

Item No. 15**SCHEDULE C**

APPLICATION NUMBER	CB/09/05598/FULL
LOCATION	GRAVENHURST LOWER SCHOOL, HIGH STREET, GRAVENHURST, BEDFORD, MK45 4HY
PROPOSAL	FULL: INSTALLATION OF 2 CANOPIES.
PARISH	Gravenhurst
WARD	Silsoe & Shillington
WARD COUNCILLORS	Cllr R Drinkwater, Cllr A Graham
CASE OFFICER	Sarah Fortune
DATE REGISTERED	06 August 2009
EXPIRY DATE	01 October 2009
APPLICANT	Gravenhurst Lower School
AGENT	Mouchel Parkman
REASON FOR COMMITTEE TO DETERMINE	LAND OWNED BY CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL
RECOMMENDED DECISION	GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION

Site Location:

The site is located on the south side of High Street in the built up area of Gravenhurst. The site supports the Gravenhurst Lower School buildings.

The Application:

This application is for the installation of two canopies one to be attached to an existing classroom, the other to be freestanding. (A revised plan has been submitted which clarifies that the application is only for these two canopies and not for the shed which was also shown on the original submitted site layout plan.)

RELEVANT POLICIES:**National Policies (PPG & PPS)**

PPG4 Industrial and Commercial development

Regional Spatial Strategy

East of England Plan (May 2008)

Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy (March 2005)

Bedfordshire Structure Plan 2011

Mid Bedfordshire Local Plan First Review 2005 Policies

DPS6 Criteria for extensions

Supplementary Planning Guidance

South Bedfordshire Local Plan Review Policies

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Planning History - relevant

07/01506/CC Continue siting of temporary classroom unit.
No objection from Mid Beds DC: 21/09/2007
Permission Granted 30/11/2007 and expires 30/11/2012

Representations: (Parish & Neighbours)

Parish/TC Comments to be reported to the Committee.

Adj Occupiers

1. Mr Gilbert. 19 High Street Gravenhurst: Concerned that noise levels will increase and there are many bedrooms which overlook the site of proposed canopy A. What precautions have been take to manage the noise levels, are there plans in place to cover the structure from view and are there any sound proofing options to reduce the potential impact on local residents.
2. W.A Watson. 5 Orchard Close: Concerned about the increase in noise levels in addition to noise from the new Pre School.
3. Mr and Mrs Anderson. 9 Orchard Close: The plans do not show the pre School, canopy 'A' appears to be designed to amplify noise towards Orchard Close and this will increase noise levels and concern about persistent problems of parking - as many parents park on the pavements.

Any further comments to be reported to the Committee.

Consultations/Publicity responses

E.H.O. Comments to be reported to the Committee.

Determining Issues

The main considerations of the application are;

1. Background
2. Impact on visual amenities of area
3. Other considerations

Considerations

1. Background

The application is for the installation of two canopies which are to provide for covered areas for the children at the school to play.

Canopy A is to be installed on the east elevation of the temporary school building which lies to the immediate south of High Street. (This classroom has been at the site for a few years and the latest application for its retention was granted in 2007.) Canopy A is to be used by reception children of which there are currently 13 pupils. It is to provide a covered area to protect the children from the sun, enabling them to enjoy free flow play between the indoor and outdoor space to provide them with an outdoor classroom as per the early Years Foundation stage curriculum. It can also be used to provide for cover for the parents as they wait to collect their children.

Canopy B is to be freestanding and is to be sited to the south west of the site and set well back from the road it is to be used by the children from the Foundation Stage through to year 4 of which there are currently 40 pupils. It will protect them from the sun, enable them to lunch outside in hot weather, provide shaded area during breaks and lunchtime and provide them with an outdoor classroom as per the national curriculum.

There are no objections in principle/policy terms to the siting of these canopies at the school since they are additions to a well established school premises and are now being required by Ofsted to be provided so that pupils have a sheltered play area.

