

Report to                   **Planning Committee**  
Date                       **6 November 2019**  
By                       **Director of Planning**  
Local Authority           **Chichester District Council**  
Application No.          **SDNP/19/04212/FUL**  
Applicant               **Midhurst Rother College (Kath Chard)**  
Application              **Addition of glass side cladding to existing canopies.**  
Address                 **Midhurst Rother College**  
                         **North Street**  
                         **Midhurst**  
                         **GU29 9DT**

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**Recommendation: That the application be approved for the reasons set out in paragraph 10 of this report.**

### **Executive Summary**

**Reason for Committee Referral:** Parish Objection – Officer recommends Permit.

The application seeks consent for the addition of glass panels (shuttering) to the sides of the existing canopies at the front of the school, in order to provide a degree of weather protection for students sheltering in the structure.

The lightweight and transparent character and appearance of the cladding would remain subservient to the larger, more monolithic form of the main school building. Therefore in terms of its wider visual impact the shuttering will have limited impact and complies with policies SD4 and SD5 of the South Downs Local Plan 2019. The application is recommended for approval.

### **1.0 Site Description**

- 1.1 Midhurst Rother College is situated in Midhurst and is located to the west of the northern approach to the town. The main school building complex is relatively modern, constructed in red/orange brick over three storeys. The upper two floors are mainly glazed, with grey panelling separating the rows of windows. The first and second floors oversail the ground floor, which is supported by a row of white painted columns. Immediately in front of the building are a series of existing conical canopies arranged as a double row providing a covered 'breakout' area for students' use.

- 1.2 The main building is set some distance from the public highway but nevertheless still features prominently in views from the road when passing the main entrance. The existing canopies can be seen from certain angles but these views are distant views and are diffused by internal landscaping.

## **2.0 Proposal**

- 2.1 Planning permission was recently granted (SDNP/19/02024/FUL) for an additional six canopies to supplement the existing canopies on site. The proposal seeks to add toughened glass side panels, enclosing the existing conic canopies in front of the main school building that were permitted in 2016 in order to provide a greater covered area.
- 2.2 The addition of the glass panels is to provide the college with enhanced dining, seating and breakout space for its students, to be used in all weathers. However the cladding does not encase the canopies completely, leaving the south west elevation open to the elements and gaps to the top and bottom of the panels of the other elevations.
- 2.3 The glass panels consists of 10mm toughened glass held in place by clamps mounted on steel posts, powder coated to match the existing glazing system used in the main building.

## **3.0 Relevant Planning History**

- 3.1 SDNP/19/02024/FUL - Erection of 6 no. Conic Canopies. – Approved
- 3.2 SDNP/16/02763/FUL- Regularisation of 6 no. Conic canopies and installation of 6 no. additional conic canopies – Permit

## **4.0 Consultations**

- 4.1 Midhurst Town Council

Comments received 16 October 2019

Objection.

Midhurst Town Council's serious previous objections remain extant. The application states an 'all weather' structure, however, there is no evidence of this. There are concerns that there will be water ingress and there will be a requirement for heating. It is not suitable for purpose.

Comments received 25 September 2019

Midhurst Town Council object to this application. Midhurst Town Council's serious previous objections remain extant.

Comments received 25 June 2019 to previous application SDNP/19/02024/FUL

The Town Council strongly objects to the polycarbonate material for the side cladding. This will be visually unsightly and is considered inappropriate material for a building where youths are to be in.

The College is at the gateway to Midhurst town and within the South Downs National Park. More suitable, aesthetically appropriate materials should be considered.

The Town Council does not object to the addition of 6 new canopies.

**5.0 Representations**

5.1 None received

**6.0 Planning Policy Context**

6.1 Applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The statutory development plan in this area comprises the **South Downs Local Plan 2014-2033** and any relevant Neighbourhood Development Plan and, any relevant minerals and waste plans.

6.2 The development plan policies and other material considerations considered relevant to this application are set out in section 7, below.

National Park Purposes

6.3 The two statutory purposes of the SDNP designation are:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area.,
- To promote opportunities for the public understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of their areas.

6.4 If there is a conflict between these two purposes, conservation takes precedence. There is also a duty to foster the economic and social well-being of the local community in pursuit of these purposes.

**7.0 Planning Policy**

Relevant Government Planning Policy and Guidance

7.1 Government policy relating to National Parks is set out in English National Parks and the Broads: UK Government Vision and Circular 2010 and The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which was issued on 19 February 2019. The Circular and NPPF confirm that National Parks have the highest status of protection, and the NPPF states at paragraph 172 that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in national parks and that the conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations and should be given great weight in National Parks.

