

**East Malling &
Larkfield**
Larkfield North

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22.06.2006

TM/06/01222/FL

Proposal: Side and front extension to club house
Location: Larkfield Sports Club New Hythe Lane Larkfield Aylesford Kent
Applicant: Larkfield And New Hythe Sports And Social Club Limited

1. Description:

- 1.1 This proposal is for the partial demolition of two small additions and for side extensions to the west and east and a front extension to the Larkfield & New Hythe Sports & Social Club Clubhouse and changing rooms. The proposed extension will increase the size of the bar area, provide extra toilets and a disabled toilet within the main facilities as well as adding two changing rooms. The proposal will increase the size of the building from 23.6m by 7m to 31.6m by 10.5m. The height of the building will also increase to a maximum of 4.85m above ground level.
- 1.2 The applicant has submitted supporting information covering noise matters, which indicates that the following matters would be incorporated into the scheme:
- *Doors and windows will be fitted with acoustic seals;*
 - *Loft insulation will be carried out;*
 - *If required a sound level logger will be installed;*
 - *A lobbied entrance is part of the proposed extension;*
 - *All members are made aware of keeping noise levels to a minimum when leaving the facility.*

2. The Site:

- 2.1 The application site lies within the urban confines of Larkfield and within an Important Green Space. The site lies to the west of New Hythe Lane, along the access road, which also doubles up as Public Right of Way MR94A. To the west of the site also lies PROW MR 93. The existing clubhouse and changing rooms lie in the southeastern corner of the site, with a football pitch to north. To the east of the site lie two residential properties, No.251 & 249 New Hythe Lane, to the south lies playing fields and to the west are the residential properties of Fielding Drive. There is a significant change in ground levels between the application site and the Fielding Drive properties of some 2 to 3m, with the application site being banked up above Fielding Drive. The existing clubhouse and changing rooms complex is a single storey brick built structure under a tiled roof. There is a large informal parking area to the west of the building.

3. Planning History (most relevant):

- 3.1 TM/96/00033/FL Approved 28.02.1996
Addition of disabled toilet to extension.
- 3.2 TM/93/1577FL Approved 01.02.1994
Extension to pavilion to house additional changing rooms and showers.
- 3.3 TM/84/0559 Approved 29.08.1984
Single storey sports pavilion.
- 3.4 MK/4/73/777 Approved 07.01.1974
Social room and changing rooms.
- 3.5 MK/4/65/367 Approved 10.11.1965
Change of use for playing fields.

4. Consultees:

- 4.1 PC: There is an existing building as shown which established the principle of a Club House on this private sports field. No objection therefore in principle but some additional landscaping would be welcome.
 - 4.1.1 There are two properties close to the Club House and further away the properties in Fielding Drive. The issues of noise and possible disturbance should be taken into account especially as the building includes a bar area which can be used apart from when football is taking place. If there is any hours of use restriction, it should accord with any Licence conditions.
- 4.2 DL: This is viewed as a very positive step forward for the Club and the proposals are fully supported. The proposals will enable the club to offer improved facilities to their current members and allow for future development. It is especially encouraging to see the advantages this will have in improving access for all. The proposal is also supported by the Council's Playing Pitch Strategy, which highlights the need to retain and maintain the existing pitches/provision in this area of the Borough.
- 4.3 DHH: The environmental health issue raised by this application is noise. The proposed extension to the sports and social club incorporates a considerably enlarged bar area of a size that is likely to be used for social functions involving the playing of amplified music at high volume.
 - 4.3.1 In my opinion, to safeguard the aural amenity of nearby residents, noise from music played within the building should be no more audible outside the closest houses.

4.3.2 I am satisfied that the proposed acoustic treatment of the building:

- The fitting of acoustic seals to doors and windows;
- The provision of a lobbied entrance;
- The willingness to fit a noise limiting advice;
- This will be sufficient to safeguard the amenity of nearby residents against music noise emissions from the sports and social club.

4.3.3 Accordingly, I do not wish to object to the application but recommend that any approval be subject to conditions requiring a noise limiter, closure of windows and use of the lobbied entrance when music is played.

4.4 KCC (Highways): The site is located some distance from New Hythe Lane, accessed by a public right of way. The extensions in the main improve the existing facilities such as changing rooms/toilets/kitchen etc and do not in themselves attract any highway issues. The only area to be considered is the increase in floor area of the existing bar area. However, in this instance there is to be no increase in membership and subject to there being no loss of existing parking, I would on balance support the proposal.

