

Item A. 2 06/00846/FULMAJ Permit Full Planning Permission

Case Officer Mr David Stirzaker

Ward Wheelton And Withnell

Proposal Change of use of an existing informal kick-around space(located to the rear of Brinscall St John's Primary School) into a new 11 side football playing pitch

Location Land At Rear Of 139 To 157 School Lane Brinscall Lancashire

Applicant Brinscall Village Football Club (BVJFC)

Background This application relates to an area of land extending to 1.3hectars to the south of St Johns C of E Methodist Primary School. The land is presently used as an informal playing/kick about area and is allocated under Policy LT14 as a site of important recreational value.

Proposal It is proposed to create a new football pitch. The pitch will require cut and fill works to form a level playing surface whilst it is also proposed to install a new system of land drainage with outfall to an existing open ditch to the southeast of the pitch. The pitch will be used by Brinscall Village Football Club and will be made available to local schools. The use of the pitch will commence at 10am and will finish at 8pm. Access to the site is from school lane via an existing hardcore track which is gated. There will not be any vehicular access to the pitch apart from maintenance vehicles as is the existing situation. The existing car parking and changing facilities will be made use of at the cricket club on the on the other (eastern) side of School Lane.

Applicants Case The applicant (Brinscall Village Football Club) state that the pitch is needed to underpin the long term sustainability of the club, which now provides football training opportunities for more than 180 children. The clubs intention is that the pitch will be made available for use by the areas seven local schools.

The application is the culmination of a partnership project, which includes the Council as the land is being offered with a 20 year lease to the club by the Council to underpin the use of the pitch and as a minimum requirement for the Football Foundation funding purposes.

Policy DC1 - Development in the Green Belt
TR4 - Highway Development Control Criteria
Policy 7 - Parking Standards – Joint Lancashire Structure Plan
LT14 - Public, Private, Educational & Institutional Playing Fields, Parks and Other Recreational Open Spaces
PPG2 - Green Belts

Planning History The site has not been the subject of any recent planning applications.

Representations

A total of 9 letters of objection have been received from the occupiers of residential properties adjacent to the site. The contents of these letters can be summarised as follows: -

- There are current problems with flooding on the site and whilst the plans show that new drainage is proposed, it is not clear where the excess water is to be diverted to and residents have previously requested that the Council dig a drainage outlet to remove excess flood water
- What will happen to the remainder of the land in terms of drainage and it is doubtful that the current drainage outlet would be able to cope with the additional water flow
- Who will be responsible for the area outside of the pitch
- Water run off from the pitch is extremely likely to collect outside of, if not in the garden areas of adjacent properties
- Will access to the field be granted to members of the public whilst work takes place and once it is completed
- If the drains are made redundant, this may cause the demise of the drainage structure and may cause structural damage to the property hence the new proprietors should take full responsibility for the drainage channel in its entirety and secure suitable insurance should damage be caused
- There should be no change to the availability of the field for use by members of the public and dogs are not to be banned and dog waste bins to be sited around the field
- Waste disposal bins should be placed around the site and no permanent or portable structures are to be affixed in the site
- Design of the pitch should not change outlook from properties on School Lane through land fill
- Will all weather pitches be added in the future and will they require planning permission
- A loss of privacy would occur and there would be increased levels of noise and accompanying disturbances not only from players but from accompanying parents and adults and the pitch is to be used 7 days a week
- Who is going to be responsible for the drainage and cutting the grass
- There are not sufficient parking facilities available and the pitch will make the existing highways problems worse
- The pitch is not needed as Brinscall Football Club already have 3 fields on which they play and train
- Any damage or disruption caused by the football club should be put right at their expense and if the pitch is used to its maximum, floodlighting will be required
- If the application goes ahead, is there a further plan to increase existing facilities and is there a plan to install a traffic control pelican crossing as the football season is during the winter months and dark nights
- Have calculations been made to take into account the volume of water that on very wet rainy days will have on the properties down stream from the pitch

Consultations

LCC (Highways) raise no objections.

The Director of Streetscene, Neighbourhoods and Environment raises no objections to the application.

No objections from The Ramblers.

The Council's Greenspace Co-ordinator offers full support for the proposal as the existing site is unusable due to poor drainage and ground conditions and the new pitch will enhance sports provision for the entire village and benefit the wider sporting community.

LCC (Ecology) raise no objections to the application.

United Utilities have been forwarded copies of the objection letters regarding drainage issues but do not raise any objections to the application.

The Environment Agency have also been forwarded copies of the objection letters regarding drainage and recommend the imposition of a condition requiring the applicant to submit a scheme for the provision and implementation of a surface water regulation system restricting surface water runoff to existing rates for approval by the Council in liaison with the Environment Agency. This will ensure the amount of water entering the ditch will remain at existing levels.

The Architectural Liaison Officer raises no objections to the application.

Assessment

The main issues relating to this application are impact on the openness of the Green Belt, residential amenity, drainage and highway safety.

