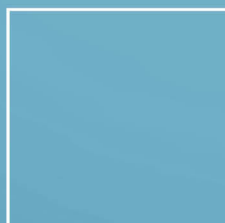
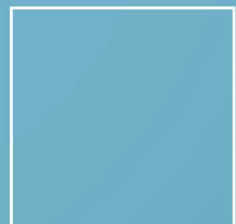
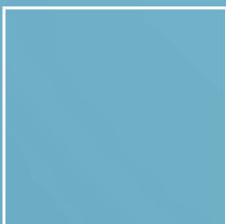


Cambridgeshire County Council

**Planning Statement**  
**Minor-Material**  
**Amendment Application**  
**Bottisham Primary**  
**School**



## Issue Sheet

Report Prepared for: CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MINOR-MATERIAL AMENDMENT APPLICATION IN RELATION TO BOTTISHAM PRIMARY  
SCHOOL

PLANNING STATEMENT

FEBRUARY 2021

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Date: February 2021

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## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1.1 This planning statement has been produced on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council to support a planning application seeking to extend the temporary planning permission for 'The erection of a 7-bay (21m x 8.7m) mobile classroom for a temporary period until August 2021 with the installation of two new scooter pods' at Bottisham Primary School, Beechwood Avenue, Bottisham, Cambridge, CB25 9BE.
- 1.1.2 This planning application is a Regulation 3 application under the Town and Country Planning General Regulations (1992) legislation which enables Local Authorities to apply for planning permission for development whereby they have a significant interest or are the landowner.
- 1.1.3 This Planning Application is made under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) and seeks to vary Condition 3 attached to the decision notice for planning permission ref: E/3002/16/CC, described above.
- 1.1.4 The proposal would allow the retention of the mobile classroom unit for a further 3 years.
- 1.1.5 A Non-Material Amendment under Section 96A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) has been submitted in parallel with this application. The Non-Material Amendment proposes to amend the original description of development as described in the supporting letter which accompanies the application.
- 1.1.6 The retention of the mobile classroom is required for a further 3 years allow the school to maintain sufficient teaching space to accommodate existing and future pupils. This is outlined in a letter from Cambridgeshire County Council Education Department, accompanying this submission.

## **2 SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSALS**

### **2.1 The Site**

- 2.1.1 The application site is within the grounds of Bottisham Primary School, located west of Beechwood Avenue, Bottisham, Cambridgeshire and falls within the East Cambridgeshire Local Authority Boundary. The school is sited within easy access to all residents of Bottisham village. The main access is gained from Beechwood Avenue, and there is a secondary pedestrian entrance, to the field, from West Walk. The school is surrounded by low density residential development.
- 2.1.2 The application site consists of the existing modular classroom building which is located within the school grounds, as shown on Site Location Plan drawing no: Mc120-LT-004. The structure received planning permission in July 2016, and has been in place since, providing a valuable facility for pupils and staff. The structure takes the form of a 21m x 8.7m mobile classroom building consisting of an entrance lobby, WC facilities, two classroom areas, and associated storage facilities.
- 2.1.3 The site lies within Flood Risk Zone 1 (least at risk of flooding), and outside Bottisham Conservation Area. The trees to the rear of the school field fall within the Conservation Area. None of the school buildings are either statutory or locally listed.

### **2.2 Planning History**

- 2.2.1 The planning history records available for the School online are set out below.