- 7.2 It is also necessary to have regard to s. 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 7.4 The following National Planning Policy Framework documents have been considered in the assessment of this application:

- NPPF01 – Introduction
- NPPF12 – Achieving well-designed places
- NPPF15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

The development plan policies listed below have been assessed for their compliance with the NPPF.

- 7.5 The following policies of the **South Downs Local Plan** are relevant to this application:

- Core Policy SD1 - Sustainable Development
- Strategic Policy SD4 – Landscape Character
- Strategic Policy SD5 – Design
- Development Management Policy SD15 – Conservation Areas

Partnership Management Plan

- 7.6 The South Downs Partnership Management Plan (SDPMP) was adopted on 3 December 2013. It sets out a Vision and long term Outcomes for the National Park, as well as 5 year Policies and a continually updated Delivery Framework. The SDPMP is a material consideration in planning applications and has some weight pending adoption of the SDNP Local Plan.

The following Policies and Outcomes are of particular relevance to this case:

- General Policy 1

**8.0 Planning Assessment**

- 8.1 The main issues for consideration in determining this application are:
- i) The impact of the development on the host building.
  - ii) The impact of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

i) The impact of the development on the host building

- 8.2 Policy SD5 of the South Downs Local Plan 2019 states that development proposals will be permitted where they utilise architectural design which is appropriate in terms of height, massing, materials and vernacular detailing. The glass panels are designed to provide cover for the students whilst still creating the appearance of an outdoor area. The proposed panels are to be constructed from toughened glass providing a clear view through to the existing building. The glass is held in place by clamps mounted on steel posts, powder coated to match the existing glazing system. This in turn mirrors the existing glazing on the main building.
- 8.3 The lightweight and transparent character and appearance of the panels would remain subservient to the larger, more monolithic form of the main school building. Longer distance views of the lower part of the school building from the A286 (North Street) would be partially obscured by the extended run of glazing but this is not considered harmful to the host building for the reasons given above.
- 8.4 The proposal will therefore not detract from the character and appearance of the host building and will appear as an integral element of the school infrastructure.

ii) The impact of the development on the character and appearance of the area

- 8.5 The Midhurst Conservation area borders the eastern (main entrance) and southern (Lamberts Lane entrance) boundaries of the school it is therefore necessary to have regard to any impact of the development on its setting as part of the assessment of this application. The main school building is a prominent feature in the public domain. The glass panels would be screened by existing planting and, further to the south, by existing buildings fronting North Street. The panels will appear as an incidental feature seen in the context against the canopies and the much larger main school building. As such, it is considered that the proposed glass panels will not have an adverse impact on the character or appearance of the immediate setting of the school grounds or on the setting of the Conservation area which will be preserved. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with policies SD4 and SD15 of the SDNP Local Plan.

Other matters

- 8.6 The Town Council raised objection to the cladding in an earlier application (SDNP/19/02024/FUL) and as a result it was removed from that proposal. The panels have now been changed from polycarbonate sheeting to toughened glass. The Town Council has maintained its strong objection on aesthetic grounds. For the reasons given above, however, it is considered that the glass screens are acceptable in terms of their visual impact. In relation to whether the structure is fit for purpose this is a matter for the applicant and is not a material consideration in the determination of this proposal.

## **9.0 Conclusion**

- 9.1 The proposed glass panels are considered a modest addition to the existing feature of the Conic Canopies at the front of the main school building. The contemporary form is considered to be appropriate to the modern architecture of the host building and its small scale will ensure that this will not result in an assertive form of development. As such it is concluded that the development will not have a negative impact on the setting of the conservation area or that of the school itself.

## **10.0 Reason for Recommendation and Conditions**

It is recommended that the application be approved subject to the following conditions.

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 (1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)./ To comply with Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

Approved Plans

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the plans listed below under the heading "Plans Referred to in Consideration of this Application".

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. Materials in accordance with submitted details

The development hereby permitted shall not be constructed other than in accordance with the materials specified within the application form and plans, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that a harmonious visual relationship is achieved between the new and the existing developments.

## **11.0 Crime and Disorder Implications**

- 11.1 It is considered that the proposal does not raise any crime and disorder implications.

## **12.0 Human Rights Implications**

- 12.1 This planning application has been considered in light of statute and case law and any interference with an individual's human rights is considered to be proportionate to the aims sought to be realised.

### **13.0 Equality Act 2010**

- 13.1 Due regard has been taken of the South Downs National Park Authority's equality duty as contained within the Equality Act 2010.

