

Planning Committee Report	
Planning Ref:	FUL/2018/1788
Site:	Park Hill Primary School
Ward:	Woodlands
Proposal:	Creation of a Mini Pitch and installation of associated perimeter ball stop barrier and fencing, floodlights, hard standing areas and prefabricated changing rooms
Case Officer:	Shamim Chowdhury

SUMMARY

The application proposes the creation of a mini football pitch together with a prefabricated building for changing rooms, two floodlights, timber fence and mesh fencing as a ball barrier within the existing playing field of Park Hill Primary School. Outside normal school hours and during school holiday periods the mini pitch would be used by members of the public. The proposed hours of mini pitch use is from 9am to 6:30pm Monday to Friday, 9am to 4pm on Saturday, and 9am to 4pm Monday to Thursday during school holidays. The mini pitch would not be used on Sundays. The mini pitch would be located towards the eastern end of the playing field adjacent to the landscape buffer along Park Hill Lane away from surrounding neighbouring houses.

BACKGROUND

The current application has been submitted following withdrawal of the last application (Ref. FUL/2018/1178) in June 2018. In the last submission, insufficient information was available to assess the noise impact on the surrounding residential amenities as well as the impact on highways and parking provision and the intended hours of the mini pitch use was longer in the evening than is currently proposed. The application was withdrawn following officer's concerns in terms noise and disturbance. In the meantime, the applicant has engaged with the residents to discuss their proposal and arranged a meeting where ward councillors were also attended.

KEY FACTS

Reason for report to committee:	More than 5 objections
Current use of site:	School playing field
Proposed use of site:	Creation of a Mini football pitch and associated work such as floodlights, perimeter ball stop barrier and fencing and a free standing prefabricated building for changing rooms.
Hours of operation	9am – 6:30pm Monday to Friday; 9am – 4pm on Saturday

RECOMMENDATION

Planning committee are recommended to grant planning permission subject to conditions listed within the report.

REASON FOR DECISION

- The proposal is acceptable in principle.
- The proposal will not adversely impact upon highway safety.
- The proposal will not adversely impact upon the amenity of neighbours.
- The proposal accords with Policies: CO1, AC1, AC2, AC3 and DE1 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016, together with the aims of the NPPF.

BACKGROUND

APPLICATION PROPOSAL

The planning application seeks permission for the creation of a mini football pitch together with a freestanding prefabricated building to be used for changing rooms. The proposed mini pitch is to be used by the pupils of Park Hill Primary School during school hours, with the pitch being available to members of the public outside school hours and during school holiday periods within a restricted time period. The proposed hours of mini pitch is from 9am to 6:30pm Monday to Friday and from 9am to 4pm on Saturday. During school holiday period the hours of use would be from 9am to 4pm Monday to Thursday. The mini pitch would not be used on Sundays. The mini pitch would be located towards the eastern end of the playing field adjacent to the landscape buffer along Park Hill Lane. The proposed single storey building for changing rooms would be located to the south of the mini pitch. The building for changing room would measure 9m X 3.7m with flat roof 2.7m above ground level. This would be constructed out of timber panels. The mini pitch would have a perimeter ball stop barrier comprising of 1.8m netting on top of 1.2m high plywood fencing. The two floodlights on 6m high galvanised steel poles will be installed to the northwest and southeast corners of the proposed mini pitch.

The proposal is supported by a range of documents and reports including a Programme of Use, Parking Accumulation Assessment, Design and Access Statement and Planning Statement, Non-Residential Mining Report, Noise Management Plan, Noise Impact Assessment and a diagram for floodlights showing lux values.

The Design and Access Statement states that the purpose of this proposal is to create a healthier and active generation of children through the provision of new sport spaces in primary schools around England and Wales, providing access to an inclusive, quality first sport experience for physical education in a safe and fun environment. Access to the Mini Pitch will also be enjoyed by public groups to extend the widespread benefits afforded via sport to the local community.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is the playing field of Park Hill Primary School. Park Hill Primary School is located on the northern side of Lower Eastern Green Lane and is largely bounded by residential properties and the school site. The playing field is located to the north/northeast of the school buildings. Park Hill Lane, a single track adopted highway (not open to vehicular access) shares a boundary with the school/playing field to the east, beyond which are the residential houses on Sutherland Avenue. The western boundary of the site backs on to rear gardens of houses on Barnstaple Close (off Park Hill Drive). To the north, there is another playing field but separated from school playing field by a landscape buffer. There are residential houses to the south of the school building.

