

Item No. 18**SCHEDULE C**

APPLICATION NUMBER	CB/10/01310/FULL
LOCATION	Silsoe Lower School, High Street, Silsoe, Bedford, MK45 4ES
PROPOSAL	Full: Childrens Centre: Free standing single storey flat roof building, 2No canopies, relocation of shed and gates, additional parking bay, erection of fencing and demolition of brick building and replace with shed.
PARISH	Silsoe
WARD	Silsoe & Shillington
WARD COUNCILLORS	Cllr Drinkwater and Cllr Graham
CASE OFFICER	Mary Collins
DATE REGISTERED	22 April 2010
EXPIRY DATE	17 June 2010
APPLICANT	Central Bedfordshire Council
AGENT	Mouchel
REASON FOR COMMITTEE TO DETERMINE	Central Bedfordshire Council is the applicant and objection has been received which is not resolved by the imposition of conditions.

RECOMMENDED DECISION**Full Application - Granted****Site Location:**

The application site is Silsoe Lower School, located off of the High Street, Silsoe. The school building is single storey and set back from the High Street behind a playing field. There is also a large playing field to the rear of the school. To the northern boundary of the school and its grounds are playing fields, allotments and the Millennium Green. To the southern and eastern boundaries are residential properties.

The Application:

Planning permission is sought for the erection of a Childrens Centre: Free standing single storey flat roof building with two canopies. Relocation of two existing sheds and gates, additional parking bay, erection of fencing and demolition of brick building and replace with shed.

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

- PPS 1 Delivering Sustainable Development
- PPS 5 Planning for the Historic Environment

Regional Spatial Strategy

East of England Plan (May 2008)

Bedfordshire Structure Plan 2011

None

Core Strategy and Development Management Policies, Central Bedfordshire (North), November 2009

DM3 - High Quality Development

DM5 - Important Open Space within Settlement Envelopes

CS15 - Heritage

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Design in Central Bedfordshire: A Guide for Development, Adopted January 2010

Planning History

MB/79/01293/CC	County Council: Full: completion of silsoe lower school. Approved: 29/11/1979
MB/79/1293/A/CC	County Council: Single temporary classroom and toilet block. Approved: 21/03/1980
MB/94/01064/CC	County Council: Retrospective: siting of 3 bay temporary classroom. Approved: 26/08/1994
MB/97/00775/CC	County Council: Replacement of single temporary classroom with double temporary classroom unit. Approved: 25/06/1997
MB/97/01403/CC	County Council: Continued siting of single temporary classroom unit. Approved: 15/10/1997
MB/98/01608/FULL	Full: Siting of temporary classroom for use by village playgroup and after-school club. Approved: 29/12/1998
MB/00/01088/cc	County Council: Single storey extension, four space extension to car park and extension to play area. Approved: 21/08/2000
MB/03/00718/CC	County Council: Single storey extension to provide new classroom and construction of 7 additional parking spaces. Approved: 28/04/2003
MB/04/01749/CC	County Council: Extension to existing school building to replace temporary unit to incorporate a foundation classroom, nursery and ancillary areas. Approved: 11/10/2004
MB/05/00836/CC	County Council: Revised position of pond and nature area and conversion of previous nature area to tarmac area. Approved: 13/06/2005
MB/08/00900/FULL	Full: Erection of one shading canopy to front of school and one free-standing within the rear Pre-School playground. Approved: 11/09/2008
MB/08/01936/FULL	Full: Erection of one shading canopy to front of school and one free standing within the rear playground. Approved: 08/01/2009

Representations: (Parish & Neighbours)

Silsoe Parish Council	No response received
Neighbours	One letter of objection received: Loss of privacy to

windows, noise and disturbance, traffic and access

Consultations/Publicity responses

Sport England	<p>The development would involve relocating a small shed to the north east corner of the playing field. However, in view of the limited area (about 6 sq.m) affected and the unlikelihood that this corner of the playing field would be capable of being used for forming part of a pitch, this is not considered to affect the formal use of the playing field.</p> <p>In this instance, Sport England is therefore satisfied that the proposal meets exception E3 of their policies, in that the development only affects land incapable of forming a playing pitch or part thereof and does not adversely affect existing pitch provision on the site. They confirm that Sport England has no objection to this planning application.</p>
Public Protection Highways	<p>No objections</p> <p>No objections in principle. Request that a condition is attached restricting the use of the centre to start at 9.15 am which will allow the traffic congestion for the school to disperse and make way for any on street parking for the centre.</p>
Application advertised 30/04/10	No response received
Site Notice Posted 28/04/10	No response received

Determining Issues

The main considerations of the application are;

1. **Impact on the character and appearance of the Silsoe Conservation Area.**
2. **Impact on neighbouring amenities**
3. **Parking issues**

Considerations

1. **Impact on the character and appearance of the Silsoe Conservation Area.**

The school and its grounds are next to the Silsoe Conservation Area lying to the north of it. To the north of the school site are playing fields and allotments and the Silsoe Millennium Green.

