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## **Case Officer's Report of Recommended Action**

**Application No:** WSCC/032/20

**Local Council:** Chichester District Council

**Site Address:** North Mundham Primary School, School Lane, North Mundham,  
Chichester, West Sussex, PO20 1LA

**Applicant:** Director of Highways, Transport and Planning

**Description of Development:** Continued siting and use of 1 Double Temporary Classroom unit.

### **Background**

North Mundham Primary School is located on the eastern side of School Lane, to the north of Lagness Road. The application site is located outside of the built up area boundary as defined in the Chichester District Local Plan (2014). Residential properties stand beyond the highways to the south and west of the site.

The main school building occupies the western part of the application site; to the east of which stands the temporary classroom to which this application relates and the school playing field. North Mundham Parish Hall stands immediately beyond the northern school boundary. The site is enclosed by a mixture of natural and man-made boundaries with including mature trees to the south and east.

The site is located within the countryside, however is not within a designated area of landscape, historic or ecological interest, and it is not within an area identified to be at an increased risk of flooding.

The temporary unit to which this application relates stands to the east of the main school building. This structure is some 18m long by 7.5m wide. The structure is single storey, has a flat roof, rendered modular exterior walls and is accessed via the southern elevation over which stands a canopy.

The applicant seeks continued siting of the temporary classroom for a further 5 years as the previous temporary permission (WSCC/053/14/NM) has expired.

### **Relevant Planning History:**

WSCC/053/14/NM - Amendment of condition 1 of planning application WSCC/022/09/NM to allow the continued siting and use of 1 double temporary classroom unit (approved 19/09/2014)

- WSSC/072/13/NM - Installation of replacement 1500mm high bow top fencing alongside the Lagness Road boundary (approved 01/10/2013)
- WSSC/03/10/NM - Replace existing 1metre high steel bow-top fence with 1.6 metre high steel bow-top fence to increase playground security (approved 14/07/2010)
- WSSC/022/09/Nm - The continued siting and use of a temporary classroom unit (16/07/2009)
- NM/2091/04 - Variation of Condition 2 on planning permission NM/902/97 for the retention of relocatable classroom for a period of 5 years at North Mundham Primary School, School Lane, North Mundham, Chichester (approved 23/08/2004)
- NM/902/97 - The removal of a single storey relocatable unit and the installation of a double relocatable classroom unit with toilet facilities (approved 20/06/1997)

### **Environmental Impact Assessment**

Does not fall within Schedule 1 or 2 of the EIA Regulations. No EIA required.

### **Consultees and Comments:**

- County Councillor (Jamie Fitzjohn): No comments received
- Chichester District Council: No objection
- North Mundham Parish Council: No comments received.
- WSSC Highways: No objection
- WSSC Tree Officer: No objection

### **Representations**

None received.

### **Relevant Planning Policies**

#### Chichester Local Plan (2014-2029)

- Policy 1 – Sustainable Development
- Policy 10 – Chichester City Development Principles
- Policy 38 – Local and Community Facilities
- Policy 40 – Sustainable Design and Construction
- Policy 45 – Development in the Countryside

- Policy 46 – Alterations, Changes of Use and/or Re-use of Existing Buildings in the countryside
- Policy 48 – Natural Environment

#### North Mundham Neighbourhood Plan

North Mundham Parish was designated as an area for Neighbourhood Planning on the 16<sup>th</sup> of January, 2020. The plan is currently at a draft stage so can be given limited weight.

#### National Planning Policy Framework (Feb 2019)

Paragraphs:

- 11 (Presumption in favour of sustainable development)
- 38 (Positive decision making)
- 55 (Use of planning conditions)
- 91 (Healthy, inclusive and safe places)
- 94 (Proactive, positive and collaborative approach to providing sufficient school places)
- 117 (Making an effective use of land)
- 170 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment)

#### DCLG Policy Statement – planning for schools development (2011)

This national planning policy on schools does not form part of the development plan but helps guide decision-makers and should be read alongside the National Planning Policy Framework. In general terms it seeks to allow schools to expand, adapt and improve their facilities. It states ***“Local authorities should give full weight and thorough consideration to the importance of enabling the development of state-funded school in their planning decisions”*** and ***“Local authorities should make full use of their planning powers to support state-funded schools applications.”***

#### **Main Material Considerations**

The main considerations in relation to this application are its acceptability in terms of:

- Principle of the development;
- Appropriate location, scale, appearance and physical condition;
- Impact upon neighbouring amenity; and,
- Impact on local environment

### Principle of the development

West Sussex County Council has a programme to replace relocatable units on school sites with permanent buildings, prioritised against the County's Asset Management Plan. The classroom the subject of this application is currently used for general teaching and will continue to be needed to provide the necessary 'roofs over heads' to deliver the national curriculum.