PLANNING HISTORY

There have been a number of historic planning applications on this site; the following are the most recent/relevant:

Application Number	Description of Development	Decision and Date
FUL/2013/2058	Single storey extension & internal refurbishment of the existing building	approved 27/11/2013

FUL/2011/0214	Retention of existing storage container & erection of 1 no. storage container and 3m high screen	approved 31/03/2011
21784/R	Erection of single storey extension and associated ramp	approved 03/07/2008
21784/P	Extensions and alterations to create new entrance, teaching and administration areas	approved 13/11/2003

POLICY

National Policy Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF published in March 2012 sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system only to the extent that is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so. The NPPF promotes sustainable development and good design is recognised as a key aspect of this.

The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) 2014, this adds further context to the NPPF and it is intended that the two documents are read together.

Local Policy Guidance

The current local policy is provided within the Coventry Local Plan 2016, which was adopted by Coventry City Council on 6th December 2017. Relevant policy relating to this application is:

Policy CO1: New or improved social community and leisure premises

Policy DE1 Ensuring High Quality Design

Policy DS3: Sustainable Development Policy

Policy GE1 Green Infrastructure

Policy GE3: Biodiversity, Geological, Landscape and Archaeological Conservation

Policy AC1: Accessible Transport Network

Policy AC2: Road Network

Policy AC3: Demand Management

Policy AC4: Walking and Cycling

Policy EM4 Flood Risk Management

Policy EM5 Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

Supplementary Planning Guidance/ Documents (SPG/ SPD):

SPG Design Guidelines for New Residential Development

SPD Delivering a More Sustainable City

CONSULTATION

No Objections received from:

- Highways

No objections subject to conditions have been received from:

- Environmental Protection
- Sports England

Immediate neighbours and local councillors have been notified; a site notice was posted on 27 June 2018.

7 letters of objection have been received, raising the following material planning considerations:

- a) Potential noise nuisance and disturbance has not been addressed
- b) The installation of a 3.5m high acoustic fence has not been proposed despite suggested in the noise impact assessment
- c) Excessive noise and disruption outside of school hours, weekends and school holidays
- d) Light pollution, in particular the floodlights in the winter would light up the rear amenity of nearby houses
- e) Increased parking problems in the area
- f) The proposed pitch would not blend in with woodland setting and wildlife
- g) The loss of school playing fields would result in the loss of open fields in the local area
- h) Access to the site through side gate next to Park Hill Lane would result in increased noise and disturbance from visitors' comings and goings which would be harmful to the residential occupiers on Sutherland Avenue.

Within the letters received the following non-material planning considerations were raised, these cannot be given due consideration in the planning process:

- i) School has several hard standing areas which can be used for all year round activities
- j) The proposed pitch is unnecessary, is only suitable for football, will provide negligible physical or educational benefit.

Any further comments received will be reported within late representations.

APPRAISAL

The main issues in determining this application are principle of development, impact upon neighbouring amenity, visual amenity and highway considerations.

Principle of development

Policy CO1 of the Coventry Local Plan (CLP) 2016 provides guidance on social community and leisure provisions. This policy suggests that proposals for social, community and leisure facilities will be considered through the following sequential approach: a) Designated centres to support the centres hierarchy; b) Where no suitable sites are available in a designated centre, an edge-of-centre location; c) Where no edge of centre sites are available, a site adjacent to other associated facilities including existing schools and educational facilities. The policy also suggests that the proposals for social, community and leisure facilities will be considered on the basis of: a) The appropriateness of their proposed location in relation to their scale and intended catchment; b) Compatibility with nearby uses; c) Accessibility by a choice of means of transport; and d) Compatibility with other Plan Policies.