There are currently views of the existing school from the footpath, playing fields and the allotments and there are distant views of the school from the Millennium Green.

The proposed building will occupy the position of an existing flat roofed storage building of a smaller footprint which is to be demolished and a detached shed which is to be relocated which is sited between the main school building and the

northern boundary of the site.

The building will be 3 metres high with a flat felt roof and brick sides and will be 8.5 metres wide by 12.4 metres long. At each end will be a canopy, the one to the west end over the entrance to the building and serving as a buggy store and one to the east end serving as a covered all weather play area. The building will comprise 63m² of multifunctional space with office, stores, WCs and refreshment area.

The building will retain the current separation from the existing school building, will be parallel with it and its height will be the same as the existing store building at this point. The front of the building does not project forward of the main school building and views of the building from the High Street are limited and recessive.

The new building will extend closer to the northern boundary of the site and will be within 0.6 metres of the boundary at its nearest point with the separation increasing to 2 metres.

Due to ground levels of the site sloping away to the northern boundary, a retaining wall will be constructed and the ground floor of the building will be higher than the level of the footpath by approximately 0.5 metres. The height of the building plus the retaining wall at this boundary will be 3.6 metres high. Although close to the footpath and raised in relation to the level of the footpath, the lower half of the building is not considered to be imposing on the footpath and the lower half of the building will be screened by the hedge planting to the boundary. The side wall of the building is approximately in line with the side wall of the residential properties at The Fairways and does not encroach further into the open space to the side of the footpath. Properties in The Fairways to the east are constructed on the boundary with the footpath, as such it is considered that the proposed building will not be incongruous to the surrounding area.

The profile of the building will be mostly viewed from the north against the backdrop of the existing flat roofed school buildings and is not considered to be detrimental to the setting of the conservation area. The ends of the building will be seen from the footpath in particular the front of the building which faces west and serves the main entrance to the building. The Children's Centre will be accessed from the footpath and it is considered that as this the main entrance to the site, it should be visible.

Two timber sheds are to be relocated within the school grounds and a new shed to replace the demolished brick store is also proposed. Planning permission is required for the sheds as they will be sited within five metres of the boundary of the curtilage of the premises and because one will be sited on an existing playing field that is currently in use.

The small timber shed to be relocated to the corner of the school playing field is 1.8m wide x 2.4m long and 2.3m high to the ridge and is shown on photograph IMGPO565. The other existing shed to be relocated is about 3.6m x 2.4m and the height will be about 2.3m to the ridge and is shown on photograph IMGPO342.

The new shed is timber and is 3 metres wide by 5.5 metres long and approximately 3.3 metres to the apex of the pitched roof. The sheds are sited in close proximity to the northern boundary and due to their minimal height are

partially screened by the existing hedgerow planting to the northern boundary of the site. As such the siting of the sheds is not considered to be detrimental to the appearance of the wider surroundings.

A small shed is to be relocated to the north east corner of the playing field close to the northern boundary. However, in view of the limited area (about 6 sq.m) affected and the unlikelihood that this corner of the playing field would be capable of being used for forming part of a pitch, this is not considered to affect the formal use of the playing field.

2. Impact on neighbouring amenities

The nearest neighbours affected by the proposed building are in The Oaks, adjoining the site to the south and The Fairways, adjoining the site to the east.

The building will be partially screened from view from properties in The Oaks by the existing school buildings and is on the opposite side of the school grounds, as such these properties will not be detrimentally affected by the proposal.

The building will be visible from the rear of the properties at The Fairways. An area of tree planting between the front of the proposed building and the rear boundary of the properties in The Fairways will help to partially screen the building from view. A distance of 23 metres exists between the rear of the proposed building and the boundary with these properties. A detrimental loss of privacy to first floor windows to these properties should not arise as a result of the proposal. Ground floor windows and rear gardens will be screened by boundary fencing. The revised plans show a two metre high timber acoustic fence to the play area which will act as a noise barrier.

3. Parking issues

There is already a shortfall of parking for staff within the site. Although the proposal has included a parking space for the one member of staff, any visiting staff will have to park on the highway. Highways have requested if possible it would be beneficial if another parking space could be provided for an additional member of staff/visitor space. The applicants have been asked to see if this is possible and if any provision of additional parking is made this will be reported in the late sheet update to the committee.

The school already generates major congestion at school starting/ending times. The centre proposes to open between the hours of 8.30 am to 4.30 pm and although the closing time will not clash with the parents collecting their children at the end of the school day, it does correspond with the start of the school day and the heavily congested High Street can not cope with anymore on street parking at this time. Highways have requested that a condition is attached restricting the use of the centre to start at 9.15 am which will allow the traffic congestion for the school to disperse and make way for any on street parking for the centre.

