

Item 11/00028/FULMAJ

Case Officer Mr David Stirzaker

Ward Heath Charnock And Rivington

Proposal Proposed change of use of pasture land to create a sports field for 3 football pitches involving minimal cut and fill earthworks to create a level playing area together with an associated new vehicular access off Scholes Bank to serve a new car park.

Location Land 150 Metres South Of Filter Beds Cottage Bolton Road Anderton Lancashire

Applicant Horwich St Mary's FC

Consultation expiry: 20 April 2011

Application expiry: 15 April 2011

Proposal

1. This application has been submitted by Horwich St Mary's Football Club and is being considered in tandem with a planning application submitted to Bolton Council for a new clubhouse (Bolton's planning reference 81137/08). The existing site of the football club is in Horwich which is controlled by Bolton Council. The existing site accommodates football pitches and several structures used as changing rooms and toilet facilities. The application to Bolton Council proposes the replacement of these structures with a new dedicated single storey clubhouse building.
2. This application proposes the change of use of land abutting the existing football club site. This land is agricultural and it is proposed to change the use of this land to 3 no. football pitches, provide a new car parking area and provide a new vehicular access to the car park and site from Scholes Bank. The car park will provide space for 59 vehicles whilst a small overspill car park is proposed adjacent to the main car park and access. A pathway will link the car park to the clubhouse which as stated is on land under the Control of Bolton Council.
3. The application site generally slopes from north to south with the main change in levels being the fall of approx. 1.5m from Scholes Bank down into the site. Site sections have been submitted with the application showing how cut and fill works will be used to form level surfaces for the 3 no. football pitches proposed.

Recommendation

4. It is recommended that this application be granted conditional planning approval.

Main Issues

5. The main issues for consideration in respect of this planning application are as follows:
 - Principle of the development
 - Background information
 - Need for proposals
 - Levels
 - Impact on the neighbours
 - Impact on Character and Appearance of Locality
 - Trees and Landscape
 - Ecology
 - Flood Risk

- Traffic and Transport
- Public Right of Way
- Contamination and Coal Mines
- Drainage and Sewers
- Other matters

History

6. The application site has not been the subject of any recent planning applications although the part of the site which is in Bolton is the subject of a current planning application with Bolton Council for the erection of a club house (Ref No. 81137/08).

Representations

7. To date, 29 letters of objection have been received in relation to the original and amended plans. However, further consultations have now taken place in respect of a second amendment to the position of the access on Scholes Bank so any further representations will be reported in the addendum. The contents of the letters so far received can be summarised as follows: -

- The field is one of our more valuable hay meadows and its change of use would result in having to purchase winter feed to supplement the loss of the field
- The access onto Scholes Bank is an accident waiting to happen
- To get the field level would require vast amounts of imported infill material
- There are 19 football pitches within a short distance of the application site
- The car park will encourage off road bikes and various types of anti social behaviour
- The land at the Squirrel Pub should be used instead for car parking and a clubhouse
- Will the access road be closed when the pitches are not in use?
- Will in be lit?
- The car park will discourage use of public transport
- What is the benefit to the local community that outweighs the cost?
- Road speed limits in the vicinity should be reviewed
- Why is a greenfield site being concreted over when there is a brownfield site nearby
- Development will contravene and effect a conservation area
- Development will impact on nature conservation
- A highway safety issue will be created
- Is the proposed increase in use appropriate
- An aqueduct runs under the site – have United Utilities been consulted?
- Has a drainage feasibility study been carried out and if the River Douglas can take more water?
- The amount of pitches would be a large amount for the football club
- There will be a high level of noise and disturbance
- The character of the area will be ruined due to the size of the scheme
- There will be harm to highway safety due to the nature of the road and the position of the access
- The level of parking proposed is totally inadequate
- A large amount of hedgerow will need to be removed
- The car park will only be used for a very small percentage of the week
- There have been many accidents on the road in recent years
- Loss of privacy
- Impact on local drainage
- Residents peaceful appreciate of their gardens would be removed on match days
- Drivers may decide to park on the A673 as it could take a long time to get out of the car park on match days
- There will be a heightened risk of accidents on match days
- There is doubt as to the final location of the club house
- The club house may be used for social events
- There is no guarantee that high level lighting will not be used
- There are no proposals in relation to the security of the site
- The land is currently tenanted by a farmer

