

## Item No. 7

<b>APPLICATION NUMBER</b>	<b>CB/15/00470/REG3</b>
<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>Clipstone Brook Lower School, Brooklands Drive, Leighton Buzzard, LU7 3PG</b>
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	<b>Single storey flat roof extension for 5 classrooms, cloakrooms corridors, toilets and library. Single storey flat roof extension for new staffroom. Infill of courtyard and corridor to form Drama Room, Revised access drive and parking. Playground extensions and boundary fence. Above works to include drainage.</b>
<b>PARISH</b>	<b>Leighton-Linslade</b>
<b>WARD</b>	<b>Leighton Buzzard South</b>
<b>WARD COUNCILLORS</b>	<b>Cllrs Berry, Bowater &amp; Dodwell</b>
<b>CASE OFFICER</b>	<b>Donna Lavender</b>
<b>DATE REGISTERED</b>	<b>09 February 2015</b>
<b>EXPIRY DATE</b>	<b>06 April 2015</b>
<b>APPLICANT</b>	<b>Central Bedfordshire Council</b>
<b>AGENT</b>	<b>CBC Assets Team</b>
<b>REASON FOR COMMITTEE TO DETERMINE RECOMMENDED DECISION</b>	<b>CBC Applicant - Objections raised that could not be overcome.  Full Application – Recommended for Approval</b>

### **Summary of Recommendation**

The proposed development is required due to the increasing demand for school placements within the vicinity due to recent urban extensions to Leighton Buzzard. The design and siting of the extensions limits their visual intrusion and mitigates against flood risk. Opportunities have been made to improve biodiversity and to improve the parking and highway implications associated with the development. As such the proposed development would be in accordance with policies BE8 & T10 of the South Bedfordshire Local Plan Review, policies 27, 43, 49 & 57 of the emerging Development Strategy for Central Bedfordshire and the NPPF.

### **Site Location:**

The application site consists of Clipstone Brook Lower School located on Brooklands Drive within the town of Leighton Buzzard. The site is flanked to the north by Clipstone Brook and County Wildlife Site, to the east by properties in Waterdell, to the south by properties in Brooklands Drive and to the west by properties in South Street and Stratton Mews.

The site is within the urban area of Leighton Buzzard and is within the indicative floodplain (Flood Zone 3).

### **The Application:**

Permission is sought for an infill extension to the main hall of the building to provide drama facilities, a side extension to provide an extended staff room and a rear extension to provide 5 additional classrooms.

The proposed hall extension would measure 9.2 metres in width, 7 metres in depth and 6.4 metres in height incorporating a mono pitch roof design.

The proposed side extension would measure 6.3 metres in width, 9 metres in depth and would have an overall height of 3 metres incorporating a flat roof design.

The proposed rear extension to provide additional classroom space would measure 41 metres in width, 6.2 metres in depth and would have an overall height of 4.7 metres incorporating a flat roof design.

The existing pond would be relocated as part of the proposal alongside the incorporating of SUDs for flood management. Additional parking provision is also proposed to accommodate the additional staff numbers.

The following reports were provided in support of the application:

- Justification Statement
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Transport Statement
- Travel Plan
- Ecological Survey

## **RELEVANT POLICIES:**

### **National Planning Policy Framework (2012)**

#### **South Bedfordshire Local Plan Review Policies**

BE8 Design Considerations

T10 Parking - New Development

*(Having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework, the age of the plan and the general consistency with the NPPF, policy BE8 is still given significant weight. Policy T10 is afforded less weight).*

#### **Development Strategy for Central Bedfordshire**

Policy 1 : Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Policy 24: Accessibility and Connectivity

Policy 26: Travel Plans

Policy 27: Car Parking

Policy 28: Transport Assessments

Policy 43: High Quality Development

Policy 49: Flood Risk Mitigation

Policy 58: Landscape

Policy 57: Biodiversity & Geodiversity

Policy 59: Woodlands, Trees and Hedgerows

*(The Development Strategy was be submitted to the Secretary of State in October 2014. Having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework, weight is given to the policies contained within the emerging Development Strategy for Central Bedfordshire, which is consistent with the NPPF. )*