A childrens centre is a place where parents can come for advice relating to pregnancy, childcare and parenting skills. Courses are run from the centre by visiting specialists. School sites are considered the most appropriate places for

Children's Centres as it helps to encourage parents to become integrated with their local school from an early stage.

The centre wishes to open from 08:30 when a member of staff will arrive at the premises. The applicant has confirmed that the first sessions will generally start between 09:15 and 09:30. This is ensure that parents can attend the classes after dropping off their children. The aim is to run courses at times to allow parents with children to take them to school and attend the classes and collect their children from school later.

The Children's Centre is to be used by parents who may already have children that attend the school and these parents may or could potentially already drive and park in the High Street in which case it is considered they will not add to the on street parking congestion in the mornings. Sessions will be also be attended by parents who may not have children or children currently at the school. As the classes are intended to start from 09:15 onwards, these people will be arriving after the main morning rush hour. Classes are also intended to finish before the school closes to ensure that parents are free to pick up their children from their children's schools at the end of the day.

Some classes will be held in the evening and these will be aimed at adults only and will not have a detrimental impact on on street parking.

In school holidays the car park of the school will be available for parking. This will equate to approximately 12 weeks of the year.

It is considered appropriate that a condition be attached to ensure that the use of the building is for a Children's Centre only and not to be used for any other public gathering. This is to ensure that the premises are not used for any other purpose. A condition restricting the start time of the formal sessions will be imposed to ensure that the traffic congestion on the High Street is minimised at morning peak times.

Conclusion

In light of the above considerations it is recommended that planning permission be approved.

Reasons for granting permission

The proposal is in conformity with Policies DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies, Central Bedfordshire (North), November 2009 as the proposal respects the amenity of surrounding properties and is appropriate in scale and design to its setting. The proposal would result in an enhanced provision in functional terms of the site and the locality and does not adversely effect the visual quality of the settlement. It is also in accordance with Planning Policy Guidance: PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development.

- 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 **Prior to the commencement of development a scheme setting out measures for protecting all trees, shrubs and other natural features during construction work shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No work shall commence on site until all trees, shrubs and features to be protected are fenced with 2.3 high weldmesh fencing securely mounted on standard scaffolding poles driven firmly in the ground in accordance with BS 5837:2005;**

- **for trees and shrubs the fencing shall follow a line 1.0m outside the furthest extent of the crown spread, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority;**

Such fencing shall be maintained during the course of the works on the site. No unauthorised access or placement of goods, fuels or chemicals, soil or other materials shall take place inside the fenced area.

Reason: To safeguard the existing trees on the site in the interests of visual amenity.

- 3 **Development shall not commence until a scheme detailing provision for on site parking for construction workers for the duration of the construction period has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be implemented throughout the construction period.**

Reason: To ensure adequate off street parking during construction in the interests of road safety.

- 4 **Before development commences details of a covered 'buggy bar' and secure and covered cycle/scooter parking shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority and the development shall not be brought into use until the buggy bar and cycle/scooter parking have been constructed in accordance with approved details. The scheme shall be fully implemented before the development is first occupied or brought into use and thereafter retained for this purpose.**

Reason: To ensure the provision of cycle/scooter parking and buggy parking of the proposed development in the interests of encouraging the use of sustainable modes of transport.

- 5 **The childrens centre shall develop a travel plan which adds to the Silsoe Lower school travel plan. The Children Centre's travel plan should detail their involvement with the aims, objectives and actions currently being taken forward by the other establishments on the site. The above plan will include timescales for its ongoing review and amendment as appropriate. The Travel Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to first occupation of the development hereby permitted.**

Reason: To promote and encourage sustainable modes of transport.

- 6 Before the premises is brought into use the proposed parking bay shall be surfaced in a stable and durable manner in accordance with details to be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To avoid the carriage of mud or other extraneous material or surface water from the site so as to safeguard the interest of highway safety and reduce the risk of flooding and to minimise inconvenience to users of the premises and ensure satisfactory parking of vehicles outside highway limits.

- 7 Formal Sessions shall not commence until 09:15 hrs on any day.

Reason: To alleviate parking on the High Street at peak hours.

- 8 The building hereby approved shall be used as a Children's Centre and only in accordance with e-mail dated 17/06/10 from Mouchel and for no other purpose (including any other purpose falling within Class D1 of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 2006), or any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification.

Reason: To exclude the provisions of the said Use Classes Order and thereby ensure the Local Planning Authority retains full control of the future use of the building.

Notes to Applicant

1. The applicant is advised that all cycle parking to be provided within the site shall be designed in accordance with the Bedfordshire County Council's "Cycle Parking Guidance - August 2006".