- The proposals will not serve the wider community
- The car park is unnecessary and will only serve to increase car use
- People should be encouraged to walk, use public transport or at least car share
- The highways measures will not have much effect in reducing the impact of the development on highway safety
- Cars would still line Scholes Bank as there would not be enough car parking
- The application is ill thought and little consideration has been given to the local community and the impact of the development on the what is essentially a semi rural and in parts fully rural area
- There will be another 30 to 50 cars parked on Scholes Bank which would block the visibility splay to the west
- How long will 30 vehicles take to turn right
- Frustrated drivers may decide to turn left then make a u-turn and having to wait may deter drivers from using the car parks
- No increases are proposed to the traffic island
- No allowances are made for the increase in the volume of football related traffic
- Previous objections to the development of the site by Bolton Council should still be taken into account
- The road design is flawed and the rush to get football pitches seems to outweigh safety
- The existing St Mary's Social Club could be used instead as this is within easy walking distance of the site
- Destruction of the Green Belt is not justified in this case
- The pitches are in a quiet residential area and football matches will cause a disproportionately high level of disruption to residents
- Local residents will be unable to relax and enjoy their own homes
- There will be disruption to the area with vandalism, security and policing
- The development will have a negative cumulative visual impact
- There was recently an accident on Scholes Bank on 6th March
- The speed limit on Scholes Bank and Bolton Road would continue to be ignored

8. **Horwich Town Council and Anderton Parish Council** initially made comments on the proposals. However following the receipt of amended plans both Council's have been reconsulted. Any further comments will be reported on the addendum

9. **Horwich Town Council** have made the following comments: -

- Members felt that the plan as submitted by the applicant did not contain sufficient detail for them to make a recommendation at the moment. Horwich Town Council requests that the applicants be made to supply much more detail concerning their proposals for the site. For example, great concern was expressed about arrangements for safe access and egress, and it was felt that this application needed a full report from Highways. Other areas of concern relate to the position of the club house and car park and the lack of screening between the club house and car park. Horwich Town Council have also requested that further consultations take place on the amended plans.

10. **Anderton Parish Council** have made the following comments: -

- The potential for increased noise and disturbance to residents of Anderton Court and Squirrel Lane
- The proposed additional road access for the new car park looks particularly dangerous for this stretch of road

Consultations

11. **Lancashire County Council (Ecology)** do not raise any objections to the application subject to the recommendations set out in the Ecological Survey submitted with the planning application being made the subject of a planning condition.

12. **The Environment Agency** do not raise any objections to the application subject to the imposition of pre-commencement conditions requiring the existing crossing over Jepsens Clough (watercourse) to be removed in full and the watercourse restored to open section within

a timescale to be agreed and that a method statement for the removal of Japanese Knotweed & Himalayan Balsam be submitted for approval to the Council.

13. **The Architectural Design and Crime Reduction Advisor** raises no objections to the application on the basis of the plans submitted.
14. **The Director of People and Places (Parks & Open Spaces Manager)** advises that the Council receives annual requests from St Mary's football club for use of pitches in Adlington which impacts on the Council's ability to cater for teams in Chorley. In this specific location I suggest that the provision of pitches is supported. It is understood that this club has a huge number of teams and that they often have to spread to pitches across a wide area to provide safe playing conditions for the children and young people on the Chorley and Horwich boundary.
15. **United Utilities** initially objected to the application due to a lack of detailed information. However, on the basis of the additional information submitted by the applicant which has been made available to United Utilities, the original objection has now been withdrawn.
16. **Lancashire County Council (Highways)** have provided a very detailed response on the application proposals in terms of the access point, highway improvements and the level of car parking proposed. Several traffic counts have also been undertaken and the results of this identify that the proposed visibility splay to the west along Scholes Bank of 2.4m by 90m is acceptable. It is also suggested that the speed limit along this stretch of the road should be reduced through a Traffic Regulation Order although it is acknowledged that based on the 85th percentile speed of 41mph, the visibility proposed would meet with the requirements in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges. The amended access position is considered to be acceptable in terms of its layout and position on Scholes Bank. The proposed 'no right turn' will need to be satisfactorily designed in liaison with LCC (Highways) and would need to be the subject of a Traffic Regulation Order and a Section 278 agreement to secure the improvement works to the highway shown on the submitted plans will also be necessary, both at the applicant's expense. The proposed level of car parking is also considered to be acceptable as is the area of overspill car parking which should be surfaced with grasscrete or a similar material.
17. **The Director of People and Places (Neighbourhood Environmental Health Officer)** does not raise any objections to the application on the basis of the plans that have been submitted.
18. **The Director of People and Place (Waste & Contaminated Land Officer)** does not raise any objections to this application hence does not recommend any planning conditions or informatives.
19. **Sport England** considers that the consultation is a non-statutory one. However, comments are still made in relation to the application and Sport England state that the current proposal will provide additional, dedicated football pitches and new playing field provision for the football club to help it develop and expand and could offer significant benefits to sport and as such, there are no objections to the proposals. Sport England also confirm that no objections have been raised in relation to the club house application being considered by Bolton Council.
20. **The Arboricultural Officer** does not raise any objections to the application subject to a scheme of tree replanting to mitigate the loss of the trees on Scholes Bank within the visibility splay.