4.5 West Kent PROW Office: Public footpaths MR94A and MR93 run close to this development and may be affected by the application. The County Council has a controlling interest in ensuring that the Rights of Way are maintained to a level suitable for pedestrian use. Any maintenance to the higher level required for vehicular access would be the responsibility of the landowner.

4.5.1 It is important to advise the applicant that a PROW must not be stopped up, diverted, obstructed or the surface disturbed and there must be no encroachment on the current width of the path. This includes any building materials or waste generated during any of the construction phases. Please note that no furniture or fixtures may be erected on or across PROW without the express consent of the Highways Authority.

4.6 Private Reps: 43/0S/0X/13R. Thirteen letters received objecting on the following grounds:

- Noise disturbance;
- Increase in traffic movements;
- Reduction in parking area;
- A boundary fence should be erected adjacent to the Fielding Drive residents;
- Impact on residents privacy;

- Damage to the land leading down to the site;
- Light pollution;
- Traffic claming should be included along the lane;
- Car park surface should be changed to reduce noise of cars manoeuvring across the car park;
- Windows and doors will not be kept closed.

4.7 A8 Site Notice & Press Notice: No response.

5. Determining Issues:

- 5.1 The main issues are whether the proposal is appropriate development, whether it harms the residential amenity of nearby dwellings and whether the proposal constitutes a highway hazard.
- 5.2 The application site lies within an Important Green Space and is subject to policy P4/10 of the TMBLP 1998, which will not permit development unless the need for the development is overriding and the proposals would not adversely affect the contribution which the space makes to the character and quality of the townscape. The proposed development is not for a new building, but simply a number of extensions to an existing sports and social club within the Important Green Space. It is acknowledged that the extended building will be a larger structure, being 8m wider, 3.5m deeper and 0.75m taller. However, in terms of the impact on the Important Green Space the impact will be minimal to negligible, particularly as the building is sited in the corner of the green space associated with the Sports & Social Club.
- 5.3 The proposed design and choice of external materials matches the existing building. A previous landscaping scheme in connection with an earlier extension provides a considerable level of screening from PROW MR94A, however, there are some sparse areas of native screening by the entrance, as well as some minor gapping up required along the southern boundary. Therefore, subject to augmenting the existing landscaping, the proposal will not detract from the visual amenity of the locality.
- 5.4 The proposal will also enhance existing sports facilities in the local area, which is fully supported by the DL and is in line with the Borough Council's Playing Pitch Strategy, which seeks to retain and maintain existing playing fields. Therefore, I am satisfied that the proposal is an acceptable form of development and meets policy P4/10 of the TMBLP 1998.

- 5.5 The main concerns raised by local residents relate to noise disturbance from the building and particularly loud music. The applicant has sought to incorporate noise mitigation measures into the design of the building through doors and windows being fitted with acoustic seals, loft insulation being laid and a set of lobby doors constructed. The applicant also indicates that they are willing to install a noise limiter if necessary. The DHH considers that the noise from amplified music will be the main source of potential noise disturbance from the development. The DHH considers that the installation of a noise limiter would be an acceptable way of controlling the noise breakout from the building, subject to noise levels being agreed at the site boundaries of neighbouring residential properties which can be controlled by condition. In terms of local residents concerns that windows and doors will remain open, a condition can be imposed to require the windows and doors to remain closed whilst amplified music is being played in the bar area. This is a typical condition for this type of use and entirely enforceable.
- 5.6 In addition, I am proposing carry forward to the hours of opening condition imposed on planning permission TM/84/0559 in order to protect the residential amenity of nearby dwellings. Also, I have attached an informative requesting the applicant to install signs requesting patrons to give due consideration to the amenity of nearby residents upon leaving the premises. In light of the above mitigation measures and restrictions, the proposed extensions will not harm the residential amenity of nearby dwellings.
- 5.7 Local residents have also raised concerns over the use of the car park and disturbance to residential amenity of residents in Fielding Drive from light pollution and cars driving over the loose stones in the car park. The western end of the car park faces onto the first floor windows and given the lack of screening causes disturbance through car lights shining directly into the nearby houses and noise disturbance from cars manoeuvring around the uneven parking surface. Given the enhancements and increase in facilities, I consider it appropriate to address the local residents concerns by requiring the Club to install some form of permanent screen along the western boundary of the car park and a less noisy parking surface. These matters can be controlled by condition.
- 5.8 The proposed extensions will not result in the loss of any privacy to neighbouring properties, due to the physical separation of the buildings in question and also that the clubhouse and changing rooms complex is still only single storey. Local residents main concern over privacy relates to the lack of fencing along the western boundary by the football pitch and persons standing on the touchline looking down into neighbours gardens of Fielding Drive. However, this is not a material consideration to this current application.
- 5.9 In highway terms, the site lies some distance from the public highway of New Hythe Lane, although the access road is a PROW. KCC Highways does not raise concerns over the increase in traffic movements from the enhanced facilities. They consider that only the extended bar area would generate any highway

