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Cambridge City Council

SOUTH AREA COMMITTEE

To: Councillors Taylor (Chair), Blackhurst (Vice-Chair), Al Bander, Ashton, Dryden, McPherson, Pippas, Stuart, Swanson, Carter, Heathcock and Shepherd

Despatched: Friday, 30 December 2011

Date: Monday, 9 January 2012

Time: 7.30 pm

Contact: Martin Whelan

Direct Dial: 01223 457012

Amendment Sheet relating to Agenda Items 7 and 8

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SOUTH AREA COMMITTEE MEETING – 9 January 2011

Pre-Committee Amendment Sheet

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

CIRCULATION: First

ITEM: APPLICATION REF: 11/0916/FUL

Location: 85 Bishops Road

Target Date: 26 September 2011

To Note:

Amendments To Text:

7.0 REPRESENTATIONS

The objector at 89 Bishop Road has commented that if the horse chestnut tree will not be felled to make way for the development - and, as long as this is agreed, they will not be formally objecting to the plans.

Pre-Committee Amendments to Recommendation:

DECISION:

CIRCULATION: First

GENERAL ITEM REFERRING TO APPLICATION REF: 11/0900/FUL

Location: Hills Road Sixth Form College Sports Ground, Sedley Taylor Road

To Note:

The Travel Plan dated 19th December, includes a sentence on page 5 of the Travel Plan and within Appendix 1, 2 and Annex A that the number of cars which could be parked on the car park belonging to the Cantabrigian Rugby Club, which Hills Road Sixth Form has access to, should not exceed 45 cars. I do not consider that an indication of the number of cars, which may be parked in this location should be stipulated within the Plan and associated documents. I recommend that these sentences are removed.

The identification of the number of car parking spaces does not demonstrate an intensification of use. On the planning application form for 11/0900/FUL, it was stated that visiting college teams park on the Rugby Club car park, which the college has full use of. The number of car parking spaces was not specified. This area has not been increased in size and is not proposed to be altered in any way, and as such, I do not consider that any circumstances have changed from the approved development since the application was reported to Committee.

A letter has been received on 5th January 2012 from Hills Road Sixth Form College, a copy of which is attached to this amendment sheet. This letter provides facts and information about the existing use of the playing fields by both the College and other users. A chart is also attached which shows the number of bookings for the fields during the 2010 – 2011 season.

A letter has been received on 6th January 2012 from the lead petitioner on behalf of the Sedley Taylor and Luard Road Residents Group and is attached to the amendment sheet. It states that residents do support the use of the sports field by College students, but that with the existing inadequate and unsafe access arrangements a fatality may occur. There are a number of questions raised in this letter, that I would like to address;

- The Travel Plan is clearly divided into sections:
 - College use, both by students and on match days when teams visit from other educational establishments; and
 - Community use, which are those users with no connection to the College but pay to use the facilities.

The Travel Plan provides a copy of the Terms and Conditions of Hire and general information about access and parking arrangements. Within the Terms and Conditions it specifies that parking is limited and encourages users to car share, or where possible walk or cycle to the facility. This is in accordance with the wording of Condition 15, which requires the Travel Plan to encourage the use of alternative sustainable modes of transport to the site.

- To state that there are no car parking facilities would be misleading. The College has an agreement to use the Rugby Club car park and this is not proposed to change. A pragmatic method needs to be taken as not all community uses will be immediately local to the playing ground and if carrying equipment, they may not wish to use public transport. As such, they would be encouraged to car share, a method, which would see a reduction of cars using the parking facilities. It is considered that this would be more positive, than the users parking inconsiderately on the public highway, which is already congested, especially at weekends.

The Planning Enforcement Officer is of the view that the car parking use is now a historic use and that while no formal permission was submitted, over 10 years has passed, which makes the use exempt from Enforcement action.

- Hills Road Sixth Form have provided information as to the use of the playing grounds, which is attached to this amendment sheet.

