

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

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**TROWBRIDGE: RETENTION OF A SINGLE MOBILE CLASSROOM WITHOUT  
TOILETS (WCC 791(02)) AT THE CLARENDON COLLEGE, FROME ROAD,  
TROWBRIDGE, FOR WILTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**Application No. W/07/09013**

**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 single mobile classroom at the Clarendon College, Frome Road, Trowbridge would be as existing. To the east, south and west are the existing tennis courts and playing fields. To the north are the main school buildings. The site is screened from neighbouring uses to the north by the main school buildings, but is visible from residential properties to the east, south and west. 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>W/02/0997/CP</u>	Siting of a single mobile classroom without toilets (WCC 791(02)) – Planning permission granted 12 <sup>th</sup> August 2002 for a period of five years.
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**Proposal**

5. The application seeks planning permission for the retention of a single mobile classroom without toilets at the College for a further five year period.
6. The following supporting statement was submitted with the planning application:

*“Accommodation currently available at Trowbridge Clarendon College includes permanent and temporary classrooms. Single temporary building without toilets number WCC 791(02) now requires renewal planning permission.*

Past pupils numbers are:

January	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Number on Roll	1417	1439	1343	1297	1315

Forecast pupil numbers are:

January	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Number on Roll	1326	1344	1356	1397	1422

*Predicted numbers indicate the school will need to maintain the existing class structure for the foreseeable future and therefore needs to retain all the accommodation currently located on the school site. The Clarendon College is proving to be a popular school receiving many parental preferences in the intake year at the current time.*

*There is some capital receipt available for use at The Clarendon College site which has been gained under Section 106 agreements. A review of accommodation is underway to ascertain what can be provided with the capital receipt. Until these plans are finalised the temporary accommodation will still be required to provide basic need spaces at the Clarendon College.*

*Five-year planning permission is requested for temporary building number WCC 791(02) at Trowbridge Clarendon College.”*

### **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 CF1 and R2 of the West Wiltshire District Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Alteration June 2004) (WWLP)

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

### **Consultations**

8. **West Wiltshire District Council** – no objection.
9. **Trowbridge Town Council** – no objection.
10. **Local Member, Mr. Oldrieve** – no comments received.
11. **Local Member, Mrs. Hill** – no comments received.
12. **County Countryside Section** – no objection.
13. **Local Highways 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 has also been undertaken. No letters of representation have been received.

## **Planning Considerations**

16. This planning application must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
17. This planning application seeks permission to retain on site a single mobile classroom. 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 single mobile classroom is sited in an unmarked, informal part of the playing fields. However, this part of the school site lies within an area safeguarded for recreational use under Policy R2 of the District Plan. Policy R2 identifies existing recreational spaces and seeks to ensure that these facilities are not lost through their development. These sites are to be protected from development unless the:
- (i) Facilities can be retained and enhanced elsewhere on site;
  - (ii) Alternative provision can be made in the immediate vicinity to compensate; or
  - (ii) It can be demonstrated that there is an excess of sports pitch provision in the area.

These criteria are not met in this case and so the proposal is considered to represent a departure from the Development Plan.

19. However, Officers are of the opinion that the location of the single mobile classroom (being between the tennis courts to the west and mature trees) means that the proposal would only result in a small loss in the area protected by Policy R2.
20. Consequently, it is considered that the aims and objectives of Policies R2 would not be significantly undermined by the retention of the mobile.

### Educational Need

21. The Director of Children and Education confirms that class sizes at the school have remained stable and will increase slightly over the next five years. Consequently there is a need to retain the mobile classroom to ensure there is sufficient teaching space on site for the forecast increase in pupil numbers. The retention of the mobile classroom facility would allow for the continuation of lessons, without curtailing other teaching functions within the school and, as such, there is a demonstrable need for the classroom's provision for the short to medium term.
22. It is considered that the retention of the mobile classroom accords with Policy CF1 of the District Plan in that it would continue to respect its surrounding environment and have a negligible effect on existing siting, design and amenity of neighbouring uses.

### Visual Impact

23. The mobile classroom is screened from public view, but is partially visible from residential properties to the east and west (partly screened by existing on-site structures), but due to the open nature of the playing fields/tennis courts the mobile classroom would be visible to residential properties to the south, albeit the nearest residential property is 140 metres away. However, there would be no tangible change to the aesthetics of the location and in this respect the retention of the mobile is acceptable.

### Conclusion

24. The application seeks permission for the retention of a single mobile classroom without toilets to provide necessary teaching accommodation for the next five years.
25. In view of the educational need for the development, the position of the mobile on the site and the minimal visual impact to the surrounding area, it is considered that the proposal justifies a departure from the Development Plan.

### 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 five 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 mobile unit WCC 791(02) 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**  
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**Ben Gilpin**  
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***The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this Report:***

Consultation replies and correspondence.