

Snodland **569710 162094** **18 July 2014** **TM/14/02491/FL**
 Snodland West

Proposal: Clubhouse facility including changing rooms, hospitality room, spectator stand and pitch floodlighting
 Location: Playing Fields Adjacent Downsview (Snodland Community Centre) Paddlesworth Road Snodland Kent ME6 5DP
 Applicant: Snodland Town Football Club

1. Description:

- 1.1 The application comprises the erection of a Clubhouse to serve Snodland Town Football Club. The proposed Clubhouse is to be 29m x 11.5m, timber clad with a mineral felt roof and brown upvc windows. The building is to include changing rooms, a hospitality room and spectators' stand. The application also includes the erection of pitch floodlights, mounted on 6 x 15m columns.
- 1.2 The site is located within the existing Potyns Sports Ground, accessed from Paddlesworth Road. Car parking is to be provided by the existing Sports Ground parking area.
- 1.3 The application for the Clubhouse and associated facilities is being made in response to the requirements of the Football Association.

2. Reason for reporting to Committee:

- 2.1 Unusual development in the Green Belt.

3. The Site:

- 3.1 The site lies within the existing Potyns Sports Ground beyond the settlement confines of Snodland, within the Metropolitan Green Belt. The Bowls Club is located to the immediate south of the application site with the Snodland Community Centre to the east.

4. Planning History (most recent):

TM/06/00287/FL Grant With Conditions 28 July 2006

Proposed extension (gym/ boxing club/ social club) to existing sports hall / community centre

TM/07/00076/FL Approved 1 March 2007

Proposed new vehicular access to rear of community centre

TM/08/02863/FL Approved 20 November 2008

Installation of external air conditioning units

TM/08/02966/RD Approved 19 November 2008

Details of landscaping submitted pursuant to condition 2 of planning permission TM06/00287/FL: Proposed extension (gym/boxing club/social club) to existing sports hall/community centre

TM/09/01872/FL Approved 16 September 2009

Construction of bowls club including bowling green, pavilion fencing, car park and access

TM/10/00995/FL Approved 1 July 2010

New changing rooms to serve playing fields (existing and proposed) with associated access and car parking facilities.

TM/10/03542/RD Approved 10 March 2011

Details of landscaping submitted pursuant to condition 7 of planning permission TM/09/01872/FL (construction of bowls club including bowling green, pavilion fencing, car park and access)

TM/12/00589/FL Approved 24 April 2012

Two single storey extensions to existing community centre, forming additional changing facilities and social area

5. Consultees:

5.1 TC: Request that the application be referred back for more details and information including environmental study.

5.2 KCC (Highways): No objection.

5.3 Private Reps: 30 + site notice/0X/1R/0S.

5.3.1 One letter of objection has been received raising concern about the design of the facility – the facility will not meet the requirements of the Football Foundation in terms of toilets, wash hand basin, waste bin and screening provision. The columns to the Spectator Stand will obscure the view – the scheme requires redesigning.

6. Determining Issues:

- 6.1 The site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt. Paragraph 89 of the NPPF states that new buildings within the Green Belt should be regarded as inappropriate. However provision is made for certain exceptions, one being the provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, as long as this preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.
- 6.2 The provision of a Clubhouse to provide necessary facilities for an existing recreational use meets the aims of paragraph 89 of the NPPF, providing the building does not conflict with the objectives of Green Belt policy. The erection of the Clubhouse in itself will not contribute to urban sprawl, or create a merging of urban settlements nor encroach into the wider open countryside. It lies within the limits of the well established recreation ground at Potyns Field. It supports the use of land for sports purposes and outdoor sports and leisure purposes are appropriate uses in the Green Belt. With this in mind, I consider that the proposed development would not amount to inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
- 6.3 More generally, policy CP14 of the TMBCS seeks to restrict development in the countryside. However, it does state that predominantly open recreation uses together with associated essential built infrastructure, such as the development proposed in this instance, can be acceptable in principle.
- 6.4 The site is also designated as open space to be protected (policy OS1 of the MDE DPD 2010). This policy states that development that would result in the loss of existing open spaces should not be permitted unless a replacement site is proposed which is equivalent or better in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility. Further support for community access to sporting opportunities can be found in paragraph 73 of the NPPF.
- 6.5 The introduction of the Clubhouse does not result in the loss of a protected open recreational space as it would be sited on the very edge of the playing fields and as a result, would have no impact on the overall recreational value as a playing field. The development would in fact increase the recreational and community value of the wider site and therefore, far from conflicting with the aims of policy OS1, it enhances the sports function. Having established the acceptability in principle of the proposed development, I now turn to the specifics of the scheme.
- 6.6 The use of the existing car park serving the wider Sports Ground will ensure no adverse impact on highway safety. The proposed site has already been developed as a recreational use and therefore no impact will be made on the biodiversity of the wider area.
- 6.7 The building is proposed to be single storey and has been designed to minimise its impact on the open countryside. The use of timber cladding is appropriate and the low pitched roof will echo the external appearance of the Bowls Club to the south.