Applicant's Case

21. The applicant states that the proposals are intended to fulfil part of the club's aspirations to enhance their existing facilities which include a proposed new single storey building to accommodate changing rooms, ancillary accommodation, storage and a clubhouse to be located within the existing playing pitch area to the east. The clubhouse is the subject of a separate planning application which was submitted to Bolton Council in 2008 (ref no. 81137/08) and which was recommended for approval by planning officers in 2009. The final determination

of that application is awaiting negotiations between the applicant and Bolton Council as to the final position of the clubhouse.

22. Horwich St Mary's Football Club was formed in 1978. It became a Charter Standard Community Club in 2002, was registered as a Community Amateur Sports Club in 2005 and in 2007 became a registered charity.

Assessment

Principle of the development

23. The application site is in the Green Belt. Uses of land in the Green Belt which preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt are acceptable in relation to PPG2 (Planning Policy Guidance Note 2). PPG2 also states that essential facilities associated with an acceptable land use in the Green Belt should be essential and genuinely required. The proposed change of use of the existing agricultural land to football pitches is therefore in principle acceptable. Given the increase in the number of pitches on the site, it is considered that the provision of a new car park, which is the minimum necessary to serve the enhanced facility, and access is considered to be an essential facility and genuinely needed in association with the new and existing football pitches on the site.
24. In terms of Policy LT12 of the Local Plan, criteria (c) requires development not to result in the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land. Agricultural land is split into 5 categories by the Agricultural Land Classification with class 3 split into sub grades 3a and 3b. Grades 1, 2 and 3a are considered to be the most versatile types of land. This system of classification was introduced in 1966. However, since 1976, only selected areas of the country have been graded and the Natural England Technical Advice Note TIN049 confirms that there are no plans to survey all areas in detail and that consultations to DEFRA are only required when proposals are not consistent with the Planning Policies and involve the loss of 20 hectares or more of the best and most versatile land. It is stated that it is for Local Planning Authorities to decide how significant agricultural land issues are and the need for field information as DEFRA will not normally become involved with specific development proposals unless they raise issues of more than local importance. The application site is classified as grade 3 land but there is no more information available as to whether or not it falls with subgrade 3a or 3b. For the Council to ascertain this information, the land would have to be surveyed. Whilst the application site is currently tenanted by a farmer on a lease from United Utilities, it is part of a larger land holding by the farmer and the land is at present used for producing hay. The land is also adjacent to the existing site of the football club and the residential properties on Anderton Court. Given the land only extends to approximately 1.7 hectares in size, it is considered in this case that it would be difficult for the Council to justify refusing the application on the basis of the loss of this area of agricultural land in the absence of definitive survey data on the actual grade of the land.
25. On the basis of the above, in this case, it is considered that the 'principle' of the development proposed is acceptable and accords with Policy LT12 of the Local Plan and PPG2.

Need for proposals

26. The applicant has provided a statement setting out the need for the development proposed. This is based on the growth of the club since its formation in 1978. Until 1995, only 11 a side games were played. At this time, smaller team football matches were introduced and the club witnessed a big increase in the numbers playing, especially younger footballers. The club currently has 500 players made up of 29 teams comprising of boys and girls up to the age of 18 along with 2 adult teams. Of those teams, only 9 can play at Scholes Bank with the remainder playing games in Farnworth, Blackrod, Adlington and Chorley as well as some primary school sites in Horwich and Lostock.
27. The club states that it just wishes to see its own teams representing Horwich be able to play games in Horwich at the present site in Scholes Bank. The club also states that the car park will alleviate the problems of on street parking thus improving safety whilst also addressing local residents concerns on match days.
28. The club also provides justification for the clubhouse but this part of the site is in Bolton and is the subject of a separate application submitted to Bolton Council.

