TO: PLANNING & REGULATORY COMMITTEE
BY: PLANNING DEVELOPMENT CONTROL TEAM MANAGER
DISTRICT(S) ELMBRIDGE BOROUGH COUNCIL
DATE: 22 June 2011

PURPOSE: FOR DECISION
GRID REF: 516340 165690

TITLE: SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL PROPOSAL EL11/5216

SUMMARY REPORT

Land at Hinchley Wood Primary School, Claygate Lane, Esher, Surrey KT10 0AQ

Installation of demountable unit comprising two classrooms for a temporary period of seven years with associated canopy and hard play area.

Hinchley Wood Primary School provides places for 420 pupils aged 4 to 11 years. There are presently 419 pupils on the roll. The school site is located within the urban area of Hinchley Wood, on the east side of Claygate Lane immediately south of Hinchley Wood Secondary School.

The current proposal is for the installation of a demountable unit comprising two classrooms for a temporary period of seven years with associated canopy and hard play area. The demountable unit would be located to the east of the main school building on an area of grass. The building would measure a width of 20m, a depth of 9.8m and a height of 3.7m covering 196sqm. The building would provide 2 classrooms, store, lobby and w/c’s.

Key issues to be considered in the determination of this application are the potential impacts on the design and visual amenity of the site. The impact on neighbouring amenity will also be fully considered and any highways implications that may arise from the development. These matters have been assessed in the report.

Officers consider that the proposed development would not give rise to an unacceptable impact on design or visual amenity nor would it adversely impact upon neighbouring amenity or the highway. Therefore, Officers recommend that planning permission should be granted.

The recommendation is to PERMIT subject to conditions

APPLICATION DETAILS

Applicant
Estates Planning and Management

Date application valid
12 April 2011
**Period for Determination**

7 June 2011

**Amending Documents**

None

**SUMMARY OF PLANNING ISSUES**

This section identifies and summarises the main planning issues in the report. The full text should be considered before the meeting.

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**Aerial Photographs**

Aerial

**Site Photographs**

Figure 1: View of the application site facing west with main school building in the background
Figure 2: View of the application site facing south west with main school building in the background
Figure 3: View of the application site facing north west with main school building in the background
Figure 4: View of the application site facing south, located behind the covered seating area

**BACKGROUND**

**Site Description**

1. Hinchley Wood Primary School provides places for 420 pupils aged 4 to 11 years. There are presently 419 pupils on the roll. The school site is located within the urban area of Hinchley Wood, on the east side of Claygate Lane immediately south of Hinchley Wood Secondary School. The buildings of both schools are situated in the western half of the site with the school playing fields on the eastern half. The main primary school buildings date from 1952 and are of brick construction, with a mixture of pitched and flat tiled roofs.

2. The County Council as County Planning Authority has received a total of 14 applications for temporary classroom accommodation. The programme was adopted following a report to the Cabinet Member for Change and Efficiency on 20 April 2010, though many of the applications were made before that date.
3. Forecasting of numbers of school places required is carried out on an annual and area by area basis. It takes account of factors which include demographic trends in birth rate, propensity of parents to opt for non-state education, and data about new housing development which can be expected to give rise to demand for school places. A significant rise in future demand for primary places has been detected through this exercise. In March 2010, Cabinet approved a substantial Schools Basic Needs Programme to address future demand and agreed that demand for places in September 2011 and beyond to 2013 be met through provision of demountable classrooms. Many of the current applications are therefore temporary solutions pending decisions on whether and where permanent accommodation needs to be provided. The need identified in the Basic Needs Programme is spread across the County, with particular concentrations in Elmbridge and Reigate and Banstead.

4. Other applications are the result of an unforecast excess of applications for places over the available supply in particular areas. Need for applications of this type only emerges in February / March after parents make applications for the following September. This group of applications is dealing with a one off bulge in applications which are not precursors to permanent accommodation provision.

Planning History

5. The planning history for the site is summarised below:

EL11/0775 - Erection of new brick faced storage shed following removal of existing timber sheds.