I am therefore satisfied that the building will meet the requirements of policy CP24 in terms of the quality of new development and be a suitable design in this more rural locality.

- 6.8 It is noted that the Clubhouse will provide a hospitality area and kitchen. The application states that the hospitality area will be used by parents, spectators, players and officials to enjoy refreshments and socialise during and after matches. It is also envisaged that this area will provide a venue for Club Committee and football meetings, although any Club social and fund raising events will be on a very occasional basis only. In addition the Clubhouse is proposed to be sited over 90m from the nearest dwelling. Nevertheless it remains appropriate to ensure that any associated noise and disturbance are kept to a minimum. This can be ensured by the imposition of appropriate planning conditions to limit its hours of use and control any ventilation and/or extraction systems that may be required to serve the kitchen. The submission states that there would not normally be any usage after 7pm on a Saturday or 5pm on a Sunday, although the pitch will also be used sometimes during the week. I therefore recommend the general hours of use be limited to 09.00 – 19.00 on weekdays and Saturdays and 09.00 – 17.00 on Sundays and Public or Bank Holidays.
- 6.9 The application also states that the Club is a focus for other community based activities: the annual 5-a-side tournament and the town carnival for example. It would be reasonable therefore to expect the Clubhouse to be used later in the evening on an occasional basis. I therefore recommend that the Clubhouse be permitted to operate until 23.00 on a limited number of occasions: these to be limited to no more than six times a year.
- 6.10 The application proposes the erection of floodlights mounted on 6no. 15m high columns. The siting of the pitch and floodlights are of a sufficient distance from the closest dwellings to the south to ensure no unacceptable impact on local levels of residential amenity. The closest dwelling to the southernmost floodlight is over 55m away. However it remains necessary to ensure that any lighting is controlled. This can be ensured by the imposition of an appropriate planning condition to limit the hours of use. I recommend similar hours to that of the Clubhouse.
- 6.11 An objection has been raised questioning the design of the Clubhouse. Specific reference is made to the inadequate provision of toilets, wash hand basins, waste bins and screening, stating that the internal arrangements will not comply with the requirements of the Football Foundation. Whilst this is not a planning consideration an informative should be attached encouraging the applicants to reaffirm this for their own sake.
- 6.12 In light of the TC's view I have considered what other environmental factors or details would be required to be evaluated but can identify no other factors than those raised above and/or dealt with by conditions.

6.13 In conclusion, I consider that the proposed development is acceptable and meets the requirements of the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF and policies contained within the LDF. Any potential impact on the general amenity of the area can be minimised by planning conditions and this is reflected in the recommendation that follows.

7. Recommendation:

7.1 **Grant Planning Permission** in accordance with the following submitted details: Letter dated 18.07.2014, Design and Access Statement dated 18.07.2014, Details LIGHTING dated 18.07.2014, Supporting Information dated 18.07.2014, Proposed Plans SHEET 3 dated 18.07.2014, Site Layout dated 18.07.2014, Location Plan dated 18.07.2014 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 accord with the approved plans, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the development does not harm the character, appearance or visual amenity of the locality.

3 The floodlights hereby approved shall be installed and operated in accordance with the details and light spill projections submitted by Highlights Floodlighting Ltd received 18.06.2014.

Reason: In the interests of general amenity

4 The use of the kitchen for the preparation of hot food shall not commence until full details of a scheme of mechanical air extraction from the kitchen, including arrangements for the continuing maintenance of this equipment and any noise attenuation measures required in connection with the equipment have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include full spectrum octave analysis for the proposed ventilation equipment demonstrating that the noise from the equipment shall not exceed NR35 at the nearest noise sensitive premises/site boundary. The approved scheme shall be fully installed before use of the kitchen commences and shall thereafter be maintained in strict accordance with the approved details. No cooking of food shall take place unless the approved extraction system is being operated.

Reason: In the interests of general amenity

- 5 The use shall not be commenced until all noise sources, including any plant or machinery, noise generated by players, spectators and any associated functions, are identified by the developer/applicant and details of any necessary mitigation measures are submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Any necessary measures shall be implemented and retained at all times.

Reason: To protect the amenities of nearby residential properties

- 6 The Clubhouse hereby approved shall be operated only between the hours of 09.00 and 19.00 on weekdays and Saturdays, and 09.00 and 17.00 on Sundays and Public or Bank Holidays. The Clubhouse may be operated until 23.00 on an occasional basis, this being no more than six times a year.

Reason: In the interests of the general amenity of the wider area

- 7 The floodlights shall only be illuminated whilst the pitch is in use and at no other time and shall not be illuminated outside the hours of 09.00 – 19.00 on weekdays and Saturdays and 09.00 – 17.00 on Sundays and Public or Bank Holidays.

Reason: In the interests of the general amenity of the wider area.

Informatives:

- 1 The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act has added light pollution into the list of Statutory Nuisances contained within the Environmental Protection Act 1990. It is thus in the applicant's best interests to ensure that any lighting does not affect any nearby neighbours.
- 2 The Applicant is encouraged to ensure that the proposed works comply with the requirements of Football Association.

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