## Supplementary Planning Guidance

1. Central Bedfordshire Design Guide, Sept 2014
2. A Sporting Future for the Playing Fields of England (1997)

## Relevant Planning History

<b>Application:</b>	Planning	<b>Number:</b>	SB/75/00586/B
<b>Validated:</b>		<b>Type:</b>	Regulation 3
<b>Status:</b>	Received	<b>Date:</b>	30/04/1976
<b>Summary:</b>	Unknown	<b>Decision:</b>	Regulation 3 - Granted
<b>Description:</b>	SITE FOR PROPOSED LOWER SCHOOL (3.5 acres)		

## Representations:

### (Parish & Neighbours)

Town Council	Leighton Linlade Town Council (03/03/15) - No Objection
Neighbours	77, 85, 87 and 134a have raised concerns which are summarised as the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Additional traffic generation</li><li>• Highway safety implications</li><li>• Building within the flood plain</li><li>• Recommendation for an extra lollipop man</li><li>• Relocation of gate to entrance of the school</li><li>• Traffic calming or parking restrictions recommended</li></ul>

## Consultations/Publicity responses

1. Environment Agency (12/03/15) & (24/02/15) -

Concerns initially expressed due to the lack of FRA. Objects due to insufficient FRA.

Further to a revised FRA (April 2015) and plans as per their advised, their objection was removed subject to a condition on phasing on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2015.

2. CBC Trees and Landscape Officer (02/03/15) & (06/05/15) -

Objections raised due to the harm imposed on trees and landscaping alongside Clipstone Brook and the potential damage to ecology and structural integrity of the bank.

Objections were removed on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2015 as a result of revised plans removing the additional swale closest to the river bank.

3. CBC Sustainable Transport Officer  
(23/02/15) -

No objection, but a condition requesting a travel plan. Revisions were requested on receipt of a Travel Plan dated 17<sup>th</sup> April 2015.

On receipt of the updated travel plan dated 5<sup>th</sup> May 2015, no objections were raised but a condition was recommended to monitor the progress of the travel plan in the future.

4. Sport England (12/03/15) -

No Objection.

5. Friends of the Earth (19/03/15) &  
(08/05/15) –

Supports the expansion of the school and the relocation of the ponds. Concerns expressed in respect of the proposed swale on the east rear boundary of the site close to the river bank due to the loss of screening and ecology constraints. SuDs guidance does not appear to have been applied and there is a lack of a management plan for the wild flowers. Furthermore, opportunities should be had to ecological gain.

Suggestions were made on management of wildflower further to the additional information supplied during the life of the application. The applicant will be advised by way of an informative.

6. CBC Ecology (25/03/15) -

Ecological assessment required.

Further to the ecology surveys received 27<sup>th</sup> April 2015, the Ecologist has raised no objection to the granting of the permission.

7. Internal Drainage Board (26/03/15) -

Request for consultation with the EA with an appropriate FRA.

8. Greensand Trust (30/03/15) -

Concerns were expressed about the lack of flood risk mitigation or consideration of environmental impact. Deferred to the EAs expertise on an appropriate flood risk mitigation scheme but would welcome an improvement to biodiversity and would object to the loss of screening scrub to the rear of the site. The relocation

of the pond was welcomed.

9. CBC Highways Officer (31/03/15) & (07/05/15) -

Objection received due to the lack of a Transport Assessment.

Objection removed as a result of further information received on 07/05/15.

10. CBC Sustainable Growth Officer (02/04/15) -

No Objection, subject to the roof of the proposed rear extension being structurally strong enough to support the load of PV panels.

11. CBC SuDs engineer (30/04/15) -

No Objection, subject to the imposition of conditions in respect of maintenance of the surface water drainage method for the site.

12. CBC Countryside Access Project Officer (01/05/15) -

No Objection, as the revisions to the scheme would no longer have any effect on the bank side vegetation.

### **Determining Issues**

The main considerations of the application are;

1. **Principle**
2. **Design Considerations**
3. **Impact on Residential Amenity**
4. **Highways Considerations**
5. **Other Issues**

### **Considerations**

#### **1. Principle**

Paragraph 72 of the NPPF attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. 2,500 dwellings are planned within the East of Leighton Linslade extension, which will eventually require an additional 4 forms of entry (120 extra pupil places per age group) across all phases of education. This is the equivalent of 2 new 300 place lower schools, 1 new 480 place middle school and the expansion of existing upper school provision by 500 places including sixth form. 1,657 dwellings are forecast to be built in the Leighton Buzzard & Linslade area within the current 5 year forecast period.

