

Item No. 19**SCHEDULE C**

APPLICATION NUMBER	CB/10/00682/REG3
LOCATION	Stondon Lower School, Hillside Road, Lower Stondon, Henlow, SG16 6LQ
PROPOSAL	Regulation 3:Reconfiguration of existing school buildings to form Children's Centre and single storey rear extension
PARISH	Stondon
WARD	Silsoe & Shillington
WARD COUNCILLORS	Cllr Graham & Cllr Drinkwater
CASE OFFICER	Annabel Gammell
DATE REGISTERED	01 March 2010
EXPIRY DATE	26 April 2010
APPLICANT	Central Bedfordshire Council
AGENT	Porter Consulting and Management Services Limited
REASON FOR COMMITTEE TO DETERMINE	Unresolved planning objection on land owned by Central Bedfordshire Council
RECOMMENDED DECISION	Full Application - Granted

Site Location:

Stondon Lower School is an old Victorian school building, which is has been extended several times previously. The school site comprises the school building, a hard play area to the front, and a small playing field to the north west. The school site surrounds the village hall on three sides, there is residential development to the east, south and west, and Stondon Recreation Ground to the north. The school building is constructed from buff bricks, the original parts have dual pitched roofs. The school site is enclosed by fencing, this is railings to the front and wire mesh to the rear.

The Application:

This application is for an additional classroom accommodation to the rear of the existing school building. This is to facilitate a reconfiguration of the front of the school to provide a Sure Start Children's Centre.

The rear extension would be of irregular design, it would form two classrooms, a library, a staff room and additional toilet facilities. The extension would be some 25.5 metres in width, approximately 10.8 metres at its deepest point and have a maximum roof height of some 3.3 metres.

RELEVANT POLICIES:

National Policies (PPG + PPS)

PPS 1 Delivering Sustainable Development (2005)

Regional Spatial Strategy

East of England Plan (May 2008)

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

Bedfordshire Structure Plan 2011

Not applicable

Core Strategy and Development Management Policies, November 2009

Policy DM3 - High Quality Development

South Bedfordshire Local Plan Review Policies

Not applicable

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Design in Central Bedfordshire, a Guide for Development

Planning History

CB/09/06716/FULL	Changes to windows and installation of DDA ramp
MB/08/01705/CC	Replacement of door and window
MB/07/00301/CC	Extension to form office
MB/00/01922/CC	Change of use of school house to storage and administration accommodation

Representations: (Parish & Neighbours)

Stondon Parish Council:
Neighbours:

No comments received

Objection from 15 Hillside Road:

- Noise, traffic, parking and access. Situation is already bad, and any expansion will exacerbate these problems.

Objection from 3 Hillside Road:

- The Children's Centre will support children's and families from Shillington, Henlow, Henlow Camp and Langford Villages, where will additional visitors park? Hillside Road is already congested.
- Problems with parents/visitors blocking residential access.

Consultations/Publicity responses

Site Notice Posted on 24.03.10:	No comments received
Public Protection:	No comments regarding application
Highways Department:	No objection, but would like a covered buggy park to be provided.

Determining Issues

The main considerations of the application are;

1. The effect on the character and appearance of the surrounding area
2. The impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties
3. Any other implications of the proposal

Considerations

1. Effect on the character and appearance of the area

The school has been extended previously, and has an irregular design, this development would be towards the rear of the existing school building. The extension would not be visible from the street scene of Hillside Road, but would be visible from the public recreation ground to the north of the school site.

The area where the extension would be located is currently an area of grassed amenity land, which has two storage outbuildings. It is considered that the extension would be acceptable in design terms. Though the front of the school building is buff brick Victorian, the rear of the school site has been extended with a flat roof orange/red brick single storey extension. This extension would be adjoining this part of the school, therefore it is judged acceptable in design terms to allow a further flat roofed extension providing the materials were in keeping with those they would be adjoining. In this discrete enclosed location it is judged that an extension of this size would be acceptable both in terms of Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies, 2009 and the technical guidance Design in Central Bedfordshire, a Guide for Development.

2. Impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties

The school site is within a predominantly residential area, but it is judged that due to the scale and design the single storey extension would not significantly impact upon any adjoining residential neighbours. This part of the school site is adjacent to the Stondon Recreation Ground, the Stondon village hall, and residential properties at 19, 21, 21a Station Road and 2, 4, 6 Hillside Road. It is considered that as a previously extended part of the school building would substantially shield the residential properties at Hillside Road and Station Road that this development would not significantly impact upon the residential amenity of any dwellings.