The proposal is an outdoor sports facility and would remain part of an existing playing field. In this instance, in context of city's local and district centres and their hierarchy, a sequential approach to justify the proposal would appear inappropriate. The sequential approach is required primarily to maintain the hierarchy of town centres and bring diversity within the centres. The proposed outdoor mini football pitch is not a main town centre use and is for the predominant use of the pupils at Park Hill School; therefore, it is considered that such a use would not have any detrimental impact on local/town centres in terms of maintaining their hierarchy and diversity. Requesting a sequential assessment in this case would not be reasonable.

The supporting text of chapter 6 in the paragraph '*Universities, Schools and Educational Facilities*' of Coventry Local Plan 2016 states that "where possible schools and their grounds should be utilised for other community provisions such as social, cultural, leisure and indoor sports facilities. This will help to develop a schools position at the centre of the community

with significant benefits to local residents. It can also help ensure the effective use of resources and help minimise travel distances for users". Park Hill Primary school benefits from a large playing field in addition to its playgrounds. The proposed mini pitch would replace a smaller part of the playing fields and use of the mini pitch would also be available for community use outside school hours. This is in accordance with the Coventry Local Plan 2016.

The proposed mini pitch would result in the loss of a smaller part of the existing playing field, however, Sport England has agreed that the rest of the playing field and the other playgrounds within the school site are sufficient and satisfactory to meet the curricular requirement of the school. The proposal would not affect the current sports and outdoor facilities significantly which are available to school children and the proposed mini pitch within an existing playing field is the most appropriate location for it. In addition the site is part of a local primary school and accessible by a choice of means of transport as well as benefiting from limited onsite parking. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in principle subject to compliance with other Plan Policies.

Impact on residential amenity

The concerns raised by local residents are carefully noted. The residents' main concern is the noise and disturbance which will be generated from the proposed outdoor sports activity and how this could affect their living conditions. The site is a school surrounded by residential houses behind the perimeter landscape buffer. During school hours neighbouring residents generally experience noise while children play outside and carry out outdoor activities. The proposal would extend the hours of current outdoor activities beyond the school hours and during school holiday period. However, the sports activities in association with the proposed mini pitch would be organised and operated within restricted periods of time. The proposed mini pitch would be open to use during the times mentioned above. A Noise Management Plan has been submitted which demonstrates how the activities in association with the mini pitch would be monitored and controlled to minimise the noise and disturbance from comings and goings of the visitors as well as using the outdoor pitch.

The proposed pitch is part of the FA Mini-Pitch programme and comprises an artificial grass surface measuring 20 metres by 13 metres plus two inset goal areas. This is a relatively small pitch where for comparison a 5 a-side pitch measures 36.5 metres by 27.5 metres. Further to this, the main source of noise affecting the area outside school hours is road traffic on Lower Eastern Green Lane and other surrounding residential streets with noise from more distant road traffic on the major highways in the vicinity.

The NPPF suggests that planning decisions should aim to avoid noise from giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life as a result of new development. It also suggests to mitigate against and reduce harmful noise impact through the use of planning conditions.

The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) suggests that noise needs to be considered when new developments may create additional noise and when new developments would be sensitive to the prevailing acoustic environment. In assessing noise impact, the NPPG suggests that the following are considered:

- whether or not a significant adverse effect is occurring or likely to occur;
- whether or not an adverse effect is occurring or likely to occur; and
- whether or not a good standard of amenity can be achieved.

An environmental noise assessment has been carried out for the proposed new artificial grass mini-pitch to assess the impact of noise on the nearby residential properties from the community use of the pitch outside of school use hours. The assessment includes the prediction of noise emission from the mini pitch at the nearby noise sensitive properties, based on noise level data from activities measured at existing similar sites. The predicted noise level is compared to current relevant noise guidance. The assessment has collated historic and project specific data gathered from similar types of pitches and uses, and determines what is considered to be likely noise emission levels from the use.

The revised noise assessment (Rev D) concludes by stating that the predicted equivalent noise level very marginally exceeds the criteria stated in WHO 1999 at which moderate community annoyance starts to occur although given the limited amount of community use (1.5 hours on a weekday after school use) and the early proposed finish time, it is unlikely to have a significant impact.

With the proposed usage and noise management plan, the development would potentially be noticeable but not intrusive and would result in 'no observed adverse effect' when considered against national planning policy and guidance, which is defined in the NPPG as noise that can be heard, but does not cause any change in behaviour or attitude.

