

REGULATORY COMMITTEE

8th FEBRUARY 2006

**WESTBURY: RELOCATION OF A DOUBLE MOBILE CLASSROOM WITH
ASSOCIATED SERVICE CONNECTIONS FROM PEMBROKE PARK SCHOOL,
SALISBURY, TO MATRAVERS SCHOOL, SPRINGFIELD ROAD, WESTBURY
(Application No. W.05.09019)**

Purpose of Report

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

The Site

2. Matravers School is situated on Springfield Road to the south of Westbury. It is surrounded by residential development to the north, east and west. The mobile classroom is proposed to be located immediately to the west of the refectory and sports hall and north of the tennis courts. It adjoins the playing fields to the rear of the main school buildings.
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>W03.0413</u>	In 2003 planning permission was granted for a County proposal to construct a new combined sports hall and dining/catering building on the Matravers School site.
<u>W03.0513</u>	In 2003 planning permission was granted for a County proposal to construct an extension to and refurbishment of the existing CDT block on the Matravers School site.
<u>W03.0813</u>	In 2003 planning permission was granted for the supply and erection of a double mobile classroom on the Matravers School site.

Proposals

5. Conditional planning permission is sought for the relocation of a double mobile classroom with toilets from Pembroke Park School, Salisbury, to Matravers School, Westbury.

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

“Forecast pupil numbers are:

September	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Number on roll	1,012	1,041	1,060	1,089	1,134

Five year planning permission is requested to locate a double temporary building with office at Matravers School, Westbury.

The current capacity of the school is 1,064. An extension project to provide the additional pupil places in permanent buildings unfortunately did not secure approval in the 2005-06 County Capital Programme, so this basic need has to be met using a temporary solution, relocating the classrooms from another Wiltshire school to Matravers.”

Planning Policy

7. Policies CF1 and R2 of the West Wiltshire District Local Plan 1st Alteration are considered relevant to this application.
8. The policies considered relevant to this proposal are set out in **Appendix 3**.

Consultations

9. **West Wiltshire District Council** - objects on the grounds that the proposal would result in the loss of playing fields and would be contrary to Policy R2 of the West Wiltshire District Local Plan 1st Alteration 2004.
10. **Westbury Town Council** - no objections.
11. **Sport England** - no objections.
12. **Countryside Section** - no objections.
13. **Highways Development Control** - no objections.
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 siting of one double mobile classroom (9m x 3.9m x 1.6m) with associated service connections. West Wiltshire District Council objected to the proposal on the grounds that it would result in the loss of playing fields and would therefore be contrary to Local Plan Policy R2.

17. Policy R2 of the West Wiltshire District Local Plan states that development will not be permitted where it would involve the loss of existing playing fields, play spaces and other recreation land unless:
- the sports and recreational facilities can best be retained and enhanced through the redevelopment of a small part of the site;
 - alternative provision of equivalent community benefit is made in the immediate locality; or
 - there is an excess of sports pitch provision and public open space in the area, taking account of the recreational and amenity value of such provision.
18. Although it is accepted that this proposal will result in a small loss in the area protected under Policy R2, given its location immediately adjacent to the refectory/sports hall, this area of open space is essentially considered to be incidental to the more formal playing field provision. It is noted that Sport England has been consulted on this application and raised no objection. Furthermore, as the mobile classroom is proposed for a temporary period of only five years, there will be no permanent loss in recreational provision. Nevertheless, the proposal does not fulfil the criteria stated in Policy R2 of the West Wiltshire District Plan.
19. Policy CF1 of the West Wiltshire Local Plan provides in principle support for proposals for the development of land for schools recognising the importance of education facilities to the social well-being of the community.
20. There is a clear educational need to provide additional accommodation to cater for the rising number of pupils attending Matravers School. As outlined in the Director of the Department for Children and Education's Supporting Statement, the forecast pupil numbers will exceed the capacity of the school by 2007.
21. The mobile classroom is located to the west of the refectory/sports hall to the rear of the main school buildings and will be viewed in the context of these existing buildings. There is substantial mature tree and shrub coverage along the western boundary of the school site. Any possible visual intrusion from the mobile classroom on neighbouring properties would therefore be greatly reduced by this existing vegetation.
22. No objection is raised to the proposal on landscape or highway grounds.
23. It is accepted that if the development proposal does not accord with the Development Plan planning permission should be refused, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The 'need' for a development can be a material consideration in determining a planning application. With regard to the submitted proposal, it is considered by officers that the educational need for the mobile classroom is a significant material consideration in the determination of this application.

Conclusion

24. The visual impact of the mobile classroom on the adjacent residents is minor by virtue of the existing screening provided by mature vegetation.
25. There is an educational need to provide this teaching accommodation at Matravers School as set out in the Supporting Statement from the Director, Department for Children and Education.

26. In view of the above, it is considered that the proposal justifies a departure from the Development Plan.

Recommendation

27. That the application be referred to the First Secretary of State and that he be informed that the Committee is minded to grant planning permission under Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992, subject to the conditions set out below.
28. Should the First Secretary of State direct that he does not wish to call-in the planning application for his own determination, then 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 double mobile classroom is sited is restored to its former grassed condition within the first available season after the unit is removed.

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

Consultation replies and correspondence