EL07/2730 - Erection of a detached single storey building for use as an after school club and additional teaching space (permitted in December 2007)

EL02/2399 - Removal of three demountable classrooms and the construction of three permanent extensions to provide three new classrooms together with new corridors, the re-routing of the access road and provision of 11 parking spaces (permitted in February 2003)

EL97/1615 - Details of the location and size of the playground pursuant to Condition 5 of planning permission EL97/0822 (approved in November 1997)

EL97/0822 - Construction of an infant classroom block extension to the main building (252 sq m); an extension to existing infant classroom (21 sq m); an activity studio extension to existing annexe (93 sq m); new main entrance, 4 new parking spaces and new hard play area (375 sq m) (permitted in August 1997)

EL95/0792 - Erection of a 70 sq m temporary classroom unit and a 144 sq m dining unit (permitted in August 1995)

EL77/591 - Erection of three demountable classrooms to the south east of the main school building (permitted in July 1977)

EL75/867 - Erection of two movable classrooms (permitted in September 1975)

ESH.71/533 - Erection of two movable classrooms to replace fire damaged accommodation (permitted in August 1971)

ESH.17320 - Construction of a two classroom unit and a sanitary block (permitted in July 1960)

ESH.12638 - Erection of an extension to provide a new classroom and medical inspection room in brickwork to match present building (permitted in June 1956)
ESH.7161 - Erection of a Spartan II classroom unit (permitted in October 1950)
A small greenhouse was judged to be permitted development in 1987.

THE PROPOSAL

6. The current proposal is for the installation of a demountable unit comprising two classrooms for a temporary period of seven years with associated canopy and hard play area. The demountable unit would be located to the east of the main school building on an area of grass immediately adjacent to the play ground. The building would measure a width of 20m, a depth of 9.8m and a height of 3.7m covering 196sqm. The building would provide 2 classrooms, store, lobby and w/c's. The building would be constructed with cedar boarding on the elevations. A small canopy is proposed on the west elevation of the building with an area of hard play to the north and west.

7. The building is required in order to accommodate a temporary increase in pupil numbers and is not intended to accommodate a permanent increase in the Pupil Admission Number (PAN). Projections suggest that there is a need for more than seven additional forms of entry in Elmbridge and this is in part due to natural demographics and an increase in birth rates. As such further places are needed to ensure that there is sufficient provision for all children of statutory school age that will require a place in a state school from September 2011.

CONSULTATIONS AND PUBLICITY

District Council

8. Elmbridge Borough Council  No objection

Consultees (Statutory and Non-Statutory)

9. Transportation Development Control  No objection

Parish/Town Council and Amenity Groups

10. Hinchley Wood Residents Association  No comments received

Summary of publicity undertaken and key issues raised by public

11. The application was publicised by the posting of 2 site notices. A total of 42 owner / occupiers of neighbouring properties were directly notified by letter. 6 letters of representation have been received raising the following objections:

- Claygate Lane is already congested and the additional car movements will further exacerbate the situation at either end of the lane
- Claygate Lane gets blocked, ill manners of drivers and, residents driveways get blocked
- Parking at school is insufficient, people park on the lane and the volume of traffic already results in damage to kerbs and verges
- High risk of more accidents
- Demand for places is not considered to be temporary and will increase
- What accommodation will be provided in the long term
- Building will be located on the playing field
- Other areas of land which could be used for a new primary school
• Seven years is not temporary, even so temporary classrooms stay longer and is not a solution to the shortage of places
• Need additional permanent school facilities
• More students will reduce the quality of life for the residents
• Lease Grantchester House in Hinchley Wood

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

12. The site is located within the urban area of Hinchley Wood within a residential area. This site is not designated as having any environmental or ecological constraints. The proposal will be assessed in terms of the impact on design and visual amenity as well as the impact on residential amenity. The highways implications of the development will also be considered. The application needs to be considered on its own merits. It is only necessary to consider the relative merits of alternative proposals if there are practical or planning policy considerations which suggest that permission should not be granted for this proposal. The development will be assessed against relevant policy within the South East Plan 2009 and the Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000.

DESIGN AND VISUAL AMENITY

The South East Plan May 2009
Policy BE1 – Management for an Urban Renaissance
Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000
Policy ENV1 – Development and the Environment
Policy ENV2 – Standard and Design

13. Policy BE1 of the South East Plan 2009 states that local authorities and their partners will use opportunities associated with new development to help provide significant improvements to the built environment, they will promote and support design solutions relevant to context and which built upon local character, distinctiveness and sense of place.

14. Policy ENV1 states that new development should not have a materially detrimental effect on the character or the environment. All development should have regard to the scale, character and materials of the existing development. Policy ENV2 states that in order to protect and enhance the appearance of the area and the local amenity, all new development should achieve a standard of design which is sensitive to the surrounding area. The policy includes criteria for new developments which should respect its existing context in terms of plot and frontage sites, building alignments, views and space around the buildings; respect the surrounding environment in terms of scale, massing and height and in terms of form and design a development should reinforce existing visual characteristics of the existing structures.