- One query asks why College opponents are allowed cars whilst students are not. In answer to this, it is different for other users of the field as they are likely to have further to travel than the College students who are located no more than a 15 minute walk away.
- The lack of a travel plan is not grounds to make an application invalid. It was not until a full understanding of the application was reached that it was considered appropriate to request a travel plan and as it could be adequately addressed through a condition, it would not have been reasonable to refuse the application on this basis.
- Condition 15 does not specify a management system. The use of the Travel Plan can be monitored through the Terms and Conditions booking forms for hire and if any team fails to comply with these terms and conditions, it clearly states that they would be liable to forfeit the use of the pitch or ground without any adjustment of fees.

A number of points are raised in the petitioners letter which relate to matters outside the consideration of this condition such as the safety of the access and the application of policy. These are not material to the merits of this Travel Plan and will be dealt with in correspondence directly with the lead petitioner.

Amendments To Text:

Pre-Committee Amendments to Recommendation: Approve, subject to the removal of the sentence on page 5 of the document referring to the number of car parking spaces as 45.

DECISION:

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- Hand delivered 6/11/2012
by lead petitioner, -
(For inclusion in documentation of S. Area Committee meeting, 9/11/2012).

Lead Petitioner, Committee and petitioners of the Sedley Taylor and Luard Road Residents Group (62 individuals)

Comments upon 11/0900FUL condition 15 (Hills Road Sixth Form College, Traffic Plan)

- The residents' group underlines that it **SUPPORTS THE USE OF THE SPORTS field** by College students and it wishes them to have adequate College sports changing facilities. **HOWEVER**, the residents emphasise once more, that with the presently suggested inadequate and unsafe access arrangements as outlined in condition 15, there will be a serious accident in the road and someone will be killed.
- The inadequate and hazardous access B, acknowledged as such by Highways, in condition 15, is suggested as main service road for expanded **COMMUNITY/COMMERCIAL use**, (to include Cambridge Cricket). Traffic problems and adverse Traffic impact, contrary to Cambridge Local Plan 2006, 8/2 are associated with Community/Commercial use, and condition 15 does not address the issue in 1.4.1. There is no proposal section to address the College's own statement that 'Community use generates the most traffic'. Why is a proposal missing?
- Why are Community/ Commercial users not told there is no car park on the Sports Field? Condition 15 falsely reports a car park for 45 vehicles exists (2.2, 1.3.2, appendices 1,2 and annex A). There is no authorised car park with planning permission for 45 vehicles. Where is the planning permission or application for retrospective planning permission and why have the neighbours not been consulted?
- The applicant has produced insufficient information about community/commercial users and there is no condition on levels of use. How can condition 15 be enforced to ensure that no intensification of use occurs, and that Cambridge Local Plan 2006, 8/2 grounds to reject, is not contravened?
- 1.3 tells College students no cars allowed, why is it different for their opponents?
- Health and safety criteria on access to Sports grounds as outlined in the Open Space and Recreation Strategy (adopted October 2011) is anyway contravened in condition 15 (no separation of community users vehicles and pedestrians/cyclists on a too narrow path B with unsafe exit, no lighting etc.). On what ground does condition 15 allow for unsafe access into the Sports Field in contravention of the Open Space and Recreation Strategy criteria on safety of access? Only the exclusion of vehicles can render the access safe to pedestrians and cyclists. Condition 15 does not ensure that access B is not used as footway and as road simultaneously.
- The Travel plan according to the Department of Transport guidelines should have been submitted at the time of the application with full consultation between all parties affected. Why was the Travel Plan introduced only at an extremely late stage, and why have the neighbours been excluded from what should have been a consultation process between July 2011 and January 2012?
- Where are the management system and the monitoring plan outlined in condition 15, in line with Department of Transport regulations?

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**Hills Road Sixth Form College Sports Ground, Sedley Taylor Road, Cambridge
Planning Permission 11/0900/FUL**

**The purpose of this note is to support the Travel Plan submitted in response to
Condition 15 of the Cambridge City Council grant of full planning consent.**

1. The College playing fields and pavilion are used by the College and local community and were first used as such in the 1920s.
2. The number and type of pitches vary with the season:
 - Winter (September -April) – 2 football pitches and 1 rugby pitch
 - Summer (May – August) – 1 cricket pitch

There is also a rugby pitch on land which is owned by a Trust and is used by the Cantabrigian Rugby Club for matches on Saturdays between September and April and for training on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings. The Rugby Club occasionally uses the College pitch on Saturdays – once since the start of the 2011-12 season because the Trust pitch was frosted. The Trust pitch is also available for use by the College students during the week but is used infrequently as the College's pitch is superior.

