

Committee Report

Application No:	DC/17/00189/FUL
Case Officer	Tracy Long
Date Application Valid	22 February 2017
Applicant	Rugby Football Union
Site:	Blaydon Rugby Club, Crowtrees Hexham Road Swalwell Whickham NE16 3BN
Ward:	Whickham North
Proposal:	Replacement of existing grassed playing pitch with new external 3G artificial grass sports pitch including new floodlighting, team shelters, scoreboard, 1.2m high perimeter pitch barrier, equipment storage container and new hardstanding area (additional info received 14/03/17).
Recommendation:	GRANT
Application Type	Full Application

1.0 The Application:

1.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION SITE

The application site is Blaydon Rugby Club which is situated on Hexham Road in Swalwell. Vehicle and pedestrian access to the site is from the north eastern boundary of the site from Hexham Road. There are a number of buildings along the northern boundary of the site with Hexham Road which include a club house and a gym. There is a hard surfaced and grassed car parking area behind these buildings, there are also a number of grass pitches on the site. The main pitch is in the centre of the site and has a spectator stand. There is also a gravel car parking area to the south of the site. Land levels fall across the site from south west to north east.

1.2 The site is located in a mixed use area with housing to the north and east of the site, commercial properties to the east and south and countryside to the south and west.

1.3 The application site is within the Green Belt, is part of a wildlife corridor and is also designated as an Outdoor Sports Facility Protection Area on the Council's Local Plan Policies Map 2015. In addition parts of the application site are within Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3.

1.4 DESCRIPTION OF PLANNING APPLICATION

This planning application proposes to replace an existing grassed playing pitch in the centre of the site with a 3G artificial grass sports pitch, including new flooding lighting, team shelters, a scoreboard, a 1.2 metre high perimeter pitch barrier, an equipment storage container and a new hardstanding area.

1.5 This planning application has been submitted with the following supporting information

- Design and Access Statement
- Planning Statement
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Transport Information
- Lighting Details

1.6 PLANNING HISTORY

There have been a number of planning applications at this site – however none are considered to be relevant to the consideration of this current planning application.

2.0 Consultation Responses:

Environment Agency No objection subject to a planning condition.

Sport England No objection

3.0 Representations:

3.1 The Council sent neighbour notification letters to 108 properties surrounding the site. The Council also displayed 2 site notices at the site. In addition a notice also appeared in the Newcastle Journal on 17 March 2017. No representations have been received.

4.0 Policies:

NPPF National Planning Policy Framework

NPPG National Planning Practice Guidance

DC2 Residential Amenity

ENV3 The Built Environment - Character/Design

ENV51 Wildlife Corridors

CFR17 Retention of Outdoor Sports Facilities

CS1 Spatial Strategy for Sustainable Growth

CS13 Transport

CS14 Wellbeing and Health

CS15 Place Making

CS17 Flood Risk and Waste Management

CS18 Green Infrastructure/Natural Environment

CS19 Green Belt

5.0 Assessment of the Proposal

5.1 The main planning issues are considered to be whether the proposal is appropriate development within the Green Belt, its impact on the living conditions of surrounding residents, its impact on highway safety in the area and any potential risks from flooding.

5.2 GREEN BELT

The application site is within the Green Belt. National and local planning policies attach great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land open and undeveloped.

5.3 Section 89 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that the construction of new buildings within the Green Belt is inappropriate save for some exceptions, which includes:

- The provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it

5.4 The proposed development is therefore considered by Council officers to be appropriate development within the Green Belt, as it is facilities for outdoor sport and recreation. It is also considered that the proposed development would not harm the openness of this Green Belt site and would not conflict within the purposes of including land within the Green Belt.

5.5 The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable from a Green Belt point of view and accords with the aims and objectives of the NPPF and policy CS19 of the Council's Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan (CSUCP).

5.6 OUTDOOR SPORTS PROTECTION AREA

The application site is allocated as an "Outdoor Sports Facility Protection" area on the Council's Local Plan Policies Map. Saved policy CFR17 of the Council's UDP seeks to protect and retain where required existing outdoor sports facilities.