15. The demountable unit would be located to the east of the main school building on an area of grass immediately adjacent to the playground. The building would measure a width of 20m, a depth of 9.8m and a height of 3.7m covering 196sqm. The building would provide 2 classrooms, store, lobby and w/c’s. A canopy is proposed which would be attached to the west elevation of the demountable and would measure a width of 20m, a depth of 2.8m and a maximum height of 3m. The existing hard play area would be extended slightly to the north and west of the demountable unit in order to incorporate the proposed building.

16. The building has been proposed at this school as Hinchley Wood School is close to the pattern of the current demand. A number of other schools were considered but were discounted due to constraints in terms of space or have already been recently expanded. Proposals are currently being developed in order to accommodate the shortfall of places in the long-term but in the mean time, the provision for temporary accommodation is sought to solve the problem in the short-term.
17. The location of the development was fully considered and the proposed siting of the demountable was considered the most practical given the location of the existing school buildings and hard play area. The proposal would not result in the loss of a playing pitch as this part of the playing field is not marked out as a playing pitch. Officers acknowledge that the development would encroach onto part of the playing field however, Officers consider that this small encroachment would not compromise the use of the playing field given that the new building would be within the cluster of existing built form and hardstanding causing minimal encroachment onto the school playing field limiting the overall impact of the development. Therefore in this instance, Officers are satisfied that Sport England do not need to be consulted on the application.

18. The proposed demountable building is required to accommodate the additional pupil numbers for September 2011. The demountable is a functional building in a practical location to ensure minimal disruption. The unit is for a temporary period of seven years. The building would be clad with timber in order to reduce the impact of the proposal on the surrounding area. The building would be single storey with a flat roof which would also help to limit the impact of the development. The proposal would not be visible from the street scene given its location to the rear of the site.

19. Officers consider that the construction of a temporary demountable classroom, with canopy and hardstanding, would not conflict with the scale or character of the site and would not result in a detrimental impact on either the design or visual amenity of the surrounding locality. As such the proposal would accord with development plan policy in this regard.

**IMPACT ON NEIGHBOURING AMENITY**

**Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000**

**Policy COM4 – Provision of Educational Facilities**

20. Local Plan Policy COM4 allows extension of existing educational facilities provided that a number of criteria are met. These include there being no significant adverse impact on local residents.

21. The nearest neighbouring properties to the proposed development are those located to the south east of the site. These are located over 70m from the proposed demountable unit. This good distance combined with the scale and height of the demountable unit would ensure that there would be a minimal impact to the amenities of these properties in terms of loss of light, loss of privacy or overbearance. The proposed building would not be visible from the front of the site or to the west as the existing buildings would block the view of the proposed unit. There would be no impact to the north east as the existing playing field separates the application site from the surrounding properties.

22. It is acknowledged that there will be an increase in the number of cars going to and from the school at peak times, however, Officers consider that the proposal would not materially alter the existing situation in terms of disturbance arising from vehicle movements and as such do not consider that neighbouring amenity would be compromised as a result of the development.

23. Given the above, Officers are satisfied that the proposed building would not adversely impact the neighbouring properties amenities and would comply with development plan policy in this regard.
HIGHWAYS CONSIDERATIONS

National Guidance
Planning Policy Guide 13: Transport
South East Plan 2009
Policy T4 - Parking
Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000
Policy COM4 – Provision of Educational Facilities

24. Local Plan Policy COM4 allows extension of existing educational facilities provided the existing road network is capable of absorbing traffic generated, the site is accessible by a choice of means of transport and adequate provision is made for stopping and parking. Regional Plan Policy T4 requires that local development documents adopt restraint based maximum levels of parking provision for non-residential uses and set maximum parking standards in line with PPG13, ‘Transport’.

25. The proposed unit provides the physical capacity for the school’s size to increase by 60 places from its existing 420 place capacity. The provision of the classrooms is for a temporary increase in pupils rather than a permanent change in the school’s Pupil Admission Number (PAN). This increase can be expected to add to the number of cars used by parents to drop off and collect children, and the amount of parking on roads in the immediate vicinity for a short period at the beginning and end of the school day. A number of concerns have been raised by local residents in regard to the impacts of the additional traffic movements on the surrounding area.