3. Concerns about traffic by local residents, (the petitioners) are predicated on their belief that the College will intensify the use of the sports ground because the new Pavilion will be larger than the current building. The intensity of use is determined not by the size of the Pavilion but by the number of pitches, their condition and availability; the College is not increasing the number of pitches and will not therefore be intensifying the use of the sports ground. There will be no adverse traffic impact; indeed the introduction of the Traffic Plan together with already implemented/ planned change of use of some pitches (see 7 and 8 below) should have a beneficial impact on the traffic situation.
4. The increase in changing rooms from 4 to 6 and the introduction of adequate officials' changing facilities (match officials may be of either sex and currently share a single changing room with no shower or toilet facility) brings the facilities up to Sport England standards. Storage for equipment and undercover storage has also been incorporated within the building footprint replacing the old shipping container currently used for the storage of expensive and vulnerable grounds equipment. Overall there will be 6 team changing rooms, 3 officials' changing rooms and 1 private changing room (for use by the occasional person who does not wish to change in front of others). 6 changing rooms and 3 officials' changing rooms will be sufficient to allow changing for matches being played concurrently on the three pitches (ie 2 changing rooms per pitch and 1 per official). This accommodation is required to serve the needs of the College's students and has not been driven by commercial gain.
5. There has also been concern that the reason for the inclusion of a veranda on the new Pavilion is to accommodate an increase in the number of spectators. Verandas are a 'traditional' feature of sports pavilions and in this case it has been designed to dispense with the need for internal circulation space thus saving on the building footprint and making for its efficient day to day use; it will also facilitate the shuttering system which will be an important security measure for when the building is not in use. A document from the petitioners seeks to suggest that there could be up to 100 spectators but this is not substantiated and has not been considered or allowed for in the design of the building.

6. It is understood that the petitioners are generally supportive of the College's educational use. It should be noted that the College is an academic sixth form college and has fewer pitches than other nearby schools half its size (for example there are 4 rugby pitches and 1 all-weather pitch at the nearby Perse boys' school). Use of the ground by students is unavoidably restricted to Tuesday (practice) and Wednesday (matches) as at other times during the week the students are locked into an academic timetable studying their A level programmes. Thus the sports ground is little used on other weekdays (see 7 below). Students will be told to walk or cycle to the sports ground by the Sport Department Staff. Opposition teams will be given details of the relevant section of the Travel Plan by the Sport Department when fixing matches at the College.
7. For much of the year the sports ground is not used during the week days by community users. On most evenings during the summer months of May to August there is a Cricket match and, in addition, on Tuesday and Thursday evenings there is use by a local Archery club which also uses the sports ground on a Tuesday evening in April. At weekends during May to August the archers use the ground for two hours on a Saturday morning and there are cricket matches most weekends during the afternoon and early evening. During the winter months of September to April there have previously been junior football matches on a Saturday morning but this stopped at the end of the 2010-11 season and has not and will not resume; on a Sunday, football matches are played in the morning and the afternoon. There are some one off bookings but these are infrequent. Appendix 1 shows the details for September 2010 to August 2011.
8. In recent years the College has sought to increase the opportunities given to juniors to participate in football which has resulted in up to 4 matches being played on a Sunday although utilisation is, on average, around 50%. From next season this will be reduced to a maximum of 2 matches. By the 2012-13 season regular community use will normally be as follows:

Winter (football/rugby season)

- Maximum of 2 football matches on a Sunday
- Nothing on a Saturday (note Cantabrigian Rugby Club fixtures on Trust land – see 2 above)

Summer (cricket season)

- Maximum of 1 cricket match per day (evenings during weekdays and during the afternoon and evenings at weekends)
- Archery on Tuesday and Thursday evenings and Saturday mornings

Community use will be governed by the Travel Plan, a copy of which will be supplied to all users. Any failure by a community user to abide by the Plan will prejudice future booking of the pitches.