As a result an additional 2 forms of entry of lower school provision is being planned to be provided on a permanent basis, from 2015/16. This would cater for children living within the catchments of lower schools to the south of Leighton Linslade because the majority of demographic demand is being driven by pupil yield from new and anticipated housing towards the south east of the town.

The additional places required within the lower school age range are proposed to be provided through the expansions of Leedon (300 to 450 places) and

Clipstone Brook Lower Schools (225 to 375 places). Both Leedon and Clipstone Brook Lower Schools, along with the new Greenleas Lower School, are within walking distance of the new housing developments. Leedon Lower School and Clipstone Brook Lower School are both Ofsted Good Schools with sites capable of expansion.

Feasibility studies have been completed and each school's Governing Body has concluded a consultation with its local community and other stakeholders regarding the proposed expansion following support provided by the Council's Executive in December 2014. As result of these studies and thorough consultation it was concluded that both Clipstone Brook and Leedon Lower School were the most viable options for expansion. As such, it is considered that the proposal would conform with the NPPF.

## **2. Design Considerations**

The proposed rear classroom extension would respect the existing character of the host building with the use of a flat roof design and the use of similar proportions to the openings which are used on the host building. Materials have been confirmed to match as closely as possible and as such it is considered the proposed extension would both compliment and harmonise with the host building.

The proposed extension to the main hall would be an infill and the sloped roof projection would be the only visible part of the extension from the rear boundary of the site, due to its siting within the main built form of the building. However this sloped roof projection respects the main building by providing a similar gradient to the slope roof features present on the building and the form is broken up by high level glazing to soften the flat edge of the roof.

The staff room extension would be located on the hardstanding play area to the eastern side of the building and is considered to be of a modest scale and design that would harmonise with the overarching character of the host building.

In addition, the buildings have been sited to limit the amount of loss of recreational land which is the playing fields used in conjunction with the school sports activities and Sport England has confirmed that the proposal conforms with their assessing supplementary advice contained within "A Sporting Future for the Playing Fields of England" and paragraphs 73 & 74 of the NPPF which states that permission should not be granted for proposals that result in the loss of playing fields unless an assessment of the impact of loss has been conducted and the amount of loss outweighed by the needs for the development.

Therefore the proposal would conform with policy BE8 of the South Bedfordshire Local Plan Review, policies 43, 58 & 59 of the emerging Development Strategy for Central Bedfordshire and the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide and the NPPF.

## **3. Impact on Residential Amenity**

The proposed rear extension would be located in the same position as the existing outbuilding and pond and would be sited in excess of 50 metres away from the closest residential property and therefore there would be no resultant overlooking. The additional extensions proposed are infills and sited within the

main built form of the school and as such would not result in any adverse impact on the local residential amenity. Therefore the proposal would conform with policy BE8 of the South Bedfordshire Local Plan Review, policy 43 of the emerging Development Strategy for Central Bedfordshire and the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide.

#### **4. Highways Considerations**

Concerns were expressed by the Councils Highway Officer in respect of the lack of information supplied with the application that detailed the applicants response to the impact on the highway network by the proposed development. A Transport Assessment was requested however this development was below the threshold where Transport Assessments are required as per policy 28 of the emerging Development Strategy and only a Travel plan was required to be submitted.

During the life of the application, a supporting travel plan and a transport statement detailing the additional staffing proposed and the parking proposed to facilitate the additional staff was supplied. It was recognised that the proposal would result in potential for additional traffic generation however the Highways Officer has commented that the level of traffic generation anticipated would be immaterial on the local network. Furthermore the applicant has supplied a travel plan which supports the schools commitment to improving travel arrangements to the school by encouraging more sustainable transport modes. In addition the statement included details of the highway improvements proposed around the school. No further objections have been raised by either the Sustainable Transport Officer or the Highways Officer as a result of this additional information. Therefore the proposal would conform with policy T10 of the South Bedfordshire Local Plan Review and policies 26 & 27 of the emerging Development Strategy for Central Bedfordshire and the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide.