It has been noted that the noise assessment report suggested a 3.5m high acoustic barrier in the form a closed boarded timber fencing. It is acknowledged that such a barrier would reduce the noise level, but a 3.5m high fencing along the landscaped playing field would not only be an hugely unsightly feature but it would also affect the visual amenity and landscaped character of the area. Considering the level of activities within an existing playing field during day time, it is considered that this proposal would not result in an unacceptable impact to any residential amenity or have a detrimental impact on the private amenity of the residents due to excessive impacts from noise. The revised noise impact assessment (Rev D) demonstrated that the proposed use within the restricted time frame without a 3.5m high barrier would not result in unacceptable level of noise to affect the living conditions of the neighbouring occupiers. The Environmental Protection Officer is satisfied with the revised noise impact assessment and does not raise any objection to the proposal, subject to restricted hours of use as sought in the planning application.

The two floodlights are considered acceptable and due to their design and height they do not appear to have significant light spillage outside the playing field. A diagram (Proposed Floodlights DWG:LSUK 18-0190 06 Rev 01) in relation to this demonstrates that the illumination of the floodlights would not affect the neighbouring residential amenities. The Environmental Protection Officer has raised no concerns on this.

Therefore, it is considered that the proposal would not result in an unacceptable impact on residential amenity from additional noise and light pollution.

Highway considerations

Local residents raise concerns on parking issue and they consider the existing parking problem in the area would exacerbate because of the proposed mini pitch on school site.

Policy AC1 'Accessible Transport Network' states that development proposals which are expected to generate additional trips on the transport network should integrate with existing transport networks including roads, public transport and walking and cycling routes to promote access by a choice of transport modes. The principle of the above Policy is to ensure that the new development should not be prejudicial to the satisfactory functioning of

the highway and additional traffic movements should not result in unacceptable impacts on the highway network.

The planning application is accompanied by a Parking Accumulation Statement to assess the impact onto the local area during the evening and weekend periods when access to the proposed mini pitch will also be enjoyed by members of the public (outside school hours).

The proposed site use would result in more weekday evening activity and more weekend activity during mornings and afternoons. The school has around 30 on-site parking spaces, in addition to on-street parking in the area. The Parking Accumulation Statement predicts that the maximum number of participants on site at any time will be 24 and this could result in a maximum accumulation of 26 vehicles parked onsite and offsite at any one time within a one-hour period. The Parking Accumulation Statement concludes by stating that the proposed mini pitch would generate only a negligible increase in traffic generation in comparison to the extant use. Additional activities within the mini pitch would not create significant traffic movements or disturbance.

The agent has provided a plan to show the primary access route to the proposed mini pitch which is through the main gate. The Noise Management Plan also demonstrates that the visitors would be advised to use the main gate from Lower Eastern Green to access the pitch. This is to enable visitors to use the onsite car parking and avoid parking on nearby streets. The Highways Officer finds the Parking Accumulation Statement satisfactory and does not object to the proposal. It is considered that the proposal would not have significant impact on the free flow of traffic and endanger highway safety. The proposal therefore accords with Policy AC2 and AC3 of the CLP 2016 for new developments.

Impact on visual amenity

Policy DE1 of the Local Plan seeks to ensure high quality design and development proposals must respect and enhance their surroundings and positively contribute towards the local identity and character of an area. Paragraph 17 of the NPPF requires that planning should always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.

The proposed building for changing rooms would be modular type similar to some of the existing school buildings. The flat roofed building would be modest in mass and scale and its timber construction would help to blend in with the landscaped background. In addition, the perimeter mesh fencing on top of the wooden fence around the proposed pitch for the ball barrier would not have significant impact in terms of visual amenity of this landscaped playing field. The mini pitch and associated work together with the proposed building for changing rooms would not be readily visible from nearby streets. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal would not affect the visual amenity of the street and would have very limited impact on the general character of the area.

Other consideration

The proposed mini pitch and the freestanding building for the changing room is away from the landscaped perimeter buffer where there are mature trees and vegetation. The proposal would not affect any landscape feature nor would it affect any trees or surrounding vegetation. Although the development would result in the loss of grassed area of the playing field, the playing does not appear to have any significant ecological interest. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal would not have any demonstrable impact on ecology.