#### **Planning History**

- 2.2.2 Ref. No: E/3002/16/CC | Status: Approve  
*The erection of a 7-bay (21m x 8.7m) mobile classroom for a temporary period until August 2021 with the installation of two new scooter pods.*
- 2.2.3 Ref. No: E/00765/95/CC | Status: Approve  
*Extension To Provide Two Classbases And Repositioning Of Mobile Classroom*
- 2.2.4 Ref. No: E/00739/96/CC | Status: Approve  
*Extension To Staffroom And To Car Park*
- 2.2.5 Ref. No: E/00453/95/CC | Status: Approve  
*Relocation Of A 5-Bay And retention of A 1-Bay Mobile Units*
- 2.2.6 Ref. No: E/00632/94/CC | Status: Approve  
*Extension To Provide New Group Room*
- 2.2.7 Ref. No: E/00394/92/CC | Status: Approve  
*Retention Of A 1-Bay And A 5-Bay Mobile Units*
- 2.2.8 Ref. No: E/00058/89/CC | Status: Approve  
*Retention Of Two Mobile Classrooms*
- 2.2.9 Ref. No: E/01677/88/CC | Status: Approve  
*Alterations To Covered Area To Provide Cloakroom*
- 2.2.10 Ref. No: E/00869/77/CC | Status: Approve  
*Erection Of 1 "Elliott" 3-Bay Mobile Classroom*
- 2.2.11 Ref. No: E/01049/85/CC | Status: Approve  
*Erection Of A 5-Bay And Retention Of A 3-Bay Mobile Classrooms*

- 2.2.12 The records show that mobile classrooms have been a feature of the school's history when needed to accommodate greater capacity.

## **2.3 The Proposal**

- 2.3.1 The proposal seeks to extend the temporary permission period for the mobile classroom at Bottisham Primary School, which is due to end on 31st August 2021.

- 2.3.2 It is proposed to vary Condition 3, which currently reads:

*'The mobile classroom hereby permitted shall be removed from the site on or before 31 August 2021. Within 1 month of the removal of the mobile classroom, the land shall be restored to its former condition.'*

*Reason: To define the permission and to protect the character, appearance of the locality in accordance with Policies ENV 1, ENV 2, GROWTH 2 and GROWTH 5 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan (adopted April 2015).'*

- 2.3.3 The proposed updated wording would extend the operational time period of the planning permission for a period of 3 years. As such, we suggest that the Condition is varied to read as follows:

*'The mobile classroom hereby permitted shall be removed from the site on or before 31 August 2024. Within 1 month of the removal of the mobile classroom, the land shall be restored to its former condition.'*

*Reason: To define the permission and to protect the character, appearance of the locality in accordance with Policies ENV 1, ENV 2, GROWTH 2 and GROWTH 5 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan (adopted April 2015).'*

- 2.3.4 The structure has a standard temporary modular appearance. Access to the mobile is via both stepped and ramp access. In common with modular buildings of this type it is supported a short distance above the surrounding ground surface. The gap between the ground level and the lower edge of the building is infilled with a slatted timber skirt to allow adequate ventilation of the underfloor void.

- 2.3.5 The mobile has its own external fire exit door from the classroom, in compliance with Building Regulations.

- 2.3.6 As no uplift in pupil or staff numbers is proposed through this variation, no additional cycle or scooter parking spaces are sought.

### **3 Planning Policy**

#### **3.1 Decision Making**

3.1.1 Under Section 38 of The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 ('The 2004 Act'), the determination of planning applications must be in accordance with the approved development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This chapter identifies the national and local planning policies that comprise the framework within which the decision on this planning application must be made.

#### **3.2 National Planning Policy**

3.2.1 National planning policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which was published in March 2012. The NPPF has since undergone consultation and subsequently a revised submission was published in February 2019. This provides a framework within which regional and local policy is set.

3.2.2 The NPPF sets out that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, identifying that sustainable development consists of economic, social and environmental roles.

3.2.3 Paragraph 8(b) outlines that part of the social objective of sustainable development is to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being.

3.2.4 Paragraph 11 advises that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision making this means approving development which accords with the local development plan without delay. Where there are no relevant policies of the policies are out of date, permission should be granted unless:

- The application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusal; or
- Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.

3.2.5 Chapter 8 sets out that the planning system should play a role to play in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities. Local Authorities should to plan positively for the provision of community facilities and ensure that services are able to develop and modernise in a way that is sustainable and for the benefit of the community.