29. The Council's Parks and Open Spaces Manager states that the Council receives annual requests from the football club to use Chorley Council's pitches in Adlington which impacts on the Council's ability to cater for Chorley football teams. Support for the application is therefore expressed given the clubs current problems of having to spread games to pitches across a wide area to provide safe playing conditions for the children and young people of the local area.

Levels

30. The formation of the football pitches will involve cut and fill works to create suitably level playing surfaces for each of the 3 no. football pitches. The applicant has submitted proposed section plans which detail the amount of cut and fill that will be utilised across the site rather than importing material. The levels of the pitches will fall when viewed from Scholes Bank which is a result of the general fall in the level of the land in the same southerly direction from Scholes Bank. Whilst the pitches will give the land a more uniform appearance than at present, it is not considered that the cut and fill works will result in significant changes to the land levels that will be detrimentally harmful to the character of the locality.

31. The position of the access road into the site has also been amended to address concerns as to the impact an elevated road would have on the residential amenities of the occupiers of the nearby Anderton Court in that the change in the position of the road reduces its visual impact because the level change at the amended location is not quite as severe. There would be 14 metres from the edge of the access to the boundary and this is sufficient to enable the provision of landscaping to filter views of the access when seen from this property.

Impact on the Neighbours

32. The properties in Anderton Court have long gardens with the properties themselves being situated approximately 23 metres from boundary. The additional 3 no. football pitches on the site will inevitably lead to an increase in noise levels when football matches are being played. However, the original position of the pitches adjacent to the Anderton Court properties to the west has been amended and the separation distance between the pitches and the garden curtilage boundary of these properties has been increased to just over 13m. This will enable additional landscaping to be planted to filter views of the pitches and provide a more definitive boundary between these properties and the football pitches and reduce noise levels. Also, the Director of People and Places (Neighbourhood Environmental Health Officer) has not raised any objections to the application.

33. The new access to the site has now been moved further away from the garden curtilage boundary of Hawthorn Cottage that is part of Anderton Court than originally proposed due to concerns raised above at para 31. The distance of 5 metres from the boundary of Hawthorn Cottage to the access has been extended to 14 metres and this change will allow for the inclusion of landscaping between the boundary of Hawthorn Cottage and the access. The change of access position also means that the levels difference between the road and the site is reduced and this will assist in reducing the visual impact of the access. Whilst further comments may be received in relation to this amendment then it is considered that the position and level of the access is acceptable with the additional landscaping that is now proposed and that this would overcome the potential harm to the residents of Anderton Court.

34. In terms of the impact of the football pitches, the location of the pitches has also been amended to address initial concerns with regards to their proximity to the garden curtilage boundaries of the above property (Hawthorn Cottage) and Chauffeurs Cottage which is the property adjoining Hawthorn Cottage to the south. Both of these properties are part of the Anderton Court development to the west of the application site boundary. Whilst the boundaries of these properties are demarcated by existing hedgerows, the increase in the distance of the pitches from these properties will enable additional landscaping to be planted along the boundary to reduce both the visual impact of the football pitches, car park and access, but also reduce noise on match days although there are already football pitches on the site adjacent to the additional ones proposed.

35. With regards to the car parking, this was originally proposed in close proximity to the boundary of 68 Scholes Bank which is to the east of the application site. The layout of the car park has

now been reconfigured to address concerns with regards to the visual impact of the car park and its use on match days. The car park will now at its closest point be 7.5 metres from the end garden boundary of 68 Scholes Bank and 21 metres from the property itself. These distances are considered adequate to enable suitable mitigation measures to be provided.

36. No external illumination is detailed on the plans for the football pitches or the car park and any such lighting would have to be the subject of a separate planning application. To ensure the applicant is aware of this an informative has been attached to the recommendation.

Impact on Character and Appearance of Locality

37. The application site sits several metres below the level of Bolton Road. Views of the site will be attainable from Bolton Road due to the elevated nature of the road. There is also a requirement to reduce the height of the existing hedgerow along Scholes Bank to a height of 0.6m to enable provision of the 2.4m by 90m visibility splay. Some of the existing trees along Scholes Bank may also need to be removed to enable provision of the visibility splay although replacement planting will be required further into the site adjacent to the car park and the access to mitigate the visual impact of the car park when seen from Scholes Bank.

38. As stated, the formation of the football pitches will require some cut and fill to create a level surface on which to mark out the 3 no. football pitches proposed resulting in the land having a more uniform appearance when it is seen from Scholes Bank. However, the cut and fill works are not of such significance that the changes to the landform will cause detrimental harm to the character and appearance of the locality.

