

Committee: **Regulatory
Planning and Highways Sub Committee**

Date: **3 August 2005**

Report by: **Director of Transport and Environment**

Proposal: **A temporary classroom, library and administration building**

Site Address: **Cuckmere House School, Eastbourne Road, Seaford**

Applicant: **Director of Children's Services**

Application No. **LW/2406/CC**

Key Issues: i) **Need**
 ii) **Siting and design**

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To grant planning permission

CONSIDERATION BY DIRECTOR OF TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT

1. The Site and Surroundings

1.1 Cuckmere House School is situated on the eastern outskirts of Seaford fronting on to Eastbourne Road. Residential properties are situated to the north, south and east of the site.

1.2 The site is relatively small, with the main school building centrally located with two double mobile classrooms to the east with a car park beyond, and the playing field and playground to the south west of the school buildings. Vehicular and pedestrian access to the site is from Eastbourne Road which runs along the school's northern boundary.

2. The Proposal

2.1 It is proposed to erect a temporary double classroom unit, measuring approximately 17 metres in length by 18 metres in width and 3.5 metres in height. The mobile classroom would have a flat roof and white upvc window frames. The external walls would be finished in a green pvc coated steel onto plywood.

2.2 Although a double unit, this facility would provide one classroom only, with the remaining space providing a library, store area and office. A disabled access ramp would be on the eastern elevation of the unit and stepped access would be on the south and western elevation.

2.3 The unit would be situated to the east of the main school building, adjacent to two existing double mobile classroom units which are located to the far east of the school site. The applicant requests that the double unit be granted consent for five years.

3. Relevant Site History

3.1 Granted – 1980 – LW/435/CC. Change of use from Hostel for residential students at Seaford College of Education to a Residential Hostel for emotionally maladjusted children from East Quintin School.

3.2 Granted – 2001 – LW/1669/CC/1. Retention of double mobile classroom unit.

3.3 Granted – 2003 – LW/2207/CC. Retrospective retention of double mobile classroom unit.

3.4 Granted – 2004 – LW/2331/CC. Retrospective renewal of planning permission for a double mobile classroom unit.

4. Consultations and Representations

4.1 Lewes District Council Raise no objections to the proposed development.

4.2 Seaford Town Council Object to the proposed development on the grounds the County Council should make a stronger effort to provide permanent accommodation.

4.3 Neighbours No representations received.

5. The Development Plan policies of relevance to this decision are:

5.1 East Sussex Brighton & Hove Structure Plan 1991-2011 : Policy S1 (sustainability); EN1 (environment); TR3 (accessibility).

5.2 Lewes District Local Plan, Adopted March 2003: ST3 (design, form and setting of development) ST5 (access for people with limited mobility); ST6 (access for people with limited mobility).

6. Considerations

Need

6.1 Cuckmere House School is a special school for boys aged between 5 and 16 and caters for boys with statements of special educational needs (SEN) with severe emotional, behavioural and social difficulties that live in East Sussex. A significant number of pupils have a range of additional special educational needs.

6.2 Following an inspection in 2004, Ofsted invited the school to apply to be a Trailblazer Special Educational Needs (SEN) School in the category 'Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties'. The school is one of only twelve SEN Schools in England which have had the opportunity to apply for this type of funding. The proposed double mobile unit is to support the school's Trailblazer Project, in the form of an SEN Centre of Expertise, which will be expected to undertake outreach activities and share expertise to support inclusion among special and mainstream schools across the country. This will also allow the school to use their Specialist status to extend the range of opportunities to students which best meet their needs and interests.

6.3 As part of the funding for this initiative a capital grant has been awarded to assist with the infrastructure and reorganisation of the school. Two classrooms will make way for an ICT suite and this new mobile will be used to provide a new classroom, and storage, library, study area and office for the Headteacher.

6.4 Although a permanent extension would be preferable, it is not possible at this time due to budget constraints and the need to have committed the grant by September 2005. Children's Services Department have indicated that the school will be looking at ways to fund a permanent build over the coming years to replace all the mobiles on the site.

6.5 Although clearly not as desirable as permanent accommodation the unit is considered to be acceptable for a temporary period of five years as a means of providing this accommodation in association with the project, and until the future direction of the school becomes more certain.

Siting and design

6.6 Policy EN1 of the East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Structure Plan 1991-2011 seeks to conserve and enhance the built environment and policy S1 requires the environment surrounding the development to be considered. Policy TR3 seeks to ensure that appropriate provision is made for access for people with disabilities.

6.7 Policy ST3 of the Lewes Local Plan Adopted March 2003 requires development to have regard to the existing character of an area, respect the scale and height of adjacent buildings and the wider setting and use materials of a quality appropriate to the local area. Policies ST5 and ST6 seek to ensure that access is provided for people with limited mobility.

6.8 The mobile unit would be discreetly located within the school site, enclosed in a courtyard by existing buildings to the north, east, south and west which screen it from view. There are areas of dense screening to the boundaries of the school site which severely restrict views of the unit from the public realm. For these reasons the proposed development is considered to be acceptable in terms of siting.

6.9 The unit is typical of current temporary accommodation. Disabled access on the eastern elevation of the unit complies with planning policies, and the unit is of a design and colour which would match the existing mobile classroom units on the school site. It is considered to be acceptable in terms of design bearing in mind the temporary need.

7. Conclusion and reasons for approval

7.1 In accordance with Section 54A Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004 the decision on this application should be taken in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

7.2 The temporary proposal complies with Policies S1 and EN1 and TR3 of East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Structure Plan 1991-2011, and Policies ST3, ST5 and ST6 of the Lewes District Local Plan, Adopted March 2003.

7.3 There are no other material considerations and the decision should be taken in accordance with the development plans.

8. Recommendation

To recommended the Planning and Highways Sub Committee grant planning permission for planning application LW/2406/CC subject to the following condition:-

1. The temporary single mobile classroom unit hereby permitted shall be removed and the land restored to its former condition as a hard standing area on or before 3 August 2010 (B1a).

Reason: To enable the County Planning Authority to control and regulate the development and to comply with Policy EN1 of the East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Structure Plan 1991-2011 and ST3 of the Lewes District Local Plan Adopted March 2003.

BOB WILKINS
Director of Transport and Environment
26 July 2005
P&HSUB: P3AUG-LW2406CC

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Local Member: Councillor Mike Murphy

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Development plans.

Responses to consultations.

LW/2406/CC	LW/435/CC	LW/444/CC	LW/444/CC/1
LW/444/CC/2	LW/444/CC/3	LW/444/CC/4	LW/444/CC/5
LW/1669/CC	LW/1518/CC	LW/1955/CC	LW/2207/CC
LW/2331/CC			