5.7 This application proposes the replacement and upgrade of the existing grass sports pitch at the site. The proposal would therefore not result in the loss of any of the existing sporting facilities at this site. The proposal would in fact improve the existing sporting facilities.

5.8 Sport England has stated that they have no objections to the application and given the funding for the proposal is coming direct from the Rugby Football

Union (RFU), Sport England is satisfied that the proposal will meet the relevant technical specification without the need for planning conditions.

- 5.9 It is therefore considered that the proposed development is acceptable from a sport provision point of view and accords with the aims and objectives of the NPPF, saved policy CFR17 of the UDP and policies CS14 and CS18 of the Council's CSUCP.
- 5.10 **DESIGN ISSUES**
The size, design and location of the proposed development is considered to be appropriate for a rugby pitch at a Rugby Club and would not have a detrimental impact on the appearance of the site or surrounding area.
- 5.11 The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable from a design point of view and accords with the aims and objectives of the NPPF, saved policy ENV3 of the Council's Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and policy CS15 of the CSUCP.
- 5.12 **RESIDENTIAL AMENITY**
There is already existing sporting activity and floodlighting at the site in relation to the existing grass sports pitch. It is proposed to use the new replacement pitch between 9am to 10pm Monday- Sunday.
- 5.13 The nearest housing is to the east of the site just over 110 metres away from the proposed 3G pitch. There is also housing to the north of the site beyond Hexham Road some 170 metres away.
- 5.14 Given the distance between the proposed development and the nearest housing and the fact that this proposal is replacing an existing pitch, it is considered that the proposed development would not harm the living conditions of surrounding residents. It is therefore not considered necessary in this instance to condition the days and times that the sports pitch can be used.
- 5.15 Details of the replacement flood lighting for the new pitch has been submitted as part of this application. This information shows that the proposed flood lighting would not result in light spillage to any of the surrounding residents.
- 5.16 The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable from a residential amenity point of view and accord with the aims and objectives of the NPP, saved policy DC2 of the UDP and policy CS14 of the CSUCP.
- 5.17 **HIGHWAY ISSUES**
No changes are proposed to the existing access arrangements at the site. The site has over 400 car parking spaces. No car parking spaces would be lost as a result of this proposal.
- 5.18 The provision of the new artificial grass pitch will enhance the quality of the existing grass pitch which will therefore provide for some increased usage, given that the artificial grass pitch surface is more durable. Any increase in the

use of the replacement pitch is considered to be negligible when compared to the existing pitch.

5.19 The proposed development is considered to be acceptable from a highway safety point of view and accords with the aims and objective of the NPPF and policy CS13 of the CSUCP.

5.20 POTENTIAL FOR CONTAMINATED LAND

The risk of contaminated soil being present on the application site is considered to be low. However a planning condition has been recommended (condition 3) to ensure that any suspected contaminated ground found during the development should be screened and removed, to ensure that the risks from land contamination to the future users of the site and neighbouring properties are minimised.

5.21 Subject to this planning condition the proposal is considered to be acceptable from a potential contaminated land point of view and accords with the aims and objectives of the NPPF, saved policy ENV54 of the UDP and policy CS14 of the CSUCP.

5.22 FLOOD RISK/DRAINAGE

The application site is partially within flood zones 1, 2 and 3. Flood zone 3 is a flooding, fluvial flooding and tidal flooding. All of the application site is within a Critical Drainage Area. A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) which also includes a drainage strategy has therefore been submitted as part of this planning application.

5.23 The NPPF states that outdoor sport such as the proposed sports pitch is a water compatible use, which is appropriate within flood zones 1, 2 and 3.

5.24 Given that part of the application site is within flood zones 2 and 3 national planning policy states that a sequential flood risk assessment should be submitted as part of the planning application, which demonstrates that there are no alternative sites within the catchment area for the development with lower risk of flooding.