39. The site of the car park slopes gently in a southerly direction so will not require any significant changes in level. It is envisaged that the car park will be surfaced with gravel and the final details of this material will be the subject of a planning condition. A comprehensive scheme of landscaping will be sought to screen views of the car park from Scholes Bank and 68 Scholes Bank, the property closest to the car park to mitigate its visual impact.

40. The access into the site is proposed to be 6m wide and its formation along with the visibility splay to the east will visually alter the appearance of the site boundary along Scholes Bank as a result of the hedgerow being reduced to 0.6m in height and the removal of some of the existing trees. However, appropriate fencing and gating can be secured through a planning condition and access to the car park can be limited with an appropriate condition that allows its use only when matches are being played or the clubhouse is in use. This along with the replacement landscaping will ensure that the existing landscaped nature of the boundary along Scholes Bank is maintained, albeit set back further from Scholes Bank due to the visibility splay than is presently the case.

Trees and Landscape

41. The proposed visibility splay to the east will necessitate the need to remove 6 existing trees adjacent to Scholes Bank. The submitted Arboricultural Report gives these trees a 'C' rating and states that the loss of these trees can be off set with new tree and hedge planting within the site behind the visibility splay line.

42. The Council's Arboricultural Officer advises that the trees which are to be removed are not particularly good specimens and does not raise any objections to the application subject to a scheme of tree replanting being carried out which it is stated will enhance the area. A comprehensive scheme of landscaping would mitigate the loss of these trees whilst also providing a screen to the car park from Scholes Bank.

43. There are some trees further into the site adjacent to the position of the football pitches but these are to be retained. Additional landscaping will also be required along the boundary with the Anderton Court properties and adjacent to 68 Scholes Bank to screen the car park.

Ecology

44. The application is accompanied by an Ecological Assessment which concludes that the development proposed will not have any implications for protected species subject to mitigation and protection measures being followed. Recommendations are also made in relation to

Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam. LCC (Ecology) have been consulted on the application and on the basis of the content and recommendations contained within the Ecological Assessment and do not raise objections. This is subject to the recommendations and mitigations measures set out in the report being made the subject of a planning condition. The Environment Agency have also requested that a condition be attached requiring a Method Statement to be submitted in relation to removal and long term management of Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam.

Flood Risk

45. A Flood Risk Assessment has been submitted with the application which states that the development will not result in an increased risk of flooding hence accords with PPS25. The Environment Agency does not raise any objections to the development in relation to flood risk nor do United Utilities.
46. In respect of the proposed car park a planning condition has been attached to the recommendation requiring it to be constructed using permeable materials on a permeable base to ensure surface water is reduced.
47. The drainage of the football pitches has been specified as replicating the existing situation wherein field drains are used. The final drainage details will be made the subject of a planning condition so as the Council can liaise with the Environment Agency and United Utilities to ensure that the details are satisfactory.

Traffic and Transport

48. Part of the application proposes the formation of a new vehicular access from Scholes Bank to enable use of the new car park. The car park proposes the provision of 59 spaces. An over spill parking area is also proposed adjacent to the car park. Clearly the laying of hard standing within the Green Belt to form the car park has the potential to impact on the visual amenity of the area. To ensure this impact is minimal a condition is suggested requiring the submission of the proposed materials prior to the commencement of the development. LCC (Highways) state that the level of car parking is appropriate for the site and do not raise objections to the overspill car parking proposed.
49. The new access to the site is a part of the application proposals that has resulted in a large number of objections based on the potential implications for highway safety. The new access proposed includes a visibility splay to the east of 2.4m by 90m. The provision of this visibility splay is considered by LCC (Highways) to be sufficient to enable the safe use of the access to the site although a reduction in the speed limit is also considered desirable. The visibility splay will mean reducing the height of the existing hedgerow and vegetation to a height of 0.6m and suitable fencing provided which does not obstruct driver visibility.
50. In terms of this request from LCC (Highways) for the speed limit to be reduced, this would need to be the subject of a Traffic Regulation Order as will the provision of a 'no right turn' into the site. A suitable Grampian planning condition can be used to secure the 'no right turn'. However, LCC (Highways) state that the reduction in the speed limit is 'very much desirable' but are not insisting absolutely on its provision to make the proposals acceptable in highway safety terms as the 85th percentile speed of 41mph based on readings taken at the site mean that the visibility splay proposed accords with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges. It is stated though that it would make the road safer by encouraging lower speeds adjacent to the access. A careful balance therefore has to be struck between the aspirations of LCC (Highways) and what is deemed necessary to make the proposals acceptable. LCC (Highways) have not objected to the scheme on the grounds of highway safety in respect of the speed limit and as such there is no justifiable reason to refuse the application on these grounds.
51. A condition has been attached to the recommendation requiring a scheme of highway improvement works to be submitted and approved by the Council in liaison with LCC (Highways) which will thereafter require the applicant to enter into the requisite agreements with LCC to facilitate the works. The works will include the 'no right turn' and the other improvement works detailed on the plans although the final design and layout of the improvement works will be the subject of discussions with LCC Highways.

