

REPORT FOR CONSIDERATION AT PLANNING APPLICATIONS SUB COMMITTEE

Reference No: HGY/2005/2229

Ward: Seven Sisters

Date received: 06/12/2005

Last amended date: 6 January 2006

Drawing number of plans 0518 (D) 001 Rev B

Address: Gladesmore Community School Crowland Road N15

Proposal: Erection of 8 x single storey temporary classroom buildings on Gladesmore Community School outdoor sports pitch to replace fire-damaged Crowland School for a period of 3 years. Relocation of Gladesmore Community School all weather sports pitch in Markfield Recreation Ground with out of hours community use.

Existing Use: School/public open space **Proposed Use:** School/sports pitch

Applicant: Haringey Council - Property & Contracts

Ownership: Council

PLANNING DESIGNATIONS

Plans and Planning Briefs
Flood Plain
Area of Archaeological Importance
Area of Community Regeneration
EVS - Local Importance
Green Belt
Lee Valley Regional Park
Road – Borough

Officer Contact: Stuart Cooke

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT PERMISSION subject to conditions

BACKGROUND

As Members will be aware, Crowland Primary School was subject to a severe fire earlier this year and the existing school buildings are unavailable for education use as a result. At present, pupils are being taken by bus to

alternative accommodation. This arrangement is regarded as being a very short term measure to deal with the immediate crisis. In the medium term, whilst investigations are carried out into whether the fire damaged buildings can be re-used or whether redevelopment is necessary, the Education Service wish to create a temporary replacement education facility on Markfield Recreation Ground, close to the existing school site.

To this end, a planning application has been submitted to locate the replacement temporary buildings on the existing sports pitch to Gladesmore Community School and create a new temporary sports pitch on Markfield Recreation Ground.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application site comprises two elements:

1. The existing artificial sports pitch attached to Gladesmore Community school, and
2. Part of the Markfield recreation ground in Markfield Road. The area identified for the application is the NW corner of the recreation ground closest to the school sites.

The site area of the existing artificial sports pitch is 3720 square metres, (0.3720 hectares), which is located between the school buildings and the residential properties in Elm Park Avenue and Gladesmore Road.

The replacement sports pitch is proposed to be in the NW corner of the recreation ground closest to the existing school buildings. At present, the area comprises level grassed open space, forming part of the larger recreation ground. The replacement pitch is to be the same size as the existing pitch and will be surrounded by a 3 metre high chain link fence.

The recreation ground is identified in the adopted and emerging Unitary Development Plans as Green Belt and within the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority area. It is also an ecologically important site (Borough Grade 2).

PLANNING HISTORY

No relevant history

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

The scheme involves two elements,

- the erection of 8 x single storey temporary classroom buildings on Gladesmore Community School outdoor sports pitch to replace fire-damaged Crowland School, and
- the relocation of Gladesmore Community School all weather sports pitch onto Markfield recreation ground. The replacement pitch is intended to provide both a school facility and out of hours community use. The scheme has been amended from that originally proposed in four main respects,
 - the floodlights have been deleted from the scheme,
 - the proposed pitch has been reduced in size to be the same as the existing pitch,
 - the fence has been reduced to 3m in height and be of chain link, and
 - the period of permission has been reduced to 3 years.

REFERRAL AND OTHER CONSULTATIONS

Where a proposal is regarded as a departure from the adopted local Plan, should the Council resolve to grant planning permission for the proposal, under the terms of the Town and Country Planning (Development Plans and Consultation) (Departures) Directions 1999 and the Mayor of London Order 2000 the application has to be referred to both the Government Office for London and the Greater London Authority for direction.

The Council takes the view that the proposal is not a departure from the Plan. The 1999 Departures Direction does not specifically require the referral of planning applications for development in the Green Belt to the SoS, though it does require the referral of applications for “any other development which, by reason of its scale or nature or the location of the land, would significantly prejudice the implementation of the development plan’s policies and proposals.” The Council takes the view that the proposed facility is not inappropriate and its scale and nature of the proposal does not prejudice the UDP policies, and is therefore not a departure.

