

**LAVERSTOCK AND FORD: SITING OF THREE SINGLE MOBILE CLASSROOMS
AND ONE DOUBLE MOBILE UNIT PLUS DEMOLITION OF THREE EXISTING SINGLE
MOBILE CLASSROOMS AND ONE DOUBLE MOBILE CLASSROOM AT ST EDMUND'S
CHURCH OF ENGLAND GIRLS' SCHOOL, CHURCH ROAD, LAVERSTOCK
(Application No. S.05.8015)**

Purpose of Report

1. To consider the above application and to recommend that conditional permission be granted.

The Site

2. St Edmund's Church of England Girls' School is situated on Church Road to the north of Laverstock. St Joseph's School lies to the north of the site and Wyvern College to the south. The mobile classrooms that this application seeks to replace are located to the east of the main school buildings and are sited on a grassed area adjacent to the playing fields. The site is elevated and exposed to the north, east and south.
3. A location plan is attached at **Appendix 1** and a site plan at **Appendix 2**.

Planning history

4. In brief, the planning history of the site is as follows:

<u>S.03.2295</u>	In 2003 planning permission was granted for a County proposal to site a double mobile classroom with toilets on the St Edmund's CE School site.
<u>S.04.2295</u>	In 2004 planning permission was granted for a County proposal to construct a new sports hall, including supporting accommodation and link to existing building on the St Edmund's CE School site. (This permission has not been implemented)
<u>S.05. 8003</u>	In 2005 planning permission was granted for the retention of a double mobile classroom with toilets on the St Edmund's CE School site.

Proposals

5. Conditional planning permission is sought for the replacement of three single mobile classrooms with toilets and one double mobile classroom with toilets at St Edmund's CE Girls' School.

6. The Director, Department for Children and Education, has submitted the following statement in support of this application:-

"The school currently has a significant proportion of its teaching accommodation in temporary classrooms. Several of these are beyond economic repair, but the school still needs the teaching spaces. There are proposals to rebuild the school which will depend on funding becoming available from the Department for Education and Skills, so it would be improper to replace these aged mobiles with a permanent building which would probably only have a short life. Accordingly planning permission is sought to replace the five dilapidated temporary classrooms with five more modern units.

Forecast pupil numbers are:

September	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Number on roll	812	836	841	852	882

No change to the Published Admissions Number is planned as a result of this application."

Planning Policy

7. Policies C7, CN21, G1, G2, G8 and PS5 of the Salisbury District Local Plan (June 2003) are considered relevant to this application.
8. All relevant planning policies are set out in the attached **Appendix 3**.

Consultations

9. **Salisbury District Council** - objects to the proposal on the grounds that the required additional classrooms should be replaced by more permanent accommodation in accordance with Policies G2 (general criteria for development) and PS5 (new education facilities) of the Salisbury District Local Plan.
10. **Laverstock and Ford Parish Council** - objects to the proposal on the grounds that the continuous sprawl of such temporary accommodation is an eyesore and ruins Laverstock's rural street scene.
11. **Countryside Section** - no objections.
12. **County Archaeologist** - no objections.
13. **Highways Development Control** - no objections but requests the inclusion of an informative encouraging the revision of the School Travel Plan and stating that any future proposals must be accompanied by the amended document.
14. Copies of the consultation replies referred to above are available for inspection in the **Members' Room**.

Publicity

15. The application has been publicised by site notices. No representations have been received.

Planning Considerations

16. This planning application proposes the like-for-like replacement of one double mobile classroom and three single mobile classrooms. Both Salisbury District Council and Laverstock and Ford Parish Council objected to the proposal principally on the grounds that the required additional accommodation should be of permanent rather than temporary construction.
17. Members are requested to note that one of these mobile classrooms recently suffered extensive storm damage resulting in the loss of the roof.
18. The main issues to be considered with regard to this application are:
 - The duration of replacement classrooms
 - Landscape setting

Duration of replacement classrooms

19. Salisbury District Council justifies its objection to this application in part on the grounds that it would be contrary to Policy PS5 of the Salisbury District Local Plan. This broadly states that new education facilities required by the Local Education Authority will be permitted on suitable sites either within or adjoining the settlements. Furthermore it confirms that it is expected these facilities will be of permanent construction.
20. Given that this proposal seeks the like-for-like replacement of existing mobile classrooms, the suitability of the site has already been accepted. Although it is acknowledged that the expectation expressed in Policy PS5 is for facilities to be of permanent construction, this falls short of being an actual requirement. Funding constraints mean that it is not always possible to replace temporary facilities with permanent buildings. County Planning Officers do not therefore consider the proposal is contrary to Policy PS5.
21. There is a clear educational need for the retention of the mobile classrooms as set out in the Director of the Department for Children and Education's Supporting Statement. It is also apparent that the existing classrooms are beyond economic repair; the recent storm damage caused to one of the buildings serves only to exacerbate this. In view of the long term proposals to rebuild the school (subject to funding) it would not be appropriate to replace the mobile classrooms with a permanent building in the short term.

Landscape setting

22. The application site falls within the landscape setting for Salisbury and Wilton and as such Policy C7 of the Salisbury District Local Plan applies. This confirms that in order to ensure there would be no detriment to the visual quality of the landscape and to enable allocated developments to be assimilated, new development will not be permitted during the lifetime of the Plan.
23. Although it is acknowledged that the existing mobile classrooms are relatively exposed along the eastern boundary in particular, they are viewed in the context of the permanent school buildings on site. As the proposed development seeks the replacement of existing facilities, it is not considered that there would be any additional impact on the visual quality of the landscape.

Other issues

24. Although the application site lies within an Area of Special Archaeological Significance as defined in the Salisbury District Local Plan, no objection is raised to the proposal on archaeological grounds.
25. No objection is raised to the proposal on highway grounds. However, concern was expressed regarding the need for a revision to the School Travel Plan. In light of agreed corporate thresholds and guidance in PPG13, it would not be appropriate or reasonable to request that a School Travel Plan is submitted as part of this application as the proposal does not increase pupil numbers and merely represents a replacement of existing temporary accommodation.

Conclusion

26. The Director of the Department for Children and Education's Supporting Statement confirms that there is an educational need to replace the dilapidated teaching accommodation at St Edmund's CE Girls' School in advance of proposals to rebuild the school.
27. This application seeks the like-for-like replacement of existing mobile classrooms. Therefore there would be no additional impact on the setting of Salisbury and Wilton.
28. In view of the above, it is considered that the proposal is fully compatible with Development Plan policy and there are no overriding planning considerations to warrant refusal of a planning permission.

Recommendation

29. That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:
 1. The development hereby granted is for a limited period of five years from the date of this permission.
 2. The land upon which the three single mobile classrooms and one double mobile classroom are sited shall be restored to its former grassed condition within the first available season after the units are removed.

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

Consultation replies and correspondence