this temporary permission renewal being granted, the School shall submit a revised Green Travel Plan which should address the off-site parking and access complaints and obtain the written approval of the Local Planning Authority, following consultation with the Parish Council, local residents and the Highways Authority. The Travel Plan shall include details of the implementation of any requisite access and parking improvements and monitoring. The results of the implementation and monitoring shall be made available to the Local Planning Authority on request, together with any changes to the Plan arising from the necessary ongoing monitoring.

REASON: In the interests of road safety, reducing neighbouring conflicts as well as encouraging parents to adopt alternative non-car based school journeys.

POLICY: West Wiltshire District Plan 1st Alteration policy CF1, C38 and T10.

- 3 The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details shown on the submitted plans:

LOCATION PLAN received on 13.06.2011

LOCATION, PLAN AND ELEVATIONS drawing no. 1237/57 Rev O received on 13.06.2011

REASON: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans that have been judged to be acceptable by the local planning authority.

Appendices:	
Background Documents Used in the Preparation of this Report:	

