

**Item No. 12****SCHEDULE B**

<b>APPLICATION NUMBER</b>	<b>CB/10/02409/FULL</b>
<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>Russell Lower School, Queens Road, Ampthill, Bedford, MK45 2TD</b>
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	<b>Full: Erection of Children's Centre in existing school playing field. 2 no. canopies for buggy store and outdoor play. New access road to be created from the main road (Queens Road) in which 2 parking bays will be provided and turning circle.</b>
<b>PARISH</b>	<b>Ampthill</b>
<b>WARD</b>	<b>Ampthill</b>
<b>WARD COUNCILLORS</b>	<b>Cllr Paul Duckett, Cllr Gary Summerfield</b>
<b>CASE OFFICER</b>	<b>Lisa Newlands</b>
<b>DATE REGISTERED</b>	<b>08 July 2010</b>
<b>EXPIRY DATE</b>	<b>02 September 2010</b>
<b>APPLICANT</b>	<b>Central Bedfordshire Council</b>
<b>AGENT</b>	<b>Mouchel</b>
<b>REASON FOR COMMITTEE TO DETERMINE</b>	<b>Central Bedfordshire is the Applicant</b>
<b>RECOMMENDED DECISION</b>	<b>Full Application - Granted</b>

**Site Location:**

The application site is Russell Lower School, in the settlement envelope of Ampthill. The school itself is accessed off Saunders Piece, where there is the main school building, school bungalow and car park areas. There is a large playing field to the rear of the site, fronting onto Queens Road. The site is within the middle of a residential area, with residential properties bounding the site.

**The Application:**

Planning permission is sought for the erection of a Children's Centre within the existing school playing field. Incorporated into the design are two canopies for a buggy store and outdoor play. There will also be a new access road created from the Queens Road into the site, in which two parking bays and a turning circle will be provided.

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

PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development

**Core Strategy and Development Management Policies for Central Bedfordshire (North)**

DM3 - High Quality Development

## Supplementary Planning Guidance

Design in Central Bedfordshire: A guide for development

### Planning History

CB/09/06367/FULL	Full: Retention of Temporary Classroom. Granted. 05/01/2010
MB/06/01942/CC	County Council: Retention of single temporary classroom unit. Granted. 07/12/2006
MB/05/01747/CC	County Council: Erection of new fence with gate and repositioning of existing fence. Granted. 06/03/2006
MB/05/00396/FULL	Full: Erection of portacabin for use by Ladybird Pre-school playgroup. Granted. 13/05/2005
MB/03/00449/CC	County Council: Single storey extension to provide two new classrooms. No objection. 01/05/2003
MB/99/01107/CC	County Council: Extension to form additional classroom, cloakroom and w.c. No objection. 06/09/1999
MB/96/00544/CC	County Council - Reg 3: Siting of single temporary classroom. No objection. 24/05/1996
MB/94/00901/CC	County Council - Widen Vehicular access and segregate vehicular and pedestrian access. No objection. 10/08/1994
MB/84/00235/FA	Full: Erection of timber shed for storage of playgroup equipment. Granted. 04/05/1984
MB/76/00019/FA	Full: Changing facilities for children. Granted. 11/03/1976

### Representations: (Parish & Neighbours)

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Object to the application on the following grounds:

- a) Lack of dedicated parking spaces to serve the needs of the development;
- b) The proposed development will attract evening and weekend use, parents, staff, and visiting specialists and there is no parking provision to cater for these uses beyond the 2 no. dedicated spaces proposed.

Furthermore, there is already congestion in this area with resident parking and additional parking demands will only exacerbate this situation.

Adjacent Occ

Concern raised by one resident of Queens Road regarding the following issues:

- parking
- additional traffic adding to the already chaotic vehicle movements in an already very busy road during school days.

## Consultations/Publicity responses

Sport England	No response received to date - any comments will be reported in the late sheet update to the Committee.
Public Protection Highways	No objections On behalf of the highway authority the following comments have been made based on amended drawing No 30 Rev A.  The proposal for a children's centre is to be served by an access off Queens Road which as proposed is to the required standard in terms of driver to driver visibility provision. However pedestrian visibility is also required which has not been indicated and therefore they need to be covered by a condition. Cycle parking needs to be included by condition.  The centre can hold up to 20 people at anyone time, including children. I do agree that with the exception of the evening sessions where the site may be occupied by 20 adults, approximately a maximum of 10 adults would be the norm attending the building. Some of these adults may walk to the site, 5 – 6, however there will be some that will drive to it and therefore provision of 4 additional on site parking spaces would need to be provided. The additional information provided indicates that it is expected those who drive to the site to park on the road. Based on my observations during my site visit I consider that may be capacity on the road along the frontage of the site to accommodate 4 -6 cars.
Disability Discrimination Officer	No objections
Application advertised 30/07/10	No response received
Site Notice posted 28/07/10	No response received

## Determining Issues

The main considerations of the application are;

1. Impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area;
2. Impact of the proposal on the residential amenities of the neighbouring properties;
3. Other Issues

## Considerations

1. **Impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area;**

The school and its grounds are accessed from Saunders Piece. The proposed

children's centre is to be sited within the south-western corner of the existing playing field to the rear of the school. The proposal is to be accessed from Queens Road. The building has been set close to an existing public footpath. The siting of the proposal is such that it will help maintain security for the school, by providing an independent access and therefore not requiring visitors to the centre to go through the secure school grounds and the existing main school entrance.

The proposal is to include a single storey brick built building, with tiled pitched roof. There will be a canopy to the front of the building to provide for a buggy store and outdoor covered play area. There will also be two parking spaces, and a turning area within the site.

The building will be a maximum of 3.8 metres high, 13.1 metres long, and 11.2 metres wide (including the canopy). The building will comprise 57 square metres of multifunctional space, with additional office, stores, W.Cs and refreshments areas.