issues, but these would not be significant. The proposed extensions will not result in the loss of parking spaces, as these areas are currently overgrown scrub, grass and storage areas. The recently adopted KCCVPS July 2006 would require 44 parking spaces for the extended building (32 spaces for participants, 4 for spectators and 8 for the social club bar area). The existing large informal car park is capable of accommodating this level of parking. Therefore, I am satisfied that the proposal will not constitute a highway hazard.

5.10 The proposed extensions will not affect the PROWs, but the applicant will be advised that the PROW should not be blocked or diverted during construction works. Members will note that the West Kent PROW Office has not objected to the scheme. A local resident has raised concerns that the increase in traffic movements will damage the surface of the access road, however, this is a private matter for the Sports & Social Club in terms of the maintenance of the access road.

5.11 In light of the above considerations, I am satisfied that the proposal is an appropriate form of development, will not harm the amenity of nearby residents and will not constitute a highway hazard, therefore I support this proposal.

6. Recommendation:

6.1 **Grant Planning Permission** as detailed by letter received on the 22.06.2006 and by plans NEW- HYTHE-01 Rev A, NEW HYTHE-02 Rev A and NEW-HYTHE-03 Rev A 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: In pursuance of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2 All materials used externally shall match those of the existing building.

Reason: To ensure that the development does not harm the character and appearance of the existing building or visual amenity of the locality.

3 Prior to the playing of any amplified music in the bar area of the sports and social club a noise limiting device shall be installed. The limiter shall be set to a noise level agreed beforehand with the Local Planning Authority so that music is at no time more than barely audible at the site boundary of nearby dwellings. Thereafter all amplified music played in the sports and social club shall be regulated by the noise limiter which shall permanently be maintained to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the aural amenity of the nearby dwellings.*

- 4 Whenever amplified music is played in the sports and social club, the windows and the external doors to the bar area are to be kept closed; access and egress to the bar area being by way of the entrance lobby, one pair of doors being kept closed at all times.

Reason: In the interests of the aural amenity of nearby dwellings.*

- 5 No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of landscaping. All planting, seeding and turfing comprised in the approved scheme of landscaping shall be implemented during the first planting season following occupation of the buildings or the completion of the development, whichever is the earlier. Any trees or shrubs removed, dying, being seriously damaged or diseased within 10 years of planting shall be replaced in the next planting season with trees or shrubs of similar size and species, unless the Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: Pursuant to Section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and to protect and enhance the appearance and character of the site and locality.

- 6 No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority a scheme for the resurfacing of the car park and the erection of a permanent screen along the western boundary of the car park. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details before the approved extensions are occupied and shall be so retained at all times thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of the residential amenity of nearby dwellings. *

- 7 The noise mitigation measures as detailed in letter dated the 22 June 2006 shall be installed prior to the first use of the extensions hereby approved and shall be retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of the residential amenity of nearby dwellings. *

- 8 The use of the premises shall cease no later than 23:00 hours on any day. The building shall not be used before 7am on any day.

Reason: In the interests of the residential amenity of nearby dwellings.*

Informatives:

- 1 The applicant is advised that Public Right of Ways MR94A and MR93 run close to the development. The Public Right of Ways must not be stopped up, diverted, obstructed or the surface disturbed and there must be no encroachment on the current width of the path. This includes any building materials or waste generated

during any of the construction phases. No furniture or fixtures may be erected on or across Public Right of Way without the express consent of the Highways Authority.

- 2 The applicant is asked to install signs requesting patrons to give due consideration to the amenity of nearby residents upon leaving the premises.

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