3.2.6 Paragraph 94 attaches great importance to ensuring a sufficient choice of school places are available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. The NPPF encourages Local Authorities to take a positive, proactive and collaborative approach to meeting the education needs of the community and should give great weight to the need to expand schools.

3.2.7 The Framework emphasises the importance of promoting sustainable transport. Paragraphs 102 and 103 emphasise the value of sustainable methods of transport and their ability to contribute to wider sustainability and health objectives.

3.2.8 The Framework encourages the conservation or enhancement of biodiversity, and describes that opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged.

3.2.9 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) elaborates on the role health and wellbeing can play in creating sustainable and successful communities. The Guidance outlines that 'The design and use of the built and natural environments, including green infrastructure are major determinants of health and wellbeing. Planning and health need to be considered together in two ways: in terms of creating environments that support and encourage healthy lifestyles, and in terms of identifying and securing the facilities needed for primary, secondary and tertiary care, and the wider health and care system (taking into account

the changing needs of the population)' (Paragraph: 001 Reference ID:53-001-20190722 Revision date: 22 07 2019).

### **3.3 Local Planning Policy**

#### **East Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2015)**

- 3.3.1 The East Cambridgeshire Local Plan was adopted in April 2015 and is the current development plan for the purpose of determining this application.
- 3.3.2 Policy GROWTH 1: 'Levels of housing, employment, and retail growth' outlines that provision will be made for 11,500 new homes in the district between 2011 and 2031.
- 3.3.3 Policy GROWTH 2: 'Locational Strategy' describes that the majority of development will be focused on the market towns of Ely, Soham and Littleport and limited development will take place in villages which have a defined development envelope to support local services, shops and community needs. Bottisham is a village with a defined development envelope and is described as playing a key service role for its rural hinterlands. The Policy explains that within the defined development envelopes housing, employment and other development to meet local needs will normally be permitted – provided there is no significant adverse effect on the character and appearance of the area and that all other material planning considerations are satisfied.
- 3.3.4 The Local Plan provides individual vision strategies for settlements, of which Bottisham is covered in section 8.5. It describes Bottisham as a relatively large village and lists the good range of local services and amenities. The housing strategy for the village is that there will be additional housing growth over the plan period within the development envelope. The need to extend Bottisham primary School is also referenced under infrastructure requirements.
- 3.3.5 Policy GROWTH 3: 'Infrastructure requirements' sets out where new schools will be needed across the plan period, but does not describe the approach to expansion of existing schools on a temporary or permanent basis.
- 3.3.6 Policy GROWTH 5: 'Presumption in favour of sustainable development' confirms that the District Council will work with applicants to achieve suitable sustainable development which will improve social conditions within the area. It sets out that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in Neighbourhood Plans) will be approved wherever possible without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision, permission will be granted unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account: Any adverse impacts of granting permission which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole; Specific policies in the NPPF which indicate that development should be restricted or refused; and Strategic objectives of the Local Plan including those within Town and Village visions.
- 3.3.7 Policies ENV1 'Landscape and settlement character' and ENV2 'Design' stipulate that development should create positive, complementary relationships with existing development. This includes having regard to local context, making efficient use of land, considering location, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and colour of new buildings, and how development relates to the surrounding area. ENV2 outlines that proposals should incorporate sustainable construction principles and methods. Furthermore, it describes that good design includes considering the impact of proposals on neighbours, ensuring that there is no detrimental effect on their amenity.
- 3.3.8 Policy ENV4 requires applicants to demonstrate how they have considered maximising all aspects of sustainable design and construction.