The proposal is adjacent to neighbouring residential properties and will therefore be seen in conjunction with these. It is therefore not considered that it would have a material impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

## **2. Impact of the proposal on the residential amenities of the neighbouring properties;**

The nearest neighbours affected by the proposed building are the adjacent residential properties within Queens Road.

The building will be partially screened by a new close boarded timber fence to be erected and the separation distance between the proposal and the neighbouring property, 12 Queens Road, is approximately 4.6 metres to the side elevation of the dwelling. Also, on the side boundary of the neighbouring property with the application site, there is an existing single storey structure, which will provide further screening.

Due to the design of the proposal there will be no windows in the rear elevation of the building facing the neighbouring residential property. It is therefore considered that there will be no material loss of privacy to this neighbouring property.

The covered outdoor play area is on the opposite side of the building to the neighbouring residential property. The existing area is used as part of the school playing field, therefore it is not considered that this would result in any further detrimental impact on the amenities of this neighbouring residential property, than the existing situation.

## **3. Other Issues**

### Parking

Concern has been raised by the Town Council and a local resident regarding the parking situation within the area, particularly at peak times such as school drop

off and pick up times. The proposal involves two parking spaces, one for the full time member of staff within the facility and the other a designated disabled space.

The centre proposes to open between the hours of 8.30am to 4.30pm 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 when the adjoining road network, in particular Queens Road is already heavily congested with on street parking. It is therefore considered appropriate to impose a condition restricting the use of the centre to start at 9.15am which will allow for the traffic congestion in connection with the school to disperse and make way for any on street parking for the centre.

A childrens centre is a place where parents can go 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 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 on Queens Road in which case it is considered that they will not add to the on street parking congestion in the mornings. Sessions may also be attended by parents who may not have children or children currently at the school. As the sessions are intended to start from 09.15am onwards, these people will be arriving after the main peak drop off time. Also, due to the catchment area of the school and the location within a residential area, it is anticipated that the majority of visitors will walk to the centre.

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.

#### Loss of playing field

The site is on the south-west corner of the existing school playing field. Therefore, there will be a loss of school playing field to enable the development. No comments have been received by Sport England at this time in relation to the loss of playing field. Any comments received by them will be reported in the late sheet update to committee. However, the agent has submitted a letter that they received from Sport England in relation to a pre-application enquiry regarding the proposed development. In the letter Sport England state that the proposed development would not affect existing playing pitches and sufficient space would remain on the playing field for marking out additional playing pitches if required and that the proposal is in the corner of the field and are therefore considered to be areas least likely to be marked out for playing pitches in practice. Also, about half of the area of the building proposed would be incapable of forming a playing pitch due to the limited space available due to the shape of the playing field in these corners.

#### Use

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.

## **Conclusion**

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

## **Reasons for Granting**

The proposal respects the amenity of surrounding properties and is appropriate in scale and design to its setting, it would also provide enhanced provision in functional terms of the site and the locality; as such it is in conformity with Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies for Central Bedfordshire (North). It is also in accordance with PPS1: Delivering Sustainable 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 The approved building shall not be occupied until the junction of the proposed vehicular access with the highway has been provided as shown on drawing No 30 Rev A.

Reason: In order to minimise danger, obstruction and inconvenience to users of the highway and the premises

- 3 Before any of the access to the proposal is first brought into use, a triangular vision splay shall be provided on each side of the new access drive and shall be 2.0m measured along the back edge of the highway from the centre line of the anticipated vehicle path to a point 2.0m measured from the back edge of the highway into the site along the centre line of the anticipated vehicle path. The vision splay so described and on land under the applicant's control shall be maintained free of any obstruction to visibility exceeding a height of 600mm above the adjoining footway level.

Reason: To provide adequate visibility between the existing highway and the proposed access, and to make the access safe and convenient for the traffic which is likely to use it.

- 4 Before the premises are occupied all on site vehicular areas shall be surfaced in a manner to the Local Planning Authority's approval so as to ensure satisfactory parking of vehicles outside highway limits. Arrangements shall be made for surface water from the site to be intercepted and disposed of separately so that it does not discharge into the highway.

Reason: In order to minimise danger, obstruction, and inconvenience to users of the highway and of the premises

- 5 Before development begins, a scheme for the parking of cycles on the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. 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 adequate cycle parking to meet the needs of occupiers of the proposed development in the interests of encouraging the use of sustainable modes of transport.

- 6 The children's centre shall develop a travel plan which adds to the Russell 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.

- 7 Before the premises is brought into use the proposed parking area 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.

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

Reason: To alleviate parking on Queens Road at peak hours.

- 9 The building hereby approved shall be used as a Children's Centre 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 no works associated with the construction of the vehicular access should be carried out within the confines of the public highway without prior consent, in writing, of the Central Bedfordshire Council. Upon receipt of this Notice of Planning Approval, the applicant is advised to write to Central Bedfordshire Council's, Technology House, 239 Ampthill Road, Bedford, MK42 98D quoting the Planning Application number

and supplying a copy of the Decision Notice and a copy of the approved plan. This will enable the necessary consent and procedures under Section 184 of the Highways Act to be implemented. The applicant is also advised that if any of the works associated with the construction of the vehicular access affects or requires the removal and/or the relocation of any equipment, apparatus or structures (e.g. street name plates, bus stop signs or shelters, statutory authority equipment etc.) then the applicant will be required to bear the cost of such removal or alteration.

2. The applicant is advised that the requirements of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 will apply to any works undertaken within the limits of the existing public highway. Further details can be obtained from the Traffic Management group Highways and Transportation Division, Central Bedfordshire Council, Technology House, 239 Ampthill Road, Bedford, MK42 9BD.