Public Right of Way

52. There are no public rights of way which cross the application site that will be impacted on by the application proposals.

Contamination and Coal Mines

53. The Waste and Contaminated Land Officer does not raise any objections to the application and a standard informative will be attached to the planning permission drawing the applicant's attention to the need to contact the Coal Authority to obtain advice given the site is within an area that could have been the subject of past coal mining activity.

Drainage and Sewers

54. The applicant states that the drainage of the pitches will be as per the existing situation wherein field drains will be utilised and the car park will be conditioned to be constructed using permeable materials on a permeable base so water will drain through the surface to the ground underneath, again replicating the existing situation.

55. There is an aqueduct running across part of the site although United Utilities do not have any objections to the application following the submission of further details of levels. Whilst the pitches will be the subject of cut and fill works, the actual surface area will remain the same and this will be subjected to the same level of rainfall. The Environment Agency have also commented on the application and do not raise any objections either.

Others Matters

56. In terms of the comments made by local residents which have not already been addressed, whilst it is noted that the land is still in agricultural use, it is leased to the farmer by United Utilities and whether or not this lease is continued is a decision that rests with United Utilities.

57. The Squirrel Pub site has recently been granted planning permission for the erection of 4 no. dwellings so could not be used as a car park to serve the football club.

58. In terms of the concern regarding anti-social behaviour on the proposed car park no objections have been raised by the Architectural Liaison Officer to the proposals.

59. In terms of the use of brownfield sites in preference to this site, the club is wishing to improve existing facilities on one site and using an alternative site would mean all of the clubs pitches are not in one location.

60. With regards to the security of the site, the clubhouse is on land with the Bolton Council area but as stated, a condition will require that access to the site by vehicles is not available when it is not in use.

Overall Conclusion

61. The 'principle' of the change of use of the land to football pitches is acceptable and accords with guidance in PPG2 in that it relates to outdoor sport and recreation and given the application represents improvements to the existing use by Horwich St Mary's Football Club, the principle of the development is considered to be acceptable. In relation to Policy LT12, it is considered that the proposals accord with the objectives of this Local Plan Policy in that the impact on the amenities of local residents can be suitably mitigated and adequate car parking will be provided whilst there is justification for the improved facilities at the club. The main visual impact will stem from the provision of the visibility splay along Scholes Bank wherein the existing trees will need to be removed and the hedgerows cut back although with replacement planting, the overall character of the Scholes Bank frontage will be retained once the planting is established. The football pitches will not result in significant changes to land levels across the site which would be harmful to its character.

62. The highway comments are addressed above and the highway improvement works and the visibility splay will be subject to an appropriate condition

63. Whilst this planning application is linked to the clubhouse application in meeting the aspirations of the club to improve its facilities, the additional pitches proposed taken with the existing pitches on the site does necessitate the need for car parking which will also improve the situation on match days when cars park on the public highway hence it is considered that this application can be considered as a standalone proposal.

Other Matters

Public Consultation

64. The applicant has undertaken some consultation with the public. Section 7 of the applicants Planning Statement includes details of meetings held between residents and the St Marys Football Club at Horwich Leisure Centre. It is stated that whilst the meetings were regarding the application to Bolton Council for the clubhouse, the illustrative site layout proposals did show the additional football pitches and general position of the car park which now form the basis of this planning application. Appended to the Planning Statement is a copy of a newsletter sent out to local residents following a meeting.

Sustainability

65. The location of the application site and therefore the existing football club is on the very edge of Horwich which is part of the community which it serves. Whilst it is inevitable that many journeys to the site will be made by car, the site is close enough to Horwich, Anderton and Adlington to realistically make walking, cycling and the use of public transport a viable option especially given there is a bus stop on Scholes Bank right next to the application site.

