Development Management - Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0252/14 **Recommendation – Approve**

Site: **Demolition of existing temporary changing room building and erection of a single storey purpose built building to incorporate changing rooms, toilets and storage facilities for sports related activities**

Proposal: **Croshaw Recreation Ground, Grafton Drive Sompting, West Sussex**

Date of site visit: 26 March 2014

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application relates to a prefabricated rectangular building used by Lancing United FC as a changing room. It has little architectural merit and is in need of replacing. The proposal seeks to construct a larger hipped roof building in its place, measuring 5.9m high, 12.1m wide and 8.9m deep with a roof overhang forming a covered area at the front (the existing building measures 12m wide, 3m deep and 3m high).

The building sits at the eastern end of the recreation ground and is prominent in views from Grafton Drive, Boundstone Lane and Sompting Road. There are several mature trees within the vicinity of the building, including one directly to the rear, which it will be important to retain.

The land is owned by Lancing Parish Council and is the subject of a 25 year lease to the football club.

Relevant site history

S/54/85 – Prefab changing pavilion approved (temporary)
S/38/92 – Retention of changing pavilion (temporary)
S/28/95 – Retention of changing pavilion (temporary)
S/75/00 – Retention of changing pavilion
S/16/06 Replacement enlarged building - approved

Consultations

West Sussex County Council: The ***Highway Authority*** has no objection. There are no changes to the access or parking arrangements as a result of the proposal and it will not impact on the nearby public highway. Recommend conditions to control delivery of plant/equipment/materials outside the normal periods of use and a Method Statement to ensure that staff and visitors are segregated from the construction areas.

Adur & Worthing Councils: The Environmental Health Officer has no objections.

The Arboricultural Officer has no objection. The new building will be acceptable as long as its footprint does not encroach further into the existing root protection zone. The tree is currently 2.4 metres from the building, which means that its RPA is half the 4.8 metres that is recommended. Therefore, as long as this distance is maintained, the tree should not be affected.

Sompting Parish Council: Supports the application

Representations

4 letters received raising the following points:

- There are trees adjacent to the site and a tree survey is required
- There should be no first floor or clubhouse/bar, or late night events
- Hours of use should be same as previously approved under S/16/06
- There should not be any parking on the 'green' opposite Grafton Drive.
- This is a recreational park not a football park
- The facility is for football only, not sports related activities
- Existing lights attached to building cause light intrusion and dazzle drivers
- Litter must be disposed of – the Club should be made responsible
- Will advertising material be attached to side of building as existing?
- Collection bins are unsightly
- Building should be positioned away from the junction for highway safety reasons

Relevant Planning Policies

Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AR1, AR7
Assessment of Saved Policies (ADC 2013)
National Planning Policy Framework (CLG 2012)
Planning Practice Guidance (CLG 2014)

Planning Assessment

Principle

Saved policy AR1 relates to public open space and states that development will normally only be permitted if it is for recreational purposes and does not harm the amenity of nearby residents. Policy AR7 states, among other criteria, that the development of new recreational facilities will be permitted subject to it being of an appropriate scale and character for the locality, there being no harm to residential amenity, on-site parking and access to the highway being acceptable and the inclusion of appropriate facilities for disabled people.

The construction of a replacement changing facility is therefore acceptable in principle subject to the policy criteria above.

Visual amenity

The design of the building has been amended during the course of the application to introduce a full hip. This reflects the design of the building previously approved in 2006 but not built, and is more in keeping with the general roof form in the area. It marks a significant improvement over the pre-fabricated building currently on the site which has no visual merit.

It is sited on a prominent corner of the recreation ground, at the junction of three roads. It is to have a larger footprint than the existing building and is to be sited approximately 2m further to the west to protect the mature tree to the east. The retention of this tree, and those to the south, will help to soften the visual impact of the building. The increased footprint will encroach further onto the recreation ground but will not prejudice the use of the recreation ground by the public to any significant degree.

Residential amenity

The new building will be larger but is sufficiently separated from the dwellings to the north and east to not cause any adverse loss of light or outlook. The floor plan of the proposed building shows it being used as changing rooms only, with no provision of a social club. Its use will therefore be similar to that of the existing building and will not result in late night use.

The 2006 permission included a condition restricting the use of the building to between the hours of 9am and 6.30pm at weekends, 5pm and 9.30pm on Tuesdays and 9.30pm on one other weekday evening per calendar month plus one additional meeting held annually. This was to prevent disturbance to local residents, given the proximity of dwellings to the site.

However, that permission was not implemented and it does not appear that there are any controls over the hours of use of the existing building. The use will be limited predominantly to times when football is being played and, as there are no floodlights on the recreation ground, the facility is unlikely to be used late at night. Being a changing facility only, on balance, it is not considered that hours of use need to be controlled, particularly as there is no control over the hours of use of the recreation ground itself.

Parking and access

Representations received to the application have referred to parking occurring on the recreation ground itself and on the street, causing congestion and safety issues. The recreation ground has no on-site parking provision and no new parking is proposed. However, the proposal is to replace existing facilities with new changing facilities and it is not anticipated that it will result in a more intensive use of the facility or worsen the existing traffic situation. WSCC has not objected on highway safety grounds and, in light of this response, it is not considered that a highway objection can be sustained.

Recommendation

APPROVE for the reason:-

The proposed development is located within the built up area and would improve the quality of the recreational facilities. The proposal would not detract from the local environment or result in additional impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties or on highway safety. It would consequently not conflict with the relevant saved policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AR7) or the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Standard 3 year time limit
2. Use as changing rooms only
3. Temporary parking and storage provision
4. Protection of trees
5. No trenches to be laid within 5m of tree trunks
6. Materials
7. Demolish and remove debris
8. No floodlighting
9. Approved plans

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation? Y

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying matters of concern within the application (as originally submitted) and negotiating, with the Applicant, acceptable amendments to the proposal to address those concerns. As a result, the Local Planning Authority has been able to grant planning permission for an acceptable proposal, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Case Officer: Peter Barnett Date: 15 May 2014

Authorised by: Gary Peck Date: 15 May 2014