CONSULTATION

Ward Councillors

Local residents-

1-95, 2-100 Elm Park Avenue

99-125, 82-94 Crowland Road

75-169 Gladesmore Road

91-101, 88-110 Lealand Road

1-26 (cons), 1a-f Lemsford Close

Environment Agency

Friends of Haringey Public Open Spaces
Friends of Markfield Recreation Ground
Lee Valley Regional Park Authority
Transportation
Parks
Council for Sport England

RESPONSES

Ward Councillors - no responses received at the time of writing this report.
Local residents – 12 responses received from local residents, some of whom have children at Crowland School.

Environment Agency - consider this area to be a low flood risk area.

Friends of Haringey Public Open Spaces

Friends of Markfield Recreation Ground

Lee Valley Regional Park Authority

Transportation -

“Although the proposed development is at a location with low public transport accessibility level, this is a relocation of existing use to a temporary site located opposite existing site. Hence, we have considered that this development would not have any significant impact on the subsisting generated car trips or indeed car parking demand. In addition, this location has not been identified within the Council's SPG as that with parking pressure and it is also deemed that the existing approved Crowland School's Travel Plan would mitigate the traffic impact of this development proposal. It is also to be noted that Gladesmore Community School, whose part of land is being utilised for this temporary development, also has an approved travel plan.

“Consequently the highways and transportation authority would not object to this application.”

Parks –

“In November 2006, the Council adopted the Haringey Open Space Strategy in order to provide a clear future direction for the management and development of open space.

“Objective 1 of the Open Space Strategy refers to “Enhancing the quantity and quality of open space provision across the Borough in order to improve opportunities for local people to access a variety of open space environments”.

“Markfield Recreation Ground is located in Seven Sisters ward which is an area that is identified in the Strategy as being overall deficient in open space. Markfield is the only area of local open space providing for the needs of residents in this part of the Borough.

“However, it is a problematic site which is specifically affected by issues of:

- Sewage disgorgement during periods of very intense rainfall.*
- Poor drainage.*
- Inadequate levels of access.*
- High levels of both user and non user concern for personal safety and security.*
- Difficulties in adequately maintaining the site to a reasonable and safe standard particularly the north eastern corner which currently contains former sewage filter beds.*
- Overall low amenity value because of a lack of suitable facilities.*

“The Council submitted a stage 2 application to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) for £1,000,000 of Sustainable Communities funding in November 2005 as part of an overall package of investment of £2,430,050. The outcome of this application is anticipated in the latter part of January 2006.

“Key elements of the application are:

- De-silting of the surface water drainage system to prevent further contaminated flooding.*
- Land drainage to the grassed areas in order to improve amenity value including the redevelopment of formal team sports.*
- Reprovision/ refurbishment of changing facilities.*
- Removal of vandalised and broken sections of the concrete filter beds.*
- Clearance of part of the filter beds to provide a multi use games area.*
- Renewal of the play facilities for younger children.*
- Improvements to lighting throughout the park.*
- Resurfacing of footpaths.*
- The potential development of new cafeteria and toilet provision.*
- Re-landscaping and new planting to create open vistas and improve security.*

“Subsequent to the ODPM submission in November, Recreation Services were contacted by Children’s Services to explore the potential for the temporary siting of an artificial sports pitch or classroom accommodation within Markfield Recreation Ground for a period of up to 3 years.

“In the initial period, up to the summer of 2007, we understand from Children’s Services that this would enable the local provision of temporary classroom accommodation for Crowland School pupils whilst their school is being re-provided. Thereafter, it would provide temporary accommodation for Gladesmore School pupils to enable extensive construction works to be undertaken, funded by the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme.

“Recreation Services are wholly supportive of the need to provide for locally available classroom accommodation for the pupils of Crowland School.

“We have been informed by officers from Children’s Services that continued access to an artificial sports pitch would be required as the existing pitch is intensively used.

“Children’s Services officers have also indicated that the pitch would be available for community use outside of school hours free of charge and that Children’s Services would be responsible for maintenance of the pitch.

“Our principal concerns in relation to the application are the following:

- 1. The area proposed by Children’s Services for the location of the pitch is scheduled, via the ODPM bid, to undergo drainage works in 2007/8 which would be part funded via an application to the Football Foundation both towards the cost of the drainage works and for the provision of changing facilities.*

In funding terms, it is not realistic for Recreation Services to bring the timing of these works forward into 2006/7 because of the lead in times required to make the application to the Football Foundation, and the consequence of this is that the opportunity of Football Foundation funding for the drainage works would be lost. However, as a minimum, the drainage works would need to be completed at the same time as the temporary pitch installation.

