

Planning application - Supporting Statement

Property name: Alfred Sutton Primary School

Property address: 148 Wokingham Road, Reading, RG6 1JR

Renewal of planning application for 1 no. double-stack demountable modular double classroom unit.

Existing Building and Site

Alfred Sutton Primary School is located within the ward of Park and occupies a suburban site to the South East of central Reading. The School's catchment serves the immediate local area, accommodating approximately 450 pupils at present together with a 26 place Nursery operating both am and pm.

The School's accommodation is located within three single storey Victorian red brick buildings together with a much newer Early Years building which was completed in 2006, also of red brick.

The site is bounded by Wokingham Road to the North East, playing fields to the South, a technical college to the West and Crescent Road to the North West. Housing proliferates beyond all areas described above. The school site is relatively small with macadam areas only for formal and informal play. The adjacent playing fields are used by the school for soft formal play only. The playing fields are also used by the adjacent technical college, at weekends by local football clubs and are also available for use by the general public.

The School operates from 8.45am-3.15pm although the site is open either side of these times for staff usage.

Brief

Reading required further primary school places for September 2013 and it was proposed that a double stack demountable modular double classroom unit was installed adjacent to the Nursery modular to provide further classrooms and much needed resource spaces.

In 2013 (ref. 130136) permission was granted for 'Provision of one double-stack demountable modular double classroom, associated external works and provision of a temporary macadam playground'.

A potential longer-term strategy was to investigate the schools permanent expansion. The proposed location for the new modular's took this into account so as not to prejudice any potential future development at the school. The permanent expansion - Planning application 140968 - School expansion onto adjacent playing field. New build teaching block incorporating relocated Crescent under 5's playgroup and School Nursery. Extension to admin. block, plus associated external works was approved 21/10/2014 and completed 16/02/16.

In 2015 - application 150479 was approved for 'Extension of 18 months for the provision of one double-stack demountable modular double classroom already granted through application 130136'.

The plan was to relocate the double-stack demountable modular double classroom from Alfred Sutton Primary School to Moorlands Primary School as part of the proposed expansion - Planning application 180171 - School expansion from a two form of entry (420 pupils) to a three form of entry (630 pupils) to include two, two-storey double modular units (with new cladding), one single storey modular building (with new cladding) and two single storey extensions, demolition of single temporary classroom,

retention of 2 double modular units, external landscaping works and increase in car parking numbers including off- site parking on adjacent Recreation Ground.

A combined cost for removal and reinstatement (making good plus reinstating the playground etc. to original landscape design) is circa £254k. This would have come from the Primary Expansions budget.

Pupil Forecasting then determined that the places were no longer needed, and it was decided on 26 February 2019 at Committee, that the project should not proceed.

There are currently no suitable sites for the modular to be moved to. Even if there was a site identified, when moved they do not store well, and the fabric condition deteriorates. Furthermore, there is no market for the buyback of demountable modular classrooms.

Currently, due to Covid, the school is using the additional space to ensure that they are being safe.

We are also experiencing issues with Pupil Forecasting and need to ensure that we have a 5% floating capacity available to provide accommodation to students, should the need arise.

The double-stack demountable modular double classroom has also been identified as back up for the new secondary school, which is being built by the Department for Education. The school is due to open 01/09/23 and should the building not be built in time and we need to provide temporary accommodation for the students as it is our statutory duty to provide the places.

Design Principles/ Solutions

Due to the limited external space on the main school site, the location of the modular units was proposed adjacent to the existing Nursery modular installed in 2012. This allowed ease of access for installation of the units together with efficiencies regarding connections to existing services.

A double-stack modular was proposed due to the efficiencies it provides in building footprint, energy use and costs.

The accompanying drawings illustrate the configuration and appearance of the modular classrooms. The modular will be formed from composite wall panels finished in a coated metal, indicated as green on the drawings. The low pitched roof will be a high performance composite panel system metal deck roof.

Access and Inclusion Principles

The modular classrooms are two storey. The ground floor is designed on the principle of level access throughout. The main entrance door opens from a raised timber deck accessed from the new existing hard-standing via a ramp, with associated steps. It is proposed that an accessible toilet be provided on the ground floor accessed from the staircase lobby, off the main entrance lobby.

Highways

The existing pedestrian and vehicle entrances are to remain as existing as part of this application.

There is no proposal to affect the existing numbers of parking spaces within the school site.

Existing pedestrian access arrangements for the Crescent Nursery located on the school site are unaffected by the proposals.

Landscape Design

The scheme includes limited external works but will include an external ramp and associated steps to the modular unit entrance. A new area of macadam is proposed around the modular to link it back to the existing macadam adjacent to the Nursery modular. It is also proposed to provide a temporary hard play area running parallel to the South school boundary to accommodate the increase in pupil numbers. This area will incorporate a 'ramped' area within the macadam to overcome a slight gradient at the East side of the play area.

Due to the location of the modular there is limited ecological impact.

Sustainability

In line with Reading Borough Council's guidance, sustainability and environmental issues were considered as part of the permanent new-build development, to reduce the environmental impact of the various elements of the buildings.

The modular classroom was constructed to current building control requirements. Due to the nature of the modular classroom it is easily demountable and can be reused/ relocated elsewhere, following removal from this site.

Archaeology

Contact made with Berkshire Archaeology regarding the proposals and drawings E02158-F-003-Existing Buildings and E02158-F-005-Phasing, Sept 13 were forwarded to them.

Their feedback is that given the scale of the proposal and the low archaeological potential of this area they didn't feel that a requirement for any archaeological work would be appropriate for this site.