

Item B. 1 08/00214/CB3 Referred to Full Council for Decision

Case Officer Mrs Lesley Glendenning

Ward Chorley North West

Proposal Lighting scheme for recreation ground to include footpath, lighting and sports flood lighting

Location Coronation Recreation Ground Devonshire Road Chorley

Applicant Chorley Borough Council

This application is required to go to Committee as it has been submitted by the Council. It is also required to go to Full Council.

Consultation Expiry: 3rd April 2008

Application Expiry: 24th April 2008

Proposal: The application is a Regulation 3 application for the formation of a lighting scheme to Coronation Recreation Ground, including footpath lighting and sports flood lighting.

Background: Coronation Recreation Ground is a public park, with Ashfield Road and Devonshire Road running down the west and east sides of the site respectively. The houses on Collison Avenue back onto the north side of the site and the houses on Regent Road back onto the south side.

A central path runs through the park east to west. To the north of this are two tennis courts and two bowling greens, with a further path against the rear of the houses on Collison Avenue. There is a children's playground in the southeast corner of the park with a path from the central entrance to the park sweeping round through some trees against the properties on Regent Road.

It is proposed to erect two forms of lighting, footpath lighting to both the perimeter footpaths and central footpath in a traditional heritage style, and sports floodlighting to the tennis and bowling greens.

Planning History: A similar application was withdrawn last year (07/00976/FUL).

Planning Policy: LT14: Public, Private, Educational and Institutional Playing Fields, Parks and Other Recreational Open Space.

Representations: At the time of writing the report no representations have been received. Any received will be placed on the addendum.

Consultations: Environmental Services
Due to the design and location of the lamps and the proposed time restriction there is no objection.

Applicants Case: Local to Coronation Recreation Ground there are no other safe places in which children can play. Without this site children are forced to play in the street. By lighting the site the useful life of the play area, open spaces and sports facilities can be extended each

day. As the site is also extremely popular with dog walkers, both early in the morning and late at night, the proposal will, if approved, have a major effect on feelings of safety.

For some time the site has played host to an unsavoury element once dusk falls. Alongside the juvenile nuisance and underage drinking that often goes undetected there have been numerous instances of substance and solvent abuse and drug dealing, so much so that the site was targeted as part of Operation Nimrod earlier in the year. These concerns are the driving force behind the Police being financial contributors to the scheme.

In keeping with the traditional nature of the recreation ground, and in particular its ironwork, all footpath lighting is being designed in a heritage style. These include black iron effect columns and lanterns. Column feet will feature a level of detail to give a traditional feel. To minimise levels of vandalism intricate features such as frogs legs connections and ladder arms have been designed out, which should make climbing or swinging from the columns more difficult.

Through discussions with the local Police Architectural Liaison Officer it has been proposed that the most appropriate timings for lighting would be as follows:

- Perimeter footpath lighting will come on when required and be switched off at 10pm;
- Footpath lighting serving the central footpath (through the trees) will remain on all night;
- Sports floodlighting will switch on at dusk and off at 9pm at the latest.

In terms of access to safe play and recreation, the proposal will allow structured and unstructured play alongside formal and informal activity having the site lit will offer opportunities to a large number of people across each age group. Once lit, the site also has the potential to host small cultural events.

A letter of support from Chorley Borough Bowls Forum accompanies the application. Amongst other things they state that a big step to upgrading the greens would be flood lights as ladies use it on Monday and Wednesday evenings and feel quite vulnerable, as it can be almost dark by the time the matches are over. They are sure that more night time matches would be played if lights were available. In addition there are no greens with lights available in Chorley for winter bowling, so it would be a great asset to the bowlers of the district. The future plans of the Bowls Forum are to continue coaching sessions and further populate the public greens, in the last two years they have put three new teams onto the public greens and will put a fourth next year. Many private greens are attached to pubs and clubs that face an uncertain future so it is likely that more bowlers will use public greens in the future.

Assessment:

LT14 of the Local Plan covers Public, Private, Educational and Institutional Playing Fields, Parks and Other Recreational Open Space. This states that Ancillary development will only be permitted where the following criteria are met:

- a) it is in connection with and will enhance the recreational and/or amenity value of the open space;

- b) it is of a size and scale which does not detract from the character of the open space;
- c) it will not have a detrimental effect on any site of nature conservation value;
- d) the development will not affect land capable of forming, or forming part of, a playing pitch, bowling green or tennis court including any safety margin and does not result in the loss of, or inability to make use of any playing pitch, bowling green or tennis court or the loss of any other sporting/ancillary facility on the site.

In relation to this policy it is considered that the proposal will enhance the recreational and amenity value of the park by extending the time it can be used. The design of the lighting is in keeping with the park and enhances the current playing pitches.

Neighbour Amenity

The main impact will be to the adjacent neighbours of the site. It is considered that the proposals will not result in an unacceptable loss of amenity to these neighbours, but it would be appropriate to apply a condition ensuring that the reflector plate shown on the plans to throw the light forward and reduce backlight is retained. The only light on the perimeter this cannot be achieved on is the lamp next to the shelters, which needs to be placed on the other side of the footpath.

Although it is accepted that the lighting scheme will extend the times that the park is used beyond the current times, the scheme has been a joint venture with the Police as there are problems with the current use of the park after dark, with no lighting. It is hoped that the more unsavoury activities currently taking place at the park will be discouraged by the lighting, while encouraging the legitimate use of the park, such as the courts and pitches. Conditions will be applied restricting the floodlighting to 9pm and the perimeter lighting to 10pm. The central footpath through the trees will remain on all night, but is less likely to cause problems, as it is further away from the houses.

Conclusion:

The lighting scheme proposed is aimed to enhance the recreational value of the park for the local community by extending the time it can be used. It is also a response to problems that have been identified in relation to the current use of the park. The application is therefore recommended for approval subject to conditions including an hour's restriction requiring the perimeter footpath lighting to be switched off at 10pm and floodlights to be switched off by 9pm.

Recommendation: Referred to Full Council for Decision 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. A light shield to prevent light spillage into neighbouring properties as shown on Drawing No. CBC 4 submitted with the application, shall be fitted to the footpath column numbers 1, 6, 7, 9, 10, 13, 12 and 11 (columns as numbered on drawings no 8520-D-01 Rev A).

3. The lighting hereby permitted shall be restricted to being lit at the following times only (columns as numbered on drawing no. 8520-D-01 Rev A):

- Perimeter footpath lighting: between 08.00hrs and 22.00hrs (columns 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 16, 14, 13, 12, 11, 20, 21)
- Footpath lighting serving the central footpath: no time restriction (columns 15, 17, 18, 19, 3)
- Floodlighting to all pitches: no illumination before 09.00hrs or after 21.00hrs.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of local residents and in accordance with Policy Nos. EP20 and EP21A of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.
