

REGULATORY COMMITTEE

11th JUNE 2003

**TROWBRIDGE: RETENTION OF SIXTH FORM MOBILE CLASSROOM
AND EXTENSION AT THE CLARENDON SCHOOL,
FROME ROAD, FOR WILTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
(Application No. W.03.0398.CP)**

Purpose of Report

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

The Site

2. The site is at Clarendon Comprehensive School, Frome Road, Trowbridge. The proposal is located to the south and rear of the main school complex and is surrounded on the west, north and east by existing permanent modern school buildings with varying external finishes. To the south are the extensive playing fields of the school. The site is not located in any specific designated policy area in the Adopted West Wiltshire District Plan 1996. A site plan is attached at **Appendix 1**.

Planning History

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

<u>W.95.0123.CP</u>	Five-year temporary planning permission for four classroom sixth form mobile classroom - March 1995
<u>W.00.0570.CP</u>	Three-year temporary planning permission for retention of sixth form mobile classroom - May 2000
<u>W.00.0183.CP</u>	Planning permission for single classroom extension to sixth form mobile classroom - August 2000

Proposal

4. The application is submitted by the County Council under Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning Regulations 1992 and seeks planning permission for the retention of a sixth form mobile classroom and extension for a further period of five years.
5. The Chief Officer of the Department for Children, Education and Libraries has submitted the following statement in support of the application:-

"Forecast pupil numbers are:-

September	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Numbers on Roll	1,494	1,518	1,546	1,570	1,566

Predicted numbers indicate that the school will need to retain all the accommodation currently located on the school site for the foreseeable future. Five-year planning permission is requested for temporary building number WCC 697(95) at Clarendon School."

Planning Policy

6. Policy CF1 of the Adopted West Wiltshire District Plan 1996 is considered relevant to this application.
7. All of the policies considered relevant to this proposal are set out in **Appendix 2**.

Consultations

8. **West Wiltshire District Council** - no objection subject to a condition being imposed requiring the removal of the mobile classroom by 14th April 2006.
9. **Trowbridge Town Council** - no objection.

Publicity

10. The application has been advertised by way of a site notice. No representations have been received.

Planning Considerations

11. The planning application proposes the retention of the sixth form mobile classroom for a further five years. The main issues to be considered with regard to this application are:-
 - Continuing educational need for this facility
 - Visual impact

Educational Need

12. The Department for Children, Education and Libraries confirms that the mobile classroom is required to accommodate numbers at the school for the foreseeable future. Therefore, a five-year period has been requested.
13. However, West Wiltshire District Council has stated that the period for retaining the mobile classroom should be limited to April 2006 (three years). The reasons given for this are that the form of development would not be acceptable on a permanent basis and, therefore, to enable the Local Planning Authority to grant permission to meet the temporary needs of the applicant, a three-year period is appropriate.

14. Further clarification regarding the accommodation needs of the school has been sought from the Department for Children, Education and Libraries, which advises that no commitment can be given regarding the removal of this particular mobile by April 2006. The mobile classroom is the sixth form Centre at the school and is not a priority for replacement by permanent build in the Education Capital Programme. Government initiatives are directed at increasing the numbers of students staying on to sixth form so demand will increase rather than decrease.

15. Officers are satisfied that the need to retain this temporary accommodation has been justified, with the Department for Children, Education and Libraries confirming that it is unlikely that permanent accommodation could be provided by 2006. The District Council's stance is considered unreasonable in this regard.

Visual Impact

16. The mobile classroom, largely surrounded by existing buildings and overlooking the school's own playing fields, has little, if any, visual impact beyond its immediate environs. The mobile's external colour finish reflects that of the surrounding buildings and further reduces its visual presence.

Conclusion

17. In view of the established educational need for the facilities provided by the mobile classroom and the minimal visual impact, it is considered that the application is acceptable in terms of the Development Plan and there are no other overriding material planning considerations.

Recommendation

18. 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 mobile classroom is sited shall be restored to its former grassed condition within the first available planting season after the unit is removed.

GEORGE BATTEN

Director of Environmental Services

Report Author

MICHAEL BATES

Senior Planning Assistant, Local Plans and Development Control

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

Consultation replies and correspondence

Environmental impact of the Recommendation contained in this Report:

As set out in the report