

REGULATORY COMMITTEE  
19<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2007

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**BULFORD: RETENTION OF A NURSERY UNIT (WCC 750(97)) AT BULFORD CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL, JOHN FRENCH WAY, BULFORD,  
FOR WILTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL  
Application No. S/07/8011**

**Purpose of Report**

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

**The Site**

2. The location of the nursery unit would be as existing at Bulford Church of England Primary School. To the west and south are the school's hard play area and the main school buildings. To the east is the main school playing field. To the north is the site's boundary, a wooded area and Nine Mile River. The site is screened from neighbouring uses to the north, south and west by the main school buildings/existing vegetation, but is visible from residential properties to the east. The application site is only clearly visible when seen on site. It is not clearly visible when viewed from publicly accessible areas.
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/02/1360</u>	Retention of a temporary nursery unit. Planning permission granted 13 <sup>th</sup> September 2002 and implemented.
<u>S/97/1492</u>	Siting of a temporary nursery unit. Planning permission granted 14 <sup>th</sup> November 1997 and implemented.

**Proposal**

5. Planning permission is sought for the retention of the nursery unit at the school for a further five year period.
6. The following supporting statement accompanied the planning application:

*"Wiltshire County Council put in place 10 mainstream nursery classes as part of primary or infant schools in different parts of the county in the late 1990's. These were planned to target difficulties in disadvantaged areas by providing three and four year-old children with a guaranteed high quality pre-school experience. Half of these nursery classes are in military areas of the county. The nursery class at Bulford CE Primary remains part of this strategy and is required to provide continuing education for pre-school children in Bulford."*

*It also contributes to Wiltshire County Council's duty under Section 118 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and Section 153 of the Education Act 2002 to ensure that all parents of three and four year olds are able to access the minimum free entitlement for up to two years before their child reaches compulsory school age.*

*Five-year planning permission is requested for temporary building number WCC 750(97) at Bulford CE Primary School."*

### **Planning Policy**

7. The following policies are considered relevant to this application:
- Policy DP1 of the Wiltshire and Swindon Structure Plan 2016 (WSSP) (adopted April 2006).
  - Policies G1, PS5, PS6 and R5, and of the Salisbury District Local Plan (adopted June 2003) (SDLP)

These policies are set out in **Appendix 3**.

### **Consultations**

8. **Salisbury District Council** – no objection, subject to a condition ensuring permission is for a three year period.
9. **Bulford Parish Council** – no objection.
10. **Local Member, Mr. M. Baker** – no comments received.
11. **Sport England** – no objection.
12. **Countryside Section** – no objection.
13. **Local Highway Authority** – no objection.
14. Copies of the consultation responses are available for inspection in the **Members' Room**.

### **Publicity**

15. The application has been publicised in the local press and by site notice. A neighbour notification exercise was also carried out. No letters of representation have been received.

### **Planning Considerations**

16. This planning application seeks permission to retain on site a nursery unit.
17. The main issues to be considered with regard to this application are:
- Loss of playing field
  - Educational need
  - Visual impact

### Loss of Playing Field

18. The nursery unit is sited in an unmarked, informal part of the playing fields. This part of the school site lies within an area safeguarded for recreational use under Policy R5 of the SDLP. The Policy relates to the protection of recreational space, and only permits development:
- (i) Where facilities can be retained and enhanced through redevelopment of a small part of the site.
  - (ii) Alternative provision is made available in the locality.
  - (iii) There is an excess of sports pitch provision and public open space in the area.

Therefore, the proposal is considered to represent a departure from the Development Plan.

19. However, the location of the nursery unit sits between mature trees, hard surface play area and the main school buildings (the site sits between the three uses with open playing field to the east). The location of the nursery unit therefore only results in a small loss in the area protected by Policy R5
20. Consequently, it is considered that the aims and objectives of Policy R5 of the adopted Salisbury District Local Plan (June 2003) would not be significantly undermined by the retention of the unit.

### Educational Need

21. The Director of Children and Education confirms that there is a continuing obligation to provide nursery facilities in the location identified. Consequently there is a need to retain the temporary nursery unit to ensure there is sufficient accommodation on site to allow for the continuation of provision for three to four year olds in this location.
22. It is understood that a review of accommodation across the early years and childcare sector is imminent. The review intends to identify and allocate resources to address accommodation needs in the period 2008-2015.

### Visual Impact

23. The location of the temporary nursery unit proposed for retention is screened from public view, but is partially visible from residential properties to the east/south-east due to the open nature of the playing fields. However, the nearest residential properties are 60 metres away (to the south) and 130 metres away (to the east). Consequently, it is considered there would be no tangible change to the aesthetics of the location and in this respect would not be contrary to current policy.

### Conclusion

24. The application seeks permission for the retention of a nursery unit at Bulford Church of England Primary School, John French Lane, Bulford.

25. In view of the educational need for the development and the minimal visual impact to the surrounding area, it is considered that the proposal would accord with the overall objectives of the Development Plan and other material planning considerations, and not undermine policies that seek to protect recreational land.

### **Recommendation**

26. That the application be referred to the Secretary of State informing her that the Committee is minded to grant planning permission subject to the conditions set out below.
27. Should the Secretary of State not wish to call-in the planning application for determination, planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:-
1. The permission hereby granted is for a limited period of three years from the date of this permission.  
  
*Reason: To enable the County Planning Authority to review the position at the expiration of the period referred to.*
  2. The land upon which temporary nursery unit WCC 750(97) is situated shall be restored to its former condition within the first available planting season after the unit is removed.  
  
*Reason: To ensure the reinstatement of the land.*

### **GEORGE BATTEN**

Director of Environmental Services

Report Author  
**Ben Gilpin**  
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**The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this Report:**

Consultation replies