Sport England states that the proposed development is for an outdoor sports facility, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss of playing field. The proposal would reduce the number of playing pitches that could be accommodated on the playing field. The location of the mini pitch has been selected to reduce the impact of light and noise pollution and can be used by the local community. Sport England goes on to state that the submitted Proposed Site Plan demonstrates that the current winter and summer pitch sports can be accommodated on the playing field following the development and would be sufficient to meet the school's curricular requirement. They consider that the mini pitch would increase the sporting offer for both the school and the local community. Sport England do not object to the proposal subject to a community use agreement condition.

Policy EM5 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016 requires all development to apply sustainable drainage system and to ensure that surface water runoff is managed as close to its source as possible. The Flood Risk Management & Drainage team have not raised any concerns with the proposed development but have recommended a number of conditions to ensure satisfactory drainage and surface water management would be incorporated within the development to reduce the risk of flooding from surface water runoff.

Conclusion

The proposed development is considered to be acceptable in principle and will not result in any significant impact upon neighbour amenity, highway safety or ecology subject to relevant conditions. The reason for Coventry City Council granting planning permission is because the development is in accordance with: Policies CO1, DE1, DS3, AC1, AC2 and AC3 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016, together with the aims of the NPPF.

CONDITIONS/REASON

1. The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: *To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).*

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved documents: Programme of Use Rev3.0; Parking Accumulation Assessment; Design and Access Statement and Planning Statement; Non-Residential Mining Report; Mini Pitch Concept Design; Proposed Changing Rooms Elevations DWG: 18-0190 08 Rev 01; Proposed Location plan DWG: 18-0190 02; Location Plan DWG:18-0190 01; Changing Facility Base Unit Details. DWG: (20) 001; Noise Management Plan; Mini Pitch Community Visitor Access Route; Proposed Layout Plan DWG:LSUK 18-0190 03 Rev 01; Proposed Layout Plan DWG:LSUK 18-0190 04 Rev 01; Survey Layout Plan DWG:LSUK 18-0190 05 Rev 01; Proposed Floodlights DWG:LSUK 18-0190 06 Rev 01; Noise Impact Assessment Rev D.

Reason: *For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.*

3. The Mini Pitch hereby approved shall only be used between the hours of 0900 and 1830 Monday to Friday and from 0900 to 1600 on Saturday and shall not be used on Sunday. The floodlights in association with the Mini Pitch shall not be illuminated

outside the hours of operation of the Mini Pitch.

Reason: *The site is closely adjoined by residential properties and the City Council considers it necessary to strictly control the nature and intensity of use of the site in the interests of the amenities of the area in accordance with Policy DE1 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016.*

4. The Mini Pitch hereby permitted shall operate strictly in full accordance with details as set out in the approved Noise Management Plan.

Reason: *To ensure that the Mini Pitch is not used in a manner prejudicial to or likely to cause nuisance or disturbance to the occupiers of nearby properties in accordance with Policy DE1 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016.*

5. Prior to commencement of development, the following information shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority:

- i) A scheme for the provision of surface water drainage, incorporating SuDS attenuation techniques for the management of surface water peak and total flows, in accordance with Coventry City Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Document for 'Delivering a More Sustainable City'.

- ii) A detailed strategy for the long-term maintenance of the SuDS and other surface water drainage systems on site.

- iii) Provisions must be made for the drainage of the site to ensure there are no temporary increases in flood risk, on or off site, during the construction phase

Once approved, the development shall only proceed in accordance with the approved details including any recommended mitigation measures and shall remain in place thereafter.

Reason: *To ensure that adequate drainage facilities are available for the satisfactory and proper development of the site in accordance with policy EM6 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016.*

6. Use of the development shall not commence until a community use agreement prepared in consultation with Sport England has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and a copy of the completed approved agreement has been provided to the Local Planning Authority. The agreement shall apply to the Mini Pitch and the prefabricated changing room, and include details of pricing policy, hours of use, access by non-[educational establishment] users [/non-members], management responsibilities and a mechanism for review. The development shall not be used otherwise than in strict compliance with the approved agreement.

Reason: *To secure well managed safe community access to the sports facility/facilities, to ensure sufficient benefit to the development of sport and to accord with CO1 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016.*