**Tim Slaney  
Director of Planning  
South Downs National Park Authority**

Contact Officer: Louise Kent

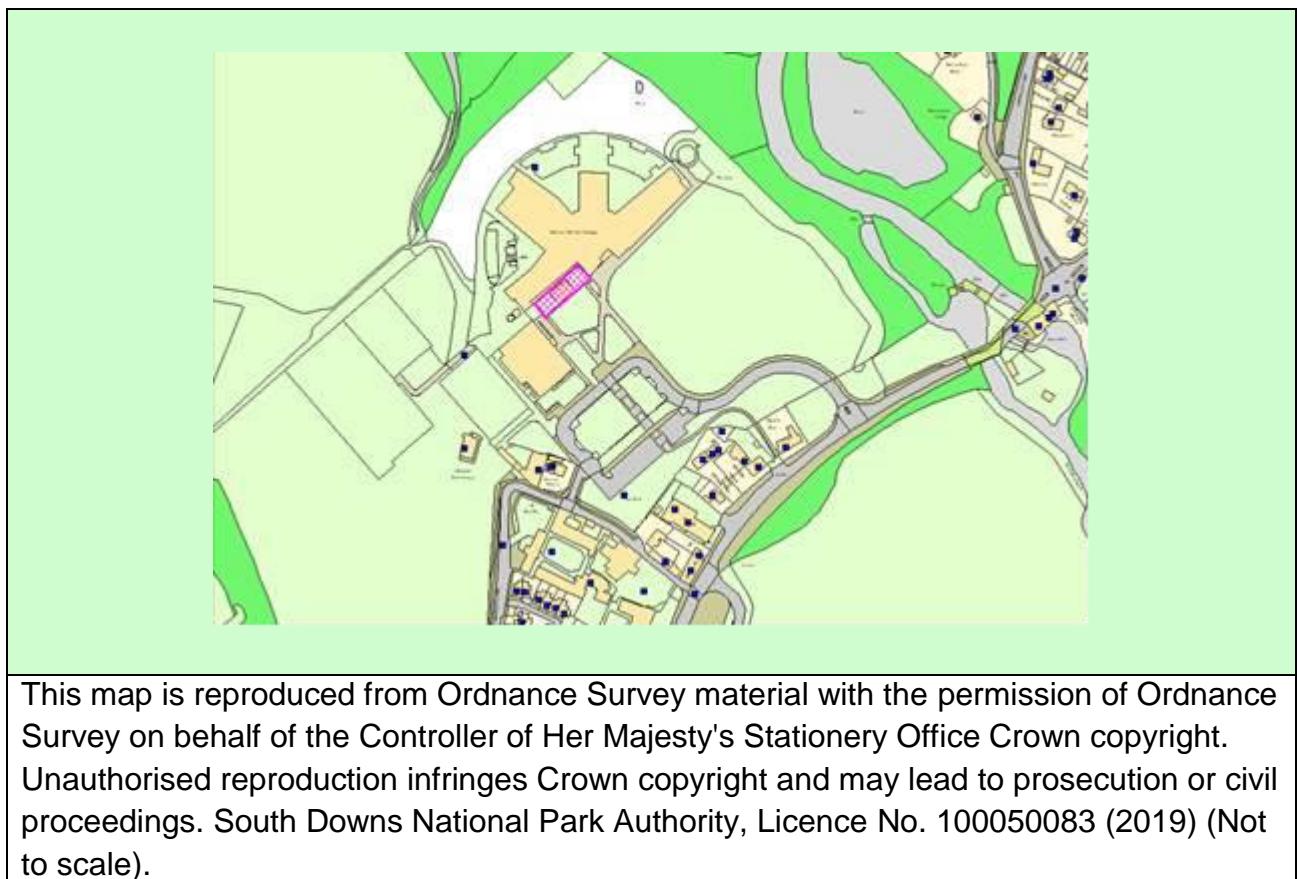
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Appendices Appendix 1 - Site Location Map  
Appendix 2 – Plans Referred to in Consideration of this Application

## **Appendix 1**

### **Site Location Map**



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## **Appendix 2 – Plans Referred to in Consideration of this Application**

The application has been assessed and recommendation is made on the basis of the following plans and documents submitted:

Plan Type	Reference	Version	Date on Plan	Status
Plans - Proposed Site & Location Plan (A3)	MHRC-P-SLP-P		13.09.2019	Submitted
Plans - Existing Elevations (A3)	MHRC-P-E-E	A	13.09.2019	Submitted
Plans - Proposed Elevations (A3)	MHRC-P-E-P	A	13.09.2019	Submitted
Plans - Existing Roof Plan (A3)	MHRC-P-RP-E	A	13.09.2019	Submitted
Plans - Proposed Roof Plan (A3)	MHRC-P-RP-P	A	13.09.2019	Submitted

**Reasons:** For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.