Planning Policies

National Planning Policies:

PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development
PPG2: Green Belts
PPS9: Biodiversity & Geological Conservation
PPG13: Transport
PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport & Recreation
PPS25: Development & Flood Risk

North West Regional Spatial Strategy:

Policy DP1 / Policy RDF4 / Policy L1 / Policy EM1 / Policy EM5 / Policy RT9

Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review

Policies: GN5 / DC1 / EP4 / EP9 / EP18 / EP19 / EP20 / TR4 / LT12 / LT12

Supplementary Planning Guidance:

- Statement of Community Involvement
- Design Guidance

Joint Core Strategy

Policy 22: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
Policy 24: Sport and Recreation
Policy 29: Water Management

Recommendation: Permit Full Planning Permission Conditions

1. The proposed development must be begun not later than three years from the date of this permission.
Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
2. No part of the development hereby approved shall commence until a scheme for the construction of the site access and the off-site works of highway improvement has been submitted to, and approved by, the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway

Authority (Lancashire Country Council) and the off-site works to the highway shall be completed prior to the first use of the football pitches and car park.

Reason: In order to satisfy the Local Planning Authority and Highway Authority that the final details of the highway scheme/works are acceptable before work commences on site and in accordance with Policy No. TR4 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.

3. All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of any buildings or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner, and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: In the interest of the appearance of the locality and in accordance with Policy No GN5 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.

4. Before the development hereby permitted is first commenced full details of the existing levels on the site and the proposed ground levels of the football pitches, the car park, access path and access road (all relative to ground levels adjoining the site) shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, notwithstanding any such detail shown on the approved plans. The development shall only be carried out in conformity with the approved details.

Reason: To protect the appearance of the locality, in the interests of the amenities of local residents and in accordance with Policy Nos. GN5 and LT12 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.

5. Before the development hereby permitted is first used, provision for cycle parking, in accordance with details which have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, shall have been made.

Reason: To ensure adequate on site provision for cycle parking and in accordance with Policy No. TR4 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.

6. No development shall take place until details of the proposed surface water drainage arrangements for the access road, car park and football pitches have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. No part of the development shall be used until the approved surface water drainage arrangements have been fully implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To secure proper drainage and to prevent flooding and in accordance with Policy Nos. EP18 and EP19 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.

7. Before the development hereby permitted is first commenced, full details of the position, height and appearance of all fences, walls and gates (including the gate across the access) to be erected to the site boundaries and within the site (notwithstanding any such detail shown on the approved plans) shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The land shall not be used pursuant to this permission until all walls and fences have been erected in accordance with the approved details. Fences and walls shall thereafter be retained in accordance with the approved details at all times.

Reason: To ensure a visually satisfactory form of development, to protect the amenities of occupiers of nearby property and in accordance with Policy Nos. GN5 and LT12 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.

8. The existing soil levels around the base of the trees to be retained shall not be altered.

Reason: To safeguard the trees to be retained and in accordance with Policy Nos. EP9 and HT9 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.

9. During the construction period, all trees to be retained shall be protected by 1.2 metre high fencing as specified in paragraph 8.2.2 of British Standard BS5837:2005 at a distance from the tree trunk equivalent to the outermost limit of the branch spread, or at a distance from the tree trunk equal to half the height of the tree (whichever is further from the tree trunk), or as may be first agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. No construction materials,

spoil, rubbish, vehicles or equipment shall be stored or tipped within the area(s) so fenced. All excavations within the area so fenced shall be carried out by hand.

Reason: To safeguard the trees to be retained and in accordance with Policy Nos. EP9 and HT9 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.