- 3.3.9 Policy ENV7: 'Biodiversity and geology' requires all proposals to protect the biodiversity and geological value of land and buildings and minimise harm to or loss of environmental features including trees and hedgerows.
- 3.3.10 Policy COM4 sets out that new or improved community facilities, such as schools, should be located within settlement boundaries. Specifically, new or improved community facilities should:
- Be well located and accessible to its catchment population (including by foot and cycle);
  - Not have a significant adverse impact (itself or cumulatively) in terms of the scale or nature of traffic generated;
  - Not have a significant adverse impact character of the locality, or the amenity of nearby properties;
  - Demonstrate that opportunities to maximise shared use have been explored; and
  - Be designed to facilitate future adaption for alternative community uses of shared use.
- 3.3.11 Policy COM7 states that development proposals should reduce the need to travel, particularly by car and should promote sustainable forms of transport appropriate to its particular location. The policy describes that Transport Statements will be required where proposals are likely to result in significant transport implication and Travel Plans will be required where development is likely to generate significant amounts of traffic. Steps to mitigate impacts relating to noise, pollution, amenity, health, safety and traffic should be set out in such documents, as appropriate.
- 3.3.12 Policy COM8 'Parking Provision' specifies that for schools, there should be up to 1 car space for each member of staff, up to 1 visitor car space per class (limit of 8 overall) and 6 cycle spaces per primary school class/12 spaces per secondary school class.

## 4 Key Planning Issues

### 4.1 Principle of development and need

4.1.1 The site is located within the development envelope of Bottisham village, where infrastructure to support existing population and planned growth is supported by Local Plan Policies GROWTH 1 and GROWTH 2. There is a clear and evidenced need for the retention of the existing temporary mobile classroom at Bottisham Primary School. The principle of development is accepted, evidenced by the planning permission for which this application seeks a variation to. The development is already in operation and has been since 2016. The remainder of this section of the report describes the proposal's conformity with other Local Plan policies.

4.1.2 The site is well enclosed by mature planting. In respect of the mobile classroom, mature hedges and trees screen the building from the majority of neighbouring residential properties to the north, south and west. The main school building screens the classroom from views to the north and east. The closest properties to the south are approximately 13 metres from the classroom, set behind mature dense hedgerows with trees, and the houses are set around 50 metres from the school boundary, within deep plots.

4.1.3 The needs justification letter prepared by Cambridgeshire County Council, submitted with this planning application, outlines:

*The school has a nursery class and eight permanent classrooms and a double mobile. One other small classroom is used by the Saplings Pre-School Playgroup and the Time to Play After-School Club. There were 274 primary-aged children on roll in October 2020 and the roll is forecast to increase to around 287 by 2023/24.*

*The school is currently organised into ten classes and this is forecast to continue until 2023/24, hence the classrooms in the mobile are currently in use and will be for the foreseeable future.*

*A three year retention until August 2024 will assist while discussions take place on the feasibility of a permanent expansion of the school building.*

4.1.4 This demonstrates that the retention of the mobile classroom is necessary to meet the projected needs of the school.

4.1.5 It is therefore considered that this application for the mobiles' retention is in conformity with the provisions of the NPPF, particularly paragraph 94, creating a sustainable community and ensuring a sufficient choice of school places are available to meet the needs of existing and new communities, as well as satisfying overarching Local Plan policies GROWTH 2 and GROWTH 5, as well as policy COM4.

### 4.2 Design, Appearance and Sustainability

4.2.1 The temporary mobile classroom is a single storey structure with a floor area of 182.7m<sup>2</sup>. The temporary building is subservient to the existing permanent school building and is suited to the rear of the main school buildings. Its design, whilst taking the typical form of a mobile structure, is sympathetic to its surroundings. As is common with mobile classroom modular buildings, the structure is supported off the ground, with the gap between floor and structure infilled with a slatted timber skirt to allow for ventilation. In this way, the proposals conform with Policies ENV1 'Landscape and settlement character' and ENV2 'Design'.

4.2.2 Additionally, the siting of the proposals make efficient and best use of the school site, whilst maintaining sufficient play space. The proposals maintain an appropriate relationship with the neighbouring residential properties to the south of the site, being set back from the boundary and behind a mature hedge containing many trees. This satisfies the requirements of Local Plan policy ENV11.