The continued siting of the structure for a further five years is sought. The applicant advises that the replacement of this classroom with a permanent structure is not of high priority compared to other units across the county, so it is likely to be needed for some time going forward. It is considered that the educational need for the facility would support its continued retention within the site. Therefore the application is considered acceptable in principle.

### Appropriate location, scale, appearance and physical condition

The classroom unit stands to the east of the main school building and adjacent to the northern site boundary. The structure is considered to be well contained within the wider school campus given its central location within the site.

The structure is single storey by design and is considered to be of a subservient scale alongside other structures at the school. Externally, the building is of a utilitarian design of limited aesthetic value, however, given its siting centrally within the site and screening provided by other structures, no unacceptable adverse visual impacts are created that would justify a refusal. Although showing signs of ageing, the unit currently appears to be in a satisfactory physical condition that does not unacceptably detract upon the locality.

Although in a countryside location, the proposed classroom would fall within the grounds of an established school, and is of a small scale with minimal impact on the character of the locality. As a result its retention would not cause an unacceptable level of harm to the countryside. It is therefore considered that the unit is acceptable in terms of its location, scale, appearance and physical condition for an extended temporary period of five years, at the end of which, the balance of the need to provide 'roofs over heads' (which is of clear educational/community benefit), against an ageing building of temporary/utilitarian form, can be reviewed.

### Impact upon neighbouring amenity

The proposals seek the retention of a building that has been on site for a number of years without having given rise to any known impacts upon neighbouring amenity.

Residential properties are located directly beyond the highways to the south and west of the site, some 76 and 90m away respectively, and have limited views of the building as a result there would be no unacceptable impact on the outlook or amenity of adjoining neighbours.

The structure is to be retained for its current use and so no additional noise would be generated from its continued siting.

It is therefore considered that the continued siting of the unit would not have a detrimental effect on neighbouring amenity.

#### Other Material Considerations

The proposed development would not result in any other significant impacts considered to be material to the proposal.

#### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

Taking the above into account, the continued siting of the unit for an additional 5 years is considered to be acceptable in planning terms.

### **Recommendation**

**Grant permission for the continued siting of the classroom unit for a temporary period of 5 years.**

#### Conditions

##### **Time Limited Permission**

1. The temporary classroom unit hereby permitted as identified as 'Unit E1062' on Drawing No. NMPS/PL-01 'Location and Site Plan' (dated June 2014) shall be removed from the site and the land restored to its former condition, or to a condition to be agreed in writing by the County Planning Authority, either:
  - a. On or before the period ending 5 years from the date of this decision;
  - b. Within three months of the unit becoming surplus to the educational accommodation need at the school; or
  - c. Within three months of the first occupation of any new permanent replacement accommodation at the school,whichever occurs soonest.

Reason: *To review the special circumstances for which temporary permission is granted.*

## Informatives

In accordance with paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework, the County Planning Authority has approached the determination of this application in a positive and creative way, and has worked proactively with the applicant. As a result, the County Planning Authority has been able to recommend the grant planning permission for an acceptable proposal, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

## Crime and Disorder Act 1998

No implications arise from this development


## Human Rights Act 1998

Article 8 of the European Convention safeguards the respect for family life and home whilst Article 1 of the first protocol concerns the non-interference with the peaceful enjoyment of private property. Both rights are subject to conditions and interference with these rights may be permitted if the need to do so is proportionate. In this particular matter, the interests of those affected by the planned development have been fully considered as have the relevant considerations which may justify interference with particular rights. All of these are set out within the body of the report and are examined in the context of relevant planning considerations.

## Equalities

The County Council has a duty to have regard to the impact of any proposal on those people with characteristics protected by the Equality Act. Officers considered the information provided by the applicant, together with the responses from consultees and determined that the proposal would have no material impact on individuals or identifiable groups with protected characteristics. Accordingly, no changes to the proposal were required to make it acceptable in this regard.

<b>Date of Report Submission:</b>  30/07/2020	<b>Case Officer's Name:</b>  Edward Anderson
	<b>Case Officer's Signature:</b>

	
Date of Final Report: 31 07 20	Reviewer's Name: James Neave
	Reviewer's Signature 