#### **5. Other Issues**

##### **Flood Risk Mitigation**

The Environment Agency flood maps show the site falling within Flood Zone 3. Paragraph 99 of the NPPF states that where new development is brought forward in areas which are vulnerable to Flood Risk, care should be taken to ensure that risks can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through the planning of green infrastructure. Sequential tests are requested for development to a site within a Flood Zone 2 & 3 area however these tests are impractical to existing established sites whereby the function of a site cannot be reasonably fulfilled elsewhere. Furthermore the applicant has justified the need for this development in this location and the Environment Agency has not requested the need for greater investigation of this matter.

A number of concerns were raised during the life of the application in respect of a swale closest to the brook edge from not only the Environment Agency but also Friends of the Earth and The Greensand Trust due to the potential loss of planting with important screening value and impact on species of ecological value. This swale has been removed as it was not considered to be an effective solution and as such alleviated these concerns.

The revisions herein respond effectively to the risk of flood through the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage methods such as swale's and permeable surfacing in

accordance with Policy 49 of the emerging Development Strategy for Central Bedfordshire. Furthermore, water attenuation is planned to offset the discharge of water produced as a result of flooding, by discharging into one of the sport pitches on the west side of the site. The methods of attenuation and SuD solutions which have now been concluded are the result of effective engagement with the Councils Sustainable Drainage Officer and the Environment Agency during the life of the application. As such it is considered that the proposal accords with policy 49 of the emerging Development Strategy for Central Bedfordshire and the NPPF.

### **Sustainability**

Policy BE8 requires proposals for development (including extensions to existing buildings) to maximise energy efficiency and take full advantage of opportunities for renewable energy sources.

Energy efficiency of the proposed extension would meet the current Building Regulations standard, however the Councils Sustainability Officer has recommended making the building's fabric as energy efficient and economically feasible to lower energy demand and reduce energy bill.

The proposed new classroom block has a south facing pitched roof ideal for installation of photovoltaic panels. PV panels are a popular choice of renewable energy for schools as they generate electricity during school opening hours and provide savings on electricity bills and additional payments through Feed-in Tariff. PV panels are indicated to be not possible at this stage of the project for financial reasons however the Councils Sustainability Officer has recommended ensuring that the roof is PV ready: structurally strong enough to take additional load and with necessary connections for PV panels to be installed at a later date should the school wish to do it which can be suggested by way of an informative. Therefore the proposal conforms with policy BE8 of the South Bedfordshire Local Plan Review and the NPPF.

### **Biodiversity**

The proposal has been revised during the life of the application to remove any elements which would have resulted in an adverse impact on ecology. The proposal would not result in impact on protected species and as such no objections have been raised by the Councils Ecologist. The NPPF calls for development to deliver a net gain for biodiversity. The Ecologist is happy with net gain proposals which have been suggested including the relocation of the pond, detailed within the Ecology Survey. Therefore the proposal conforms with policy 57 of the emerging Development Strategy for Central Bedfordshire and the NPPF.

### **Human Rights issues**

The proposal raises no Human Rights issues.

### **Equality Act 2010**

It is noted that the extensions to the main building provides level access to allow students with mobility problems to easily enter the building. Doorways wide enough to allow a wheelchair access have been provided. Accessible toilet facilities have also been provided. The proposal therefore raises no issues under the Equality Act but an informative to advise of the responsibilities of the applicant is attached.



## **Recommendation**

That Planning Permission be GRANTED subject to the following:

### **RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS**

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 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 the existing building in the interests of the visual amenities of the locality.

(Policies BE8 S.B.L.P.R and 43, D.S.C.B)

- 3 The agreed measures approved within the Travel Plan dated May 2015, shall be implemented prior to the occupation of the new classroom extension. Monitoring reports and participation in Central Bedfordshire Council's Annual school travel survey shall be submitted annually to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety, to reduce congestion and to promote the use of sustainable modes of transport.

(Policy 26 D.S.C.B)

- 4 Works shall not commence on the construction of the rear extension until a scheme to level for level flood plain compensation has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be in accordance with the Flood Risk Assessment dated April 2015, and shall include a detailed design and associated management and maintenance plan of surface water drainage for the site, based on sustainable drainage principles and an assessment of the hydrological and hydrogeological context of the development. On approval of the scheme, it shall be fully implemented in accordance with the timing arrangements embodied within the scheme and maintained in accordance with an agreed management and maintenance plan.