10. The development hereby permitted shall not commence until full details of the colour, form and texture of all hard ground surfacing materials (notwithstanding any such detail shown on the approved plans) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall only be carried out in conformity with the approved details.
Reason: To ensure a satisfactory form of development in the interest of the visual amenity of the area and in accordance with Policy No. GN5 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.
11. Before the use of the football pitches hereby permitted is first commenced, the car park, access road and vehicle manoeuvring areas shall be surfaced, drained and marked out all in accordance with the approved plans. The car park and vehicle manoeuvring areas shall not thereafter be used for any purpose other than the parking of and manoeuvring of vehicles.
Reason: To ensure adequate on site provision of car parking and manoeuvring areas and in accordance with Policy No. TR4 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.
12. Before the access is used for vehicular purposes, that part of the access extending from the highway boundary for a minimum distance of 15m into the site shall be appropriately paved/surfaced using a hard material details of which have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The accessway thereafter shall be surfaced in accordance with the approved materials.
Reason: To prevent loose surface material from being carried on to the public highway thus causing a potential source of danger to other road users and in accordance with Policy No. TR4 of the Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.
13. The football pitches hereby permitted shall be not be used until the means of vehicular access has been constructed and completed in accordance with the approved plans.
Reason: In the interests of highway safety and in accordance with Policy No. TR4 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.
14. The access road to the site and car park shall remain closed to motorised vehicles and motorcycles at all times other than when matches are being played.
Reasons: In the interests of the amenities of neighbours, to prevent vehicles and motorcycles access the site when not in use and in accordance with Policy No. LT12 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.
15. The existing access crossing over Jepson's Clough shall be removed in full with the watercourse restored to open section in accordance with details and a timescale to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be completed in accordance with the approved details and within the agreed timescale.
Reason: To reduce flood risk by removing a redundant structure and in accordance with Policy No. EP19 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.
16. Prior to the commencement of development hereby permitted, a detailed method statement for the removal and/or long-term management/eradication of Japanese Knotweed & Himalayan Balsam on the site shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The method statement shall include proposed measures to prevent the spread of Japanese Knotweed & Himalayan Balsam during any operations such as mowing, strimming or soil movement. It shall also contain measures to ensure that any soils brought to the site are free of the seeds/root/stem of any invasive plant covered under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Development shall only proceed in accordance with the approved method statement.

Reason: To prevent the spread of Japanese Knotweed & Himalayan Balsam as a result of the development and in accordance with Policy No. EP4 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.

17. The development hereby permitted shall only be carried out in accordance with the amphibian mitigation measures specified in section 6.1 of the TEP Ecological Assessment (Report Ref: 2140.002revA), or any amended measures which have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
Reasons: To safeguard protected species and in accordance with Policy No. EP4 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.
18. No site clearance, site preparation or development work shall take place until a habitat creation/enhancement and management plan (to include appropriate compensation for tree and hedgerow losses and loss of potential terrestrial amphibian habitat) has been submitted and approved by Chorley Borough Council in consultation with LCC (Ecology). The development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved habitat creation/enhancement and management plan.
Reasons: To mitigate habitat loss, safeguard protected species and in accordance with Policy No. EP4 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.
19. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 there shall not at any time in connection with the development hereby permitted be erected or planted or allowed to remain upon the land hereinafter defined any building, wall, fence, hedge, tree, shrub or other device above 600mm in height. The visibility splay to be the subject of this condition shall be that land in front of a line drawn from a point 2.4m measured along the centre line of the proposed road from the continuation of the nearer edge of the carriageway of Scholes Bank to points measured 90m in each direction along the nearer edge of the carriageway of Scholes Bank, from the centre line of the access, and shall be constructed and maintained at footway/verge level in accordance with a scheme to be agreed by the Local Planning Authority in conjunction with the Highway Authority.
Reason: To ensure adequate visibility at the street junction or site access and in accordance with Policy No. TR4 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review
20. The proposed access from the site to Scholes Bank shall be constructed to a (minimum) width of 5.5m and this width shall be maintained for a minimum distance of 20m measured back from the nearside edge of the carriageway.
Reason: To enable vehicles to enter and leave the premises in a safe manner without causing a hazard to other road users and in accordance with Policy No. TR4 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.
21. The existing access shall be physically and permanently closed and the existing verge/footway and kerbing of the vehicular crossing shall be reinstated in accordance with the Lancashire County Council Specification for Construction of Estate Roads (concurrent with the formation of the new access or within 3 months of the formation of the new access).
Reason: To limit the number of access points to, and to maintain the proper construction of the highway.
22. No development shall take place until a scheme of landscaping has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, notwithstanding any such detail which may have previously been submitted. The scheme shall indicate all existing trees and hedgerows on the land; detail any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of development; indicate the types and numbers of trees and shrubs to be planted, their distribution on site, those areas to be seeded, paved or hard landscaped; and detail any changes of ground level or landform.
Reason: In the interests of the amenity of the area and in accordance with Policy No. GN5 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.
23. The development hereby permitted shall not commence until full details of the colour, form and texture of the ground surfacing materials for the car park and overspill car park (notwithstanding any such detail shown on the approved plans) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The car parks shall be constructed using permeable materials on a permeable base. The development shall only be carried out in conformity with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory form of development in the interest of the visual amenity of the area and in accordance with Policy No. DC1 and GN5 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.

24. Before any tree felling is carried out full details (including species, number, stature and location) of the replacement tree planting shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The replacement tree planting shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details within nine months of the tree felling.

Reason: To safeguard the visual amenity of the area and in accordance with Policy No. EP9 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.
