Application Number: ADC/0107/07 Recommendation – APPROVE

Site: **Tennis Courts, Lancing Manor Leisure Centre Old Shoreham Road, Lancing**

Proposal: **Conversion of tennis courts to use for soccer, netball and tennis including resurfacing, replacement fencing and replacement of floodlights on existing columns**

The Application

The application site is within the Park, to the north-east of the Leisure Centre building. It currently comprises four tennis courts, with existing fencing and floodlighting. The courts are accessed by pathways from the Leisure Centre and its car park.

The application proposes to replace the existing fencing around the tennis courts, by retaining the existing posts and gate frames and adding new galvanised weld mesh to a height of 1.2m and galvanised mesh to an overall height of 3.66m. The existing floodlights are to be replaced with new luminaires installed onto the existing columns and the courts are to be resurfaced and marked out with playing lines for tennis, netball and soccer games.

There are no alterations proposed to the existing access pathways to the courts or to the existing parking facilities.

Consultations and Representations

Lancing Parish Council: No objection.

Director of Services: The EHO has no objection

Third Parties: A letter of representation has been received, from the resident of 20 Old Shoreham Road (on the opposite side of the A27), in his capacity as Lancing Manor Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator, raising the following points:-

+ 1 support proposal

- Car parking – the increased custom to the improved facility would exacerbate the problem of insufficient car parking on site.
- Equipment Storage – there is currently a lack of accessible equipment storage within the leisure centre. Supplementary storage has been provided by an ugly industrial container which visually clashes with the surrounding parkland. There is a concern about where the additional equipment would be stored for this new facility.
- Wildlife Protection – A family of protected Red Foxes has for some years occupied the southeast corner of the tennis courts and extreme

care should be taken to not to harm or disturb them. Additionally the mature hedge to the north west of the courts regularly contains breeding bird nests and disturbance during the breeding season (March – September) should be avoided.

[NB. a request is made to speak at the Committee meeting]

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adopted West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-16 (WSCC 2005): LOC1, NE12, DEV1, DEV 4-5
Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996): AG1, AB31, AR1, AT12
Adur Development Plan – Submission Core Strategy 2006-26 (ADC 2007): CI1, ENV1, ENV5
Revised West Sussex Parking Standards (WSCC 2003 & ADC 2004)
PPS1 'Delivering Sustainable Development' (ODPM 2005)
PPG 13 'Transport' (DTLR 2001)
PPG17 'Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation' (DTLR 2002)

Planning Assessment

Policies

Structure Plan policy DEV 1 requires that development should have a high quality construction, layout, scale and appearance and have particular regard for the use of materials and building styles. Policy DEV 4 – 5 seeks to ensure that the transport needs of development is met with a choice of means of transport and that sufficient car parking is provided, but not so much as to encourage the use of the private car in preference to other modes of transport.

Local Plan policy AR1 which allows for appropriate recreational development to the benefit of the local community on public open spaces, providing the character and appearance of the open space is respected and the amenity of nearby residents is not affected.
The Adur District Development Plan the Submission Core Strategy policy CI1, following advice in PPG17, states that all community, leisure and cultural facilities will be protected and where possible enhanced, subject to design, accessibility and location.

Visual and residential amenity

The proposed alterations to the existing tennis courts will not significantly change their current appearance. The new hard playing surface and the replacement mesh fence would not appear materially different from the fencing that currently surrounds the courts. The proposed floodlighting will utilise the existing 10 columns already located around the courts.

The site is located approximately 65m from the closest dwelling. Given the distance from the nearest residential development, and also the screening provided by the trees and other vegetation surrounding the courts, it is not considered that the proposal would cause any detriment to the residential amenities of the nearest dwellings.

Access and parking

There is an existing large car park to the south of the site, adjacent to the A27 Old Shoreham Road. The revised West Sussex Parking Standards contain maximum car parking standards for various leisure uses. For tennis, the maximum standard is 2 car parking spaces per tennis court. There are currently four courts on the site which would give rise to a maximum requirement of 8 car parking spaces. It is proposed to maintain the use of the site for four tennis courts but also allow the area to be utilised for soccer and netball. The maximum car parking standard for team games such as soccer and rugby is 12 spaces per hectare which, with a proposed playing area of 0.24ha, results in a maximum requirement of only 3 car parking spaces for the proposal. It is noted in the parking standards that, as pitches can be used for a number of different types of team games, parking requirements are difficult to assess and there are no car parking standards specified for netball.

It is considered that the proposed alterations to the courts, in particular their use for soccer and netball in addition to four tennis courts, should not significantly increase the parking requirements on the site. The large car parking area serving the leisure centre does contain an overflow section (for occasional special needs) on the grassed area adjoining the building. Additionally management could control the use of the courts to avoid peak usage periods at the centre and help reduce demand for on site parking at any one particular time.

Other issues

Additional concerns have been raised by the third party. The agent has stated that the proposed alterations should not give rise to additional storage requirements. It is considered that the and storage issue can be appropriately managed on site. There is, in any event, another current application for a storage extension to the Leisure Centre.

The agent has noted the concerns in relation to the protected wildlife in the area and has stated that the applicants are aware of their responsibilities under the Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996 and that the contractor will be required to exercise care in carrying out the works. As the works required to refurbish the courts are weather dependant, it is not possible to carry out the works outside the bird breeding and nesting season (March – September). Again the agent has advised that the contractor will be made aware of the situation and the equipment utilised for the works will be silenced as far as is possible. The agent also notes that there are a number of trees in the area of the courts and the bird population should not be significantly affected by the

proposed works. It is the applicant's responsibility to comply with all the relevant legislation regarding wildlife in the area.

In conclusion, it is considered that the proposed application is consistent with Adur District Local Plan Policies AR1 and policy CI1 of the Adur Development Plan Submission Core Strategy, as the proposal will enhance the leisure facilities by upgrading the fence and lighting around the existing courts and enabling the courts to be used for additional sports without having an undue impact on visual and residential amenities or wildlife.

Recommendation

APPROVE for reason that:-

The proposed development would help meet the need for improved recreational facilities without detracting from the existing local environment or from highway safety. It would consequently not conflict with the relevant policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AT12, AR1), the West Sussex Structure Plan (LOC1, NE12, DEV1, DEV4-5) and Adur Development Plan Submission Core Strategy (CI1, ENV1, ENV5).

Subject to:-

1. C1Ci (Standard time limit)

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