Reason: To ensure the approved system will function to a satisfactory minimum standard of operation and maintenance such that the development would not increase the risk of flooding offsite.

(Policy 49 D.S.C.B)

- 5 The development shall not be occupied or brought into use until the parking scheme shown on Drawing No. 3009 Rev A has been completed. The scheme shall thereafter be retained for this purpose.

Reason: To ensure provision for car parking clear of the highway.  
(Policies T10 S.B.L.P.R and 27, D.S.C.B)

- 6 The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details shown on the submitted plans, 3001, 3003, 3005, 3006, 3007, 3009 Rev A, B00951-200 Rev T03, B00951-201 Rev T03, B00951/204 Rev T02, B00951/1001 Rev P04, Justification dated 29/04/15, Travel Plan dated 05/05/15, Flood Risk Assessment dated April 2015, Ecology Survey dated 29/04/15 and Wildlife Statement dated 20/04/15 and Transport Statement dated 29/04/15.

Reason: To identify the approved plans and to avoid doubt.

### **Notes to Applicant**

1. In accordance with Article 31 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010, the reason for any condition above relates to the Policies as referred to in the South Bedfordshire Local Plan Review (SBLPR) and the emerging Development Strategy for Central Bedfordshire (DSCB).
2. This permission relates only to that required under the Town & Country Planning Acts and does not include any consent or approval under any other enactment or under the Building Regulations. Any other consent or approval which is necessary must be obtained from the appropriate authority.
3. The applicant is advised that the proposed new classroom block has a south facing pitched roof ideal for installation of photovoltaic panels. PV panels are a popular choice of renewable energy for schools as they generate electricity during school opening hours and provide savings on electricity bills and additional payments through Feed-in Tariff. The Council's Sustainability Officer has recommended ensuring that the roof is PV ready: structurally strong enough to take additional load and with necessary connections for PV panels to be installed at a later date.
4. It is advised that the applicant uses the 'iOn Travel' website ([www.iontravel.co.uk/centralbedfordshire](http://www.iontravel.co.uk/centralbedfordshire)) to manage their travel plan and implement the actions contained within it. It also benefits applicants by helping them to fulfil their planning conditions through the use of the reporting part of the tool.
5. The applicant is advised that further information regarding the updating of the School Travel Plan is available from the Sustainable Transport Team, Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford, Bedfordshire, SG17 5TQ.
6. The applicant is advised that the wildflower seed should be checked to ensure that they have not been treated with pesticides as can happen and this will harm bee and preferably is as local and native as possible to fit in with the work of the town on bees.

It is recommended that the applicant leave an area completely uncut

otherwise there is no space for butterflies and bees to hibernate over the winter. It is also important to do the summer cut late in September in order to support butterflies. The Suffolk wildlife trusts do a fantastic document on grassland management.

<http://www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org/grassland-for-butterflies>

7. The applicants attention is drawn to their responsibility under The Equality Act 2010 and with particular regard to access arrangements for the disabled.

The Equality Act 2010 requires that service providers must think ahead and make reasonable adjustments to address barriers that impede disabled people.

These requirements are as follows:

- Where a provision, criterion or practice puts disabled people at a substantial disadvantage to take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage;
- Where a physical feature puts disabled people at a substantial disadvantage to avoid that disadvantage or adopt a reasonable alternative method of providing the service or exercising the function;
- Where not providing an auxiliary aid puts disabled people at a substantial disadvantage to provide that auxiliary aid.

In doing this, it is a good idea to consider the range of disabilities that your actual or potential service users might have. You should not wait until a disabled person experiences difficulties using a service, as this may make it too late to make the necessary adjustment.

For further information on disability access contact:

The Centre for Accessible Environments ([www.cae.org.uk](http://www.cae.org.uk))  
Central Bedfordshire Access Group ([www.centralbedsaccessgroup.co.uk](http://www.centralbedsaccessgroup.co.uk))

**Statement required by the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment No. 2) Order 2012 - Article 31**

Planning permission has been recommended for approval for this proposal. The Council acted pro-actively through positive engagement with the applicant at the pre-application stage and during the determination process which led to improvements to the scheme. The Council has therefore acted pro-actively to secure a sustainable form of development in line with the requirements of the Framework (paragraphs 186 and 187) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment No. 2) Order 2012.

**DECISION**

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