“Therefore it would be necessary for the Council to underwrite and if necessary pay for the cost of the drainage works to the grass area proposed in the ODPM bid including the provision of adequate drainage suitable for a grass surface following the removal of the temporary pitch.

“In the event that this proposal is approved by the Development Panel, officers would therefore recommend that as a condition of this application, the Council commits to meeting the costs of the drainage works.

- 2. “The ODPM application includes the proposal to provide a multi use games area to be located in the north eastern part of the Recreation Ground in an area which currently contains the former sewage filter beds.*

“The filter beds have industrial heritage value and have been the subject of discussion between officers from Recreation Services, English Heritage and the Council’s conservation service where outline agreement was reached for their partial removal.

“The multi use games area proposed to be located on this site together with the removal of the sewage filter beds would require planning permission in order to proceed. However, the advantages to be gained from this development are two fold. Firstly, the sewage filter beds which offer very limited amenity value and pose an ongoing health and safety risk would be removed and secondly a permanent facility for a variety of ball games would be provided. The multi use games area would be constructed from similar materials to the artificial pitch required by Children’s Services and provide for similar uses. However the facility proposed would be smaller than the one required by Children’s Services and be located further from Gladesmore School.

“Preliminary discussion with Children’s Services officers indicate that the proposed multi use games area would not provide an adequate alternative to the artificial pitch proposed via the planning application. This is because:

- The lead in time to develop the multi use games area would be greater than that required for the Children’s Services pitch proposal because of the need for a further planning application. This would extend the timescale for temporary alternative access to an artificial pitch beyond the 8-10 weeks envisaged by Children’s Services.*
 - That the location of the multi use games area would require Gladesmore pupils to walk across the park causing both a loss of lesson time and increased pupil management issues.*
- 3. “The proposed location of the artificial pitch would detract from the visual amenity and ‘openness’ of the Recreation Ground as it would be located in an area which is adjacent to where the majority of users access the site. However we understand that this is for the same reasons as outlined above, i.e. to minimise loss of teaching time and potential pupil disruption.*

Council for Sport England – no response received at the time of writing this report. Any response received prior to the Sub-Committee will be reported verbally.

Markfield Project – see below

Chair of Governors Crowland School – see below

Y6 Teacher Crowland School – see below

FLAG – see below

London Wildlife Trust – see below

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

PPG2 – Green Belts

Emerging Unitary Development Plan

OS1 Green Belt
OS5 Ecologically Valuable sites and their Corridors
OS8 Lee Valley Regional Park
ENV1R Flood Protection
UD2 General Principles

Adopted Unitary Development Plan

OP3.1 Green Belt
OP 4.1 Protection of Ecologically Valuable Sites and Ecological Corridors
OP 5.1 Protection of the Floodplain and Urban Washlands
DES1.9 Privacy and Amenity of Neighbours

ANALYSIS/ASSESSMENT OF THE APPLICATION

There are three main planning issues associated with this application,

- the principle of the use
- public access, and
- the effect on local residents

It should be borne in mind that the scheme has been amended since it was first submitted in four important ways:

- the size of the proposed sports pitch has been reduced to be the same as the existing pitch to be replaced,
- the floodlights have been deleted,
- the fencing has been reduced to 3m high chain link, and
- the temporary period has been reduced to 3 years.

The principle of the use

With regard to the redevelopment of the existing sports pitch for the temporary classroom buildings, there is no change of use involved as the land is already used for education purposes.

With regard to the use of part of Markfield recreation ground for a replacement synthetic pitch, the issue of development in the Green Belt is the principle

planning issue. PPG2 sets out national planning policy in relation to development in the Green Belt and policies OS1 Green Belt and OP3.1 Green Belt of the emerging and adopted Unitary Development Plans support this guidance. PPG2 – Green Belts sets out that the general policies controlling development in the countryside apply with equal force in Green Belts but there is, in addition, a general presumption against inappropriate development within them. Such development should not be approved, except in very special circumstances.

The Council considers, in this case, that the development does not constitute inappropriate development as the proposed pitch falls within the category of uses regarded as appropriate as set out in PPG2. Paragraph 3.4 of PPG2, states that essential facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation are not inappropriate uses within the Green Belt. Para 3.5 goes on to state that essential facilities should be genuinely required for uses of land which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in it. It is for the Council to judge whether the facility is inappropriate by way of the harm to the Green Belt. In any case, any harm to the Green Belt could be outweighed by the (emergency) local need, temporary nature of the use and wider community benefit in terms of shared use - deemed to be 'very special circumstances'.