9. Much has been made about the College's hope that Cambridgeshire Cricket would wish to use the cricket pitch once there are adequate changing facilities. As has already been stated in other meetings this would only be possible if current users were displaced. It is highly unlikely that senior level cricket could ever be played on the pitch due to its size and lack of spectating and parking facilities. Cambridgeshire Cricket was shown a copy of the initial plans but has not made any input into the design of the pavilion and has made no arrangements with the College for any use of the ground in the future.

10. Concerns have been expressed by petitioners about the access to the sports ground and in particular the southern access track alongside no.23 Sedley Taylor Road (Access B) which leads to the Cantabrigian Rugby clubhouse and the car park. As noted in the planning department's report to this meeting, dated 9th January 2012, this track falls outside of the application site and ownership of the College. Evidence presented by petitioners includes an incident involving the hiring out of the car park in 2009 by the Cantabrigian Rugby club to contractors working at Addenbrooke's. This had nothing to do with the College and is an example of some of the spurious arguments that have been considered to be reasonable as a case against the College's plans. The parking by contractors ceased after the College made representation to the Trustees who met and ordered the practice to cease. The petitioners have stated that an injunction had been issued by the City Council to prevent the contractors from being allowed to park. This is not the case: the Rugby Club has told the College that no injunction was served and the City Council has no record of an injunction being issued.
11. The College will continue to use both Access track B and Access Track A situated at the junction of Sedley Taylor and Luard Roads as noted in the Travel Plan. There will be no shift of all traffic to Access B as suggested by the petitioners who are concerned about safety on the tracks. The very nature of the tracks, in particular Access B, causes vehicles to slow down to walking pace and is far less dangerous than, for example, the pedestrian crossing in front of the College in Hills Road where there are a number of accidents every year. While no accidents have been recorded by the Council for either track the College has recently sought to increase visibility on Access B by arranging that the neighbouring property 23a Sedley Taylor Road reduce the height of the hedge adjoining the track.
12. The concerns about the Access tracks are exaggerated and it cannot be substantiated by the residents that there will be intensification of the use of Access B (or Access A) leading to highway hazards. Following a recent report by a resident to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) the College received the following:

'I am writing from the HSE regarding some concerns that have been raised regarding your sports pavilion access road. It has been reported to us the road which pupils use to exit the sports ground is very narrow and has no lighting. There are occasions when large numbers of young children are exiting using this road on foot in the dark at the same time as all the vehicles. The complainant's concerns are that this may lead to an accident, particularly as I understand there are plans to extend the sporting facilities'

The concerns appeared to be based on a one off pre-season kick about by a junior football club on an evening in August when there was no cricket match. This ended shortly before 9pm and was under the supervision of adult staff/parents. The HSE found no case to answer because the element of risk was considered by them to be low. It is understood from the HSE that the complainant appealed the decision but subsequently the decision was upheld after investigation by a Senior Inspector.
13. It was also noted by the Highways Department when commenting on the original application for planning permission that the evidence gathered by the Lead Petitioner relates to:

'existing problems associated with the link formed by Sedley Taylor Road/Luard Road from Long Road to Hills Road avoiding the delays at the junction of Hills Road and Long road, and its proximity to Addenbrooke's. These are existing issues which the

application to replace the pavilion will neither resolve nor, in planning terms, make materially worse. The developer cannot, in my opinion, be expected under the planning system to resolve them, nor can any betterment be required of the developer'

14. In conclusion Hills Road Sixth Form College has never considered expanding community use at the playing field and therefore there will be no intensification of use or adverse traffic impact. The Travel Plan seeks to reduce the existing traffic impact and encourage sustainable transport solutions. Any failure by a community user to abide by the Plan will prejudice future booking of the pitches. If the aim had been to increase community use a completely different plan would have been put forward with a much larger building incorporating, for example, public toilets, possibly more changing rooms, a social room and increased space for parking and spectators. The College's priority has always been to provide improved facilities for its students with community use, as currently, purely incidental.

Appendix

Appendix 1 – Sports ground usage 2010-11