Loss of light:

The building would be enclosed within the school site, there would be a distance of over 43 metres between the single storey extension and the closest adjacent residential property, this would be behind an existing part of the school building. It is judged at this distance there would not be any significant impact upon the

light into any residential dwelling.

Overbearing impact:

It is judged that the development is in proportion with the scale of the building on the school site. The school building is an irregular shape, as it has been previously extended, this extension would adjoin the north western elevation of the existing school building, currently this is used as grassed amenity land. As the building has been previously extended to the east it is considered that this extension would balance the rear elevation of the school building and would make efficient use of the grounds of the school site.

Loss of privacy:

The extension would only be used as classrooms and facilities ancillary to school use. It is considered that there would not be any additional overlooking because of the extension. The windows would face onto the public recreation ground to the rear of the school site, it is judged that residential privacy would be ensured.

Outlook:

The extension would be of an acceptable design standard, it is considered that it would not impact upon residential outlook. It could be visible from the rear gardens of residential properties, but at this distance a development of this scale would not impact upon residential outlook.

Two letters of objection were received this was from 15 Hillside Road and 3 Hillside Road:

- Noise, traffic, parking and access. Situation is already bad, and any expansion will exacerbate these problems.

The Children's Centre currently operates informally out of the school site, classes are being held but there is no dedicated space for the centre to be located, therefore time is restricted. This development would enable the centre to run more efficiently but it would not bring additional staff or visitors to the site. Parking at peak times around many school sites is a problem, but as this development would not enable the school role to be significantly increased or adding an additional use to the school site, the parking situation is judged to be acceptable.

- The Children's Centre will support children's and families from Shillington, Henlow, Henlow Camp and Langford Villages, where will additional visitors park? Hillside Road is already congested.

The support will partly come from an outreach programme, the Children's Centre has a van, which will hold home sessions in the surrounding villages. Although some sessions will be held on the school site, the sessions are already running informally, this arrangement would provide a dedicated space. The Children's Centre would run on a session basis and therefore it would not always coincide with the peak times of the school day. The staff at the Children's centre currently work in the school and therefore additional parking is

not required. A condition to require a Travel Plan for the Children's Centre should be attached to any permission granted, to ensure the situation around the school site does not worsen because of the Children's Centre.

- Problems with parents/visitors blocking residential access.

Parents/visitors should not block the highway, Stondon Lower School currently has a Travel Plan, this should encourage sustainable travel to school. The Children's Centre would open on a sessional basis, which should avoid additional congestion around the school.

3. Any other implications

Highways:

The Highways Department did not object, but did suggest that a scheme of covered buggy parking would be beneficial. It is considered that although a buggy store would be desirable, it is not an essential requirement for this development. Many of the parents with a buggy would bring them into the centre with them, the building has been designed to be accessible for all, there is a no step access which would encourage visitors to bring the buggies into the centre.

Reasons for Granting

The proposed extension and conversion of the front of the main school building into a Children's Centre would not have a negative impact upon the general character of the area or an adverse impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties and is acceptable in terms of highway safety therefore by reason of its site, design and location, is in conformity with Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Management Policies, November 2009; Planning Policy Statement 1 (2005), Regional policies in the East of England Plan (May 2008) and the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy (March 2005). It is in further conformity with technical guidance, Design in Central Bedfordshire, a Guide for Development.

Recommendation

That Planning Permission be granted 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 All external works hereby permitted shall be carried out in materials to match as closely as possible in colour, type and texture, those of the existing building.

Reason: To safeguard the appearance of the completed development by ensuring that the development hereby permitted is finished externally with materials to match/complement the existing building(s) and the visual

amenities of the locality.

3

Within six months of the opening of the Children's Centre hereby approved within its formal accommodation, the Stondon Lower School Travel Plan shall be reviewed jointly by Stondon Lower School and the Children's Centre to include formally provision for the Children's Centre and the Plan shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The Plan shall contain details of:

- the establishment of a working group involving the School, the Children's Centre, parents and representatives of the local community to address and manage the issues associated with travel to and from the school site
- pupil travel patterns and barriers to sustainable travel
- measures to reduce car use
- measures to encourage and promote sustainable travel to and from the school site
- an action plan detailing targets and a timetable for implementing appropriate measures and plans for annual monitoring and review for 5 years.

Reason: In the interest of sustainability and highway safety.

DECISION

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