In this light, the very special circumstances which apply here should be borne in mind. First, the need to provide replacement school facilities as close as possible to the fire damaged school site is extremely important in educational terms. The present arrangement of bussing the school children to a remote site is clearly only acceptable in the very short term as an emergency measure and a preferred medium term solution is required whilst the decision is taken as to the future of the existing school buildings.

Second, the proposal is for a temporary period only of three years. This period is required in order for a permanent replacement school facility to be provided. After this period, the temporary buildings will be removed and the ground returned to its former state and incorporated back into the recreation ground.

Policies OS5 Ecologically Valuable sites and their Corridors and OP 4.1 Protection of Ecologically Valuable Sites and Ecological Corridors. These policies aim to protect sites which make a positive contribution to the diversity and richness of Haringey's flora and fauna. Borough grade sites are considered important on a borough wide basis, but grade 2 sites are not as important as grade 1 sites. Markfield Road recreation ground is identified as a Grade 2 site in the Unitary Development Plan and it is considered that the proposal will not conflict with this policy.

Public Access

The proposed sports pitch will be fenced off from the recreation ground. As a result, the general public will not have direct access to this section of the park

for the period of time that the pitch is in place. However, the proposed pitch will be available to local primary schools, individuals and clubs in the local community for use with prior booking. It is likely that local schools will be able to use the pitch for free, but it is possible that all other parties may be charged a fee for usage. A condition requiring details of the charging policy is attached.

A condition will be attached to the proposal requesting details of public access to the pitch and hours of operation, which shall be required to be submitted and approved before any works can commence on site. This will ensure that a satisfactory level of public access is attained.

The effect on local residents

With regard to the second issue, loss of amenity to adjoining occupiers, this relates specifically to residential occupiers of the adjacent properties in Elm Park Avenue and Gladesmore Road. Presently these houses back on to the existing sports pitch which is used for both school use during the day and community use in the evenings. The temporary use of the site to accommodate replacement school buildings would mean that whilst the site remained in education use, the nature of that use would be different. The buildings would be used to provide teaching accommodation for the children with an associated playground area. By its nature, this use would only operate during school hours and the only activities that might be expected to generate any level of noise would be during playtimes. Clearly, the nature of the recreational activities of the existing sports pitch and the proposed playground are different and will have different impacts at different times of the day, but on balance, it is considered that no significant loss of amenity is likely to result to adjoining residents as a result of the proposal. It should be borne in mind that the application is for a temporary period only. One objection have been received from a local resident objecting to the location of the portacabins on the existing sports pitch. Problems resulting from a lack of supervision of children are cited from previous experience of portcabins on this site.

RESPONSES TO LOCAL CONSULTATION

Ward Councillors –

no responses received at the time of writing this report.

Local residents –

17 responses received from local residents, some of whom have children at Crowland School. The responses are mixed, 10 support the scheme and 4 object. Three support the need for the replacement school buildings but are concerned about the impact of the proposed pitch and suggest that alternative options should be looked at. One response relates to the replacement buildings on the existing sports pitch only.

Friends of Haringey Public Open Spaces –

The Forum fully supports the withdrawal of the parallel application and supports the proposal to put temporary classrooms on the Gladesmore internal pitch.

The Forum objects strongly to the location of the replacement pitch on Markfield recreation ground. They consider alternative options to locate pitch should be considered. They are concerned that the Recreation Services improvement proposals for the recreation ground may be compromised by this scheme.

Markfield Project –

Concerned about the impact of the proposed pitch on the open space. Consider alternatives should be considered. Offers part of the Markfield Projects leasehold land for this purpose with potential for permanent pitch.

Chair of Governors Crowland School –

Supports the proposal. Sets out the need to provide proper educational provision for pupils. Unsatisfactory current arrangements. Exceptional circumstances. No alternatives.

Governors –

Support the proposal. Express the urgent need for replacement school facilities locally. Recognise concern at effect on recreation ground. Would seek to manage to minimise impact.

Y6 Teacher Crowland School –

Supports the proposal. Stresses extreme and unusual circumstances should be taken into account. Also scheme is temporary and will benefit wider community.