5.25 The NPPF states that a pragmatic approach should be taken with the sequential flood test. Given that this development is to improve the existing facilities at the Rugby Club it would not be possible to locate the proposed replacement pitch at an alternative site. Council officers therefore accept that due to the locational requirements of the proposal, there are unlikely to be any suitable alternative sites for this development which would fall within a lower flood zone.

5.26 The Environment Agency has stated that they have no objection to the proposed development subject to a planning condition which states that there should be no ground raising to ensure is no loss of flood plain attenuation. To address this planning condition 4 has been recommended.

- 5.27 The submitted FRA includes a drainage strategy which explains that the surface water from the development will drain to the River Derwent to the north west of the site. It is proposed that the surface water will be stored in the permeable subbase of the pitch and restricted to green field runoff rates. Four planning conditions (5 – 8) have therefore been recommended relating to the final design and implementation of the surface water drainage scheme and maintenance plan.
- 5.28 Subject to the above planning conditions the proposal is considered to be acceptable from a flood risk and drainage point of view and accord with the aims and objectives of the NPPF and policy CS17 of the CSUCP.
- 5.29 **COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY**
On 1st January 2017 Gateshead Council became a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Authority. This application has been assessed against the Council's CIL charging schedule and the development is not CIL chargeable development as it is not for qualifying retail or housing related. As such no CIL charge is liable.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The proposed development would improve the existing sport provision at the Rugby Club. The development is also considered to be acceptable and in line with both national and local planning policies. It is therefore recommended that the application is approved subject to the planning conditions below.

7.0 Recommendation:

That permission be GRANTED subject to the following condition(s) and that the Strategic Director of Communities and Environment be authorised to add, delete, vary and amend the planning conditions as necessary:

1
The development shall be carried out in complete accordance with the approved plan(s) as detailed below -

02 Block plan of site

04 Proposed AGP plan

05 Proposed elevations

08 Proposed Scoreboard

Any material change to the approved plans will require a formal planning application to vary this condition and any non-material change to the plans will require the submission of details and the agreement in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to any non-material change being made.

Reason

In order to ensure that the development is carried out in complete accordance with the approved plans and any material and non-material alterations to the scheme are properly considered.

2

The development to which this permission relates must be commenced not later than 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason

To comply with section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

3

During development works, any 'undesirable' material / made ground observed during any excavation of the existing ground should be screened and removed. If any areas of odorous, abnormally coloured or suspected contaminated ground, are encountered during development works, then operations should cease, and it must be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken, and where remediation is necessary a remediation scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Following completion of measures identified in the approved remediation scheme a verification report shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason

To ensure that risks from land contamination are minimised in accordance with the NPPF, saved policy ENV54 of the Unitary Development Plan and policy CS14 of the Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan.

4

No ground raising should take place as part of this development.

Reason

To ensure that there is no loss of floodplain attenuation in accordance with the NPPF and policy CS17 of the Council's Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan.

5

Notwithstanding the submitted plans, no development shall commence on site until a detailed scheme for the surface water drainage system for the development has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason

To prevent the increased risk of flooding in accordance with the NPPF and Policy CS17 of the Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan for Gateshead and Newcastle upon Tyne.

6

The surface water drainage system approved under condition 5 shall be provided in accordance with the approved details prior to replacement sports pitch being brought into use.

Reason

To prevent the increased risk of flooding in accordance with the NPPF and Policy CS17 of the Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan for Gateshead and Newcastle upon Tyne.

7

The sports pitch hereby approved shall not be brought into use until a Surface Water Drainage Management Plan for the management and maintenance of the surface water drainage scheme of the development has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason

To prevent the increased risk of flooding in accordance with the NPPF and Policy CS17 of the Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan for Gateshead and Newcastle upon Tyne.

8

The Surface Water Drainage Management Plan approved under condition 7 shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details for the lifetime of the development.

Reason

To prevent the increased risk of flooding in accordance with the NPPF and Policy CS17 of the Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan for Gateshead and Newcastle upon Tyne.