- 4.2.3 The proposals comply with Local Plan policies ENV2 and ENV4, which require that proposals incorporate sustainable construction principles and methods, as the building is expected to be transferred to other schools in Cambridgeshire in the future, when it is no longer required at Bottisham Primary. This will preserve the embodied energy used in the original building manufacture and is a highly sustainable solution to meeting short term changing building requirements. The unit is therefore sustainable in environmental, economic, and social terms. The units are manufactured off site and are therefore sustainable in their construction.

### **4.3 Amenity and Open Space**

- 4.3.1 The mobile is situated south-west of, but close to the main school buildings. Because of the mature trees and hedges around the school playing fields and in neighbouring gardens, and the proximity of the main school building, it is considered unlikely that many views of the buildings from the neighbouring properties are possible. The proposals are therefore in compliance with Policy ENV2 'Design'.
- 4.3.2 There would be no loss of playing space or open space, as the classroom already exists on site.
- 4.3.3 There would be no adverse impact on biodiversity as no trees or environmental features such as hedgerows would be lost from the site, meaning the proposals comply with Policy ENV7.

### **4.4 Transportation**

- 4.4.1 Policy COM7 of the Local Plan states that development proposals should reduce the need to travel, particularly by car, and should promote sustainable forms of transport appropriate to its particular location. The school is located in an area that encourages walking and cycling among school pupils due to short travel times to nearby residential properties. There is no proposed increase in pupils or staff at the school as a result of the proposals, and therefore no increase in cycle/scooter provision is required.
- 4.4.2 Policy COM8 of the Local Plan specifies that there should be up to 1 car space for each member of staff, up to 1 visitor car space per class and 6 cycle spaces per primary school classroom. As the mobile is still in use and the number of pupils being accommodated in this mobile will not change, it is not anticipated that there will be any additional vehicle movements as a result of the mobiles' retention. It is therefore considered that the proposed retention of the mobile classroom continues to accord with Local Plan policies COM7 and COM8.

## **5 Conclusion**

- 5.1.1 This Planning Application is made under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) and seeks to vary condition 3 attached to the decision notice ref: E/3002/16/CC for 'The erection of a 7-bay (21m x 8.7m) mobile classroom for a temporary period until August 2021 with the installation of two new scooter pods' at Bottisham Primary School, Beechwood Avenue, Bottisham, Cambridge, CB25 9BE. The variation would enable the time limit originally set by the condition to be altered, allowing for the retention of the mobile for an extended period of time.
- 5.1.2 The retention of the mobile classroom is required for a further 3 years to allow the school to maintain sufficient teaching space to accommodate existing and future pupils.
- 5.1.3 Paragraph 94 of the NPPF emphasises the importance the Government places on ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places are available to meet the needs of existing and new communities, and requires Local Authorities to take a positive and proactive approach in achieving this. Taking this into consideration, the application for the retention of a modular classroom building on a temporary basis accords with National Planning Policy.
- 5.1.4 As the mobile has been installed on the school site for four years, it is not considered that the proposal to extend this period for a further three years will result in any adverse impacts upon residential or visual amenity, open space provision or on parking provision and access arrangements, as assessed within the preceding section of this Statement. It is considered that the demonstrated need for the mobile to be retained on site should be a significant material consideration in the determination of this application, to meet the ongoing needs of the school.
- 5.1.5 The development complies with Local Plan policies GROWTH 1 and GROWTH 2, being appropriate development to support the existing and growing population of Bottisham. The appropriateness of development is evidenced by the existence of the development already on site. There is a clear and evidenced need for the retention of the existing temporary mobile classroom at Bottisham Primary School.
- 5.1.6 It is considered that this proposal to retain the existing mobile unit is in conformity with the NPPF and PPG, and with Local Planning Policy, including policies GROWTH 2, GROWTH 5, ENV1 ENV2, COM4 and COM7. It is therefore respectfully requested that planning permission should be granted for this planning application.