Turning to the first matter, the football pitch is a facility for outdoor sport and recreation and is therefore in line with the objectives of PPG2 and Policy DC1 of the Chorley Borough Local Plan Review in that subject to it not reducing the openness of the Green Belt, in principle, the development is acceptable. The formation of the new football pitch will require some manipulation of the ground levels in the form of a cut and fill operation. The applicant has submitted indicative cross sections to show the existing and proposed levels. Whilst the landform will obviously change, the works detailed on the indicative plans are not unduly excessive and the pitch will still be contained within the existing field boundaries hence it will not impact unduly on the wider landscape. The application does not propose any floodlighting nor does it propose any additional buildings or structures. The existing field boundaries, which comprise of hedges and trees, are being retained with the only works being the clearing of the access into the site from School Lane. On this basis, it is not considered that the formation of the football pitch will result in detrimental harm to the open and rural character of the Green Belt and is therefore in line with the objectives of PPG2 and Policy DC1 of the Local Plan Review.

Turning to the issue of residential amenity, the position of the football pitch over that of the existing informal kick about area is being moved towards the south eastern site boundary. The pitch will at its nearest point, be approx. 54m from the residential properties on School Lane. In terms of the objections received citing noise and disturbance, the site is already used as a playing field and is also available to members of the public for recreational purposes and there is nothing to stop football matches being held on the pitch as existing. It is acknowledged that the holding of organised football games and training sessions will inevitably lead to an increase in noise and disturbance at specific concentrated times. However, the pitch is further away from the properties than

the kick about area and when matches are taking place, spectators normally stand along the sidelines facing the pitch hence those watching the game on the side of the pitch nearest School Lane will have their backs to the properties. Any spectators on the opposite side of the pitch will be facing the properties on School Lane but will be approx. 100m away. It is considered that on balance, this distance is sufficient to ensure the occupiers of the properties on School Lane will not experience a detrimental loss of residential amenity by virtue of overlooking and noise disturbance.

In terms of drainage, numerous objection letters have been received from local residents citing concerns in relation to the additional water that will drain to the ditch at the south eastern end of the site. Many residents are concerned that the additional water will lead to problems with flooding and several residents are particularly worried as the ditch is culverted through their gardens. This being the case, the objection letters raising these matters were sent to United Utilities and the Environment Agency and the application has been discussed with both parties. United Utilities have not raised any objections to the application. However, the Environment Agency have recommended that a condition be attached to the permission requiring the applicant to submit a scheme for the provision and implementation of a surface water regulation system that restricts water runoff to existing rates. Such a scheme would ensure that the amount of water running into the ditch would remain as per the existing rates so as not to exacerbate the risk of localised flooding as a result of the football pitch. On this basis, it is considered that the matter can be suitably controlled through the use of such a condition hence the proposal is considered to accord with Policy EP18 of the Local Plan Review.

With regards to Highway matters, users of the football pitch will utilise the existing parking and changing facilities at the cricket club on the eastern side of School Lane. Access to the pitch will be on foot from the car park using the cleared access from School Lane in the northern corner of the site. Numerous objections have been received from the occupiers of the properties on School Lane and one in particular refers to the need for a risk assessment to be undertaken by the statutory agencies. Given the nature of this letter, a copy was forwarded to LCC (Highways) and a response was received stating that there are no Police records showing accidents have taken place between the Harbour Lane junction and Dick Lane in the village. It is also stated that at this location, School Lane is the subject of Traffic Regulation Orders prohibiting waiting at any time on both sides of the road. It is concluded that a highways objection could not be substantiated. On the basis of the comments received from LCC (Highways), no objections are raised in relation to the impact of the development on highway safety.

Conclusion It is considered that the proposed football pitch is an acceptable form of development in that it meets with the objectives of the requisite planning policies and as such, it is recommended that planning permission be granted.

**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 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. Before the development hereby permitted is first commenced full details of existing and proposed ground levels (all relative to ground levels adjoining the football pitch) 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 No. GN5 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.

3. No development approved by this permission shall be commenced until a scheme for the provision and implementation of a surface water regulation system restricting surface water runoff to existing rates has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in conjunction with the Environment Agency. The scheme shall be fully completed in accordance with the approved details prior to first use of the football pitch and retained at all times thereafter.

Reason: To reduce the increased risk of flooding and in accordance with Policy No. EP18 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.

4. The development hereby permitted shall not commence until full details of the upgrade works to the pedestrian site access from School Lane (notwithstanding any such detail shown on the approved plans) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The access upgrade works 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.

5. No vehicular access shall be permitted to the site via the existing access between 157B and 159 School Lane other than for maintenance vehicles associated with the football pitch. The access shall only be used by pedestrians.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and in accordance with Policy No. TR4 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.

6. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any Order revoking or re-enacting that Order, with or without modification), no fences, walls, means of enclosure or external illumination shall be erected on any part of the site.

Reason: To protect the open and rural character of the Green Belt and in accordance with Policy DC1 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.