The main considerations are whether the siting and design of the canopies is acceptable in relation to the character and appearance of the school buildings themselves as well as the visual amenities of the wider area and whether there are unduly adverse potential impacts- by way of noise in particular - on the amenities of nearby residents - especially those living on the other side of High Street to the application site as well as in Orchard Close

2. Impact on visual amenities of area

Canopy A is to have a max length of 8.46 metres with a depth of 3.765 metres and is to be installed so that it will be 3.2m at its highest point down to 2.4 metres at its lowest point. It will cover an area of 24 metres squared. It is to be sited on an area of part hard play surfacing and part grass (which is to be completely hard surfaced) to the front of the temporary school unit within a partly fenced and hedged area. It is to be constructed of rounded Scandinavian Redwood supports with a clear /opal roof covering.

The temporary building onto which canopy A is to be erected is at a lower ground level than the road. However, the top of the structure will be visible from the road above the roadside hedge - since it is to be built up to the edge of the site, adjacent to High Street and is to be taller than the hedge. It will also be visible to neighbours on the other side of High Street as well as to those at the top of Orchard Close. However, it is felt that whilst it is not a particularly attractive feature in itself it is clearly a temporary structure to be attached to a temporary classroom unit and will not have an unduly adverse impact on the visual amenities of the site and the area generally.

Canopy B is to be 7.6 metres in length with a depth of 4.6 metres and is to have a pitched roof 3.52metres at its highest point and drop down to 2.4 metres at its lowest point. It will cover an area of 35 metres squared. It is to be sited on a grassed area with easy access to the playground and is to be constructed of Scandinavian Redwood.

Canopy B is to be set well back from the road where it will not be visible from the highway being to the rear of the main school building . It is also at the end of a residential garden - number 8 High Street.

This wooden canopy is the more attractive of the two and will blend in with the character of the school buildings and is felt to be acceptable in relation to the building and the visual amenities of the area generally.

3. Other Considerations

A main consideration is the potential impact of these canopies on the amenities of neighbours by way of both outlook and any additional noise generated from the site. There is a hedge along the roadside boundary which will help screen part of the structure when viewed from the road. However, there clearly will be some loss of outlook to the neighbours for Canopy A but this will not be sufficient as to withhold planning permission. Canopy B will not cause any undue loss of outlook to neighbours since it is to be sited well to the end of their rear garden which is very heavily planted

The main area of concern from local residents is the potential for additional noise from the use of these canopies for outdoor play. Concerns have been raised by some local residents about the potential for the canopies to increase noise levels generated from the site in particular from canopy 'A'. However, the site of this canopy is already used in part for hardsurfaced play. The applicants have advised that the canopy should not amplify the noise made by the children. The head teacher has advised that the school is open from 9.00 am until 3.00 am and the area under Canopy A will not be used outside of these times. However, the school site is not subject to restricted hours of operation and therefore it would be inappropriate to impose such a restriction on this particular application which does not propose any change of use.

In view of the fact that this is already a play area, the times of use of the area are not to change it is considered that any additional noise as a result of the canopy (which is not likely) will not be sufficient as to sustain an objection on noise grounds.

Canopy B is well away from most neighbours so is not likely to cause undue problems to neighbours as a result of any noise generated by its use.

Comments from the Environmental Health Officer are to be reported to the Committee.

Reasons for Granting

In view of the fact that the canopies are to be sited at a well established school site, their size and design are generally in keeping with the character of the buildings at the site and the visual amenities of the area generally, there will be noise generated from the use of these canopies but this will not be sufficient as to sustain a reason for refusal since the site of canopy A is already used in part as a hard surfaced play area the application is recommended for approval as being in compliance with policies DPS5 and DPS6 in the Mid Beds Local Plan First Review 2005.

Recommendation

That Planning Permission be approved subject to the following:

- 1 The development hereby approved shall be commenced within three years of the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 which is designed to ensure that a planning permission does not continue in existence indefinitely if the development to which it relates is not carried out.

- 2 Canopy A shall be removed from the site by 30/11/2012.

Reason: The classroom to which Canopy A is to be attached is only a temporary one and the planning permission for this classroom expires on 30/11/2012.