FLAG –

Object to the location of replacement sports pitch in Markfield recreation ground. Consideration should be given to alternatives. Suggest conditions should permission be approved covering i) ground conditions, ii) tree root protection, iii) firm condition requiring removal and re-instatement.

London Wildlife Trust –

Object to the proposal. Green Belt, loss of open space. This area is an area of severe deprivation of open space. Concern over removal of pitch after temporary period ends. Lack of time for proper consultation.

Haringey Federation of Residents Associations

Accept the need to provide temporary replacement accommodation for Crowland Primary School. Object to use of recreation ground for replacement sports pitch.. Consider alternatives should be considered.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The application involves the use of part of Markfield recreation ground for the temporary provision of a school facility to replace the fire damaged Crowland School.

The principle planning issues are i) the Green Belt designation of the land, ii) public access, and iii) effect on local residents.

Policy guidance is contained within PPG2 Green Belts. Paragraph 3.4 of PPG2, states that essential facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation are not inappropriate uses within the Green Belt. Para 3.5 goes on to state that essential facilities should be genuinely required for uses of land which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in it. It is for the Council to judge whether the facility is inappropriate by way of the harm to the Green Belt. The Council considers, in this case, that the proposal does not constitute inappropriate development as the proposed pitch falls within the category of uses regarded as appropriate to the Green Belt as set out in PPG2.

PPG2 also allows for any harm to the Green Belt being outweighed by the (emergency) local need, temporary nature of the use and wider community benefit in terms of shared use - deemed to be 'very special circumstances'. Given the clear need for the temporary school buildings and the temporary nature of the proposal, the Council considers these very special circumstances apply in this case.

In terms of public access, the proposed sports pitch will be fenced off from the recreation ground. However, the proposed pitch will be available to local primary schools, individuals and clubs in the local community for use with prior booking.

With regard to impact on amenity of adjoining properties to the proposed portacabins, whilst the proposed use will result in some new noise impact, it is considered that the nature and duration of any noise will not significantly harm the current level of amenity of residents.

Therefore temporary conditional permission is recommended.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT PERMISSION

Registered No. HGY/2005/2229

Applicant's drawing No. 0518 (D) 001 Rev B

Subject to the following conditions

1. That this permission shall be for a limited period expiring on either (i) 23 January 2009 or (ii) when the permanent replacement of Crowland primary school is available for occupation, whichever is the sooner, when the works hereby approved shall be removed and the land reinstated to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.
Reason: The building, because of its design and siting, is not considered suitable for permanent retention.
2. The development hereby authorised shall be carried out in complete accordance with the plans and specifications submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
Reason: In order to ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved details and in the interests of amenity.
3. That adequate security measures and maintenance provisions to the all-weather pitch hereby approved be provided, full details of which shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority, prior to the development of the pitch commencing, and that the costs associated with the security and maintenance of the sports pitch be met by the applicant.
To ensure adequate security and maintenance to the sports pitch.
4. Before any works herein permitted are commenced, all those trees to be retained, as indicated on the approved drawings, shall be protected by secure, stout, exclusion fencing erected at a minimum distance equivalent to the branch spread of the trees and in accordance with BS 5837:2005 and to a suitable height. Any works connected with the approved scheme within the branch spread of the trees shall be by hand only. No storage of materials, supplies or plant machinery shall be stored, parked, or allowed access beneath the branch spread of the trees or within the exclusion fencing.
Reason: In order to ensure the safety and well being of the trees on the site during constructional works that are to remain after building works are completed.
5. Details of the proposed foundations in connection with the development hereby approved and any excavation for services shall be agreed with the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the building works.
Reason: In order to safeguard the root systems of those trees on the site which are to remain after building works are completed in the interests of visual amenity.
6. That full details of the fencing proposed to the pitch hereby approved, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, prior to the commencement of the development.
Reason: to ensure the proper appearance of the development.

7. That details of any charging policy for the sports pitch hereby approved, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority, prior to the commencement of the use of the pitch.
Reason: to ensure that adequate public access is provided.
8. That the applicants submit full details of the drainage works associated with the development hereby approved and meet the full costs of those works
Reason: to ensure tha satisfactory drainage of the proposed development.

REASONS FOR APPROVALThe proposal is considered to comply with relevant national and local policies and guidance. The permission is limited for a period expiring on 23 January 2009 or such time as a permanent replacement facility becomes avialable, whichever is the sooner.