26. Transportation Development Control (TDC) were consulted on the application and have no objection in terms of safety, capacity or policy and advise that there are no highways concerns related to the expansion of the number of pupils attending the school. TDC advised that there is localised short-term congestion and parking on Claygate Lane during school drop off and pick up times. They advise that these issues are generally related to amenity rather than highway safety. In broad sustainability terms, they consider that it makes sense for additional accommodation to be located in the community where there is the additional demand, increasing the likelihood of children walking to school and reducing the reliance on the car.

27. Officers accept that there will be an increase in traffic movements in the local area as a result of the school expansion. The nature of the acute peaks of movements to / from the school means these are short impacts, which are inevitable with any school, regardless of the school size. Officers consider that the school should update their travel plan in order to accommodate the increase in pupil numbers and this will be secured by a condition. Officers consider that the need for the increase in school places, given the shortage of school places in the area, outweighs the congestion difficulties at school drop off and pick up times.

HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

28. The Human Rights Act Guidance for Interpretation, contained in the Preamble to the Agenda is expressly incorporated into this report and must be read in conjunction with the following paragraph.

29. The Officer’s view is that there are no adverse impacts on amenity. This proposal does not engage any of the articles of the Convention and has no Human Rights implications.
CONCLUSION

30. The scale, design and location of the building would not adversely impact on the design or visual amenity of the existing site and would integrate well within the surrounding area. The proposal would not be dominant when viewed from the street scene.

31. Given the good separation distances between the building and the neighbouring dwellings, there would be no adverse impact on the neighbouring properties as a result of the proposal. Officers acknowledge the local concern of the residents however do not consider that the proposal would result in a detrimental impact in highways terms furthermore, TDC do not object to the proposal.

32. Given the above, Officers consider that the proposal would be acceptable and would accord with the policies as outlined in The South East Plan May 2009 and the Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000 and as such it is officers view that the proposal should be granted subject to relevant conditions.

RECOMMENDATION

33. That pursuant to Regulation 3 of the Town and County Planning General Regulations 1992, application no. EL/11/5216 be permitted subject to the following conditions.

Conditions:

1. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in all respects strictly in accordance with the following plans/drawings:
   - Site Location Plan, drawing number A-100 Rev C dated March 2011
   - Proposed Block Plan, drawing number A-101 Rev B dated March 2011
   - Proposed Elevations, drawing number A-102 Rev B dated March 2011

2. The development hereby approved shall be for a limited period of seven years from the date of the permission on or before which date the buildings hereby permitted shall be removed and the land restored to its former condition.

3. No later than 6 months from the date of this permission, a revised and updated school travel plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The travel plan shall detail how the school will accommodate and manage the increase in vehicular movements as a result of the increase in the schools capacity. Only the approved details shall be implemented.

Reasons:

1. For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

2. To reflect the terms of the application and in order that the County Planning Authority may have the opportunity to reconsider the matter in the light of experience, taking into account any altered circumstances at the time of the expiry of the permission and to ensure that the land is returned to a condition that does not prejudice the resumption of the previous use, in the interests of the character and amenities of the area in accordance with Policy ENV1 of the Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000.

3. To limit the effects of car traffic associated with the development hereby permitted and to encourage the use of non-car modes of transport pursuant to Policy COM4 of the Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000.
ITEM 10

Informatives:

1. This approval relates only to the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and must not be taken to imply or be construed as an approval under the Building Regulations 2000 or for the purposes of any other statutory provision whatsoever.

2. The attention of the applicant is drawn to the requirements of Sections 7 and 8 of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 and to Design Note 18 'Access for Disabled People to Educational Buildings' published in 1984 on behalf of the Secretary of State, or any prescribed document replacing that note.

THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE) (ENGLAND) ORDER 2010

Reasons for the grant of planning permission and development plan policies/proposals relevant to the decision.

The development

1. will provide the following benefits: temporary classroom space to accommodate an increase in pupil numbers;

2. is in accordance with the development plan policies so far as they are relevant to the application and there are no material considerations which indicate otherwise; and

3. any harm can be adequately mitigated by the measures proposed in the application and the conditions subject to which planning permission is granted.

The proposal has been considered against the following development plan policies/provisions:

The South East Plan May 2009:

Policy BE1 – Management for an Urban Renaissance
Policy T4 - Parking

Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000:

Policy ENV1 – Development and the Environment
Policy ENV2 – Standard and Design
Policy COM4 – Provision of Educational Facilities

CONTACT

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

The deposited application documents and plans, including those amending or clarifying the proposal, responses to consultations and representations received as referred to in the report and included in the application file and the following:

Government Guidance
Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 (PPG13): Transport
The Development Plan
The South East Plan 2009
Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000