

Application No : 09/02760/FULL1

**Ward:
Kelsey And Eden Park**

**Address : Langley Park Sports And Social Club
Hawksbrook Lane Beckenham BR3 3SR**

OS Grid Ref: E: 537874 N: 167135

Applicant : Langley Sports And Social Club

Objections : YES

Description of Development:

Single storey detached building to provide changing rooms 2 all weather 5 a side football pitches with 6 floodlights (8.3m high) and 3.1m high timber/ mesh fencing around perimeter

Proposal

Langley Park Sports and Social Club lies within an area of designated Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) and the site includes five full size football pitches and floodlit concrete tennis courts / five-a-side football pitches which are currently used for overspill car parking. It is proposed to install two astroturf five-a-side football pitches with six 8.3m high floodlights and a 3.1m high timber/mesh perimeter fence on the site of the concrete courts/car park. It is also proposed to erect a single storey building to provide changing rooms and showers to the south-west of the five-a-side pitches.

Planning permission was granted under application ref. 08/03343 for 90 permanent and 27 temporary car parking spaces to replace the overspill car parking that will be lost as a result of the current proposal.

The applicant has been advised that, due to the impact of the fencing and floodlights, five-a-side pitches are generally considered inappropriate development in MOL. Accordingly, the applicant has set out very special circumstances to justify inappropriate development in MOL as follows:

- proposed pitches, fence and floodlights will replace existing pitches, fence and floodlights and there will be no additional harm to openness of MOL
- removal of car parking will improve openness of MOL
- proposal will improve safety and appearance of site and facilitate a return to sporting use
- modern facilities will provide sporting and community benefits.

The applicant has also set out the following argument that the proposed changing facilities are an essential facility to support open air sport and recreation and are therefore appropriate development in MOL:

- site provides five full size adult football pitches (two of which double as junior pitches) and three dedicated mini pitches
- club uses and maintains further adult pitch on Langley Park School for Boys site and a further junior pitch is proposed this summer
- league restrictions require all weekend matches to kick off simultaneously meaning up to 12 adult and 6 junior/mini teams getting changed on site at one time
- current changing facilities comprising six rooms and a small match officials room cannot accommodate this many teams
- teams are required to share changing rooms and change in cramped conditions and in the car park, breaking sports league rules
- inadequate facilities present significant further problems accommodating females, juniors and important match officials
- standard of facilities prevents individuals and teams from achieving sporting potential.

The application is accompanied by 2 letters of support from Eden Park Rangers Football Club stating that the club's progress has been restricted in recent years as they have been unable to satisfy the requirements of the Kent County Football League that changing rooms are located within 25m of the first team pitch and 100m of the second pitch. The siting of the changing room block has been chosen in order to satisfy these requirements. The letters further state that the five-a-side pitches will provide a valuable training facility for the club and the local community.

The application is accompanied by a Transport Assessment, floodlighting details and light spillage charts.

Location

The site lies to the south of Langley Park School for Boys and Langley Park School for Girls. The site accommodates sports club facilities including a bowling green, race track and football pitches and a pavillion providing changing rooms, a bar and a function room. There is predominantly 1930s detached and semi-detached housing fronting South Eden Park Road to the south and west of the site whilst much of the area to the east of the site is characterised by open land. The south-west boundary of the site is with the Eden Park–West Wickham railway line.

Comments from Local Residents

Nearby residents were notified of the application and representations were received which can be summarised as follows:

- noise pollution
- light pollution
- increased crime and anti-social behaviour, particularly alcohol related
- increased noise and disturbance, particularly late at night

- facility is not needed / already a facility at Elmers End
- harm to openness of MOL
- increased traffic
- inadequate car parking
- detrimental impact on highway safety
- emergency access may be problematic
- precedent for further development
- increased litter
- already adequate changing rooms at the club
- increased flood risk
- Traffic Activity Study may be inaccurate
- club use Langley Park School for Boys building programme to justify proposals.

Comments from Consultees

The Metropolitan Police Crime Prevention Design Advisor has no objections to the proposal.

There are no technical highways objections.

There are no objections to the proposal from the Council's in-house drainage consultant.

Any further responses to consultations, including Environmental Health comments, will be reported verbally at the meeting.

Planning Considerations

Planning permission was granted under application ref. 08/03343 for 90 permanent and 27 temporary car parking spaces. Condition 3 of the permission required that the use of the tennis courts/five-a-side pitches for overspill car parking must cease upon completion of the new car parking.

The main policies of the Bromley Unitary Development Plan considered to be relevant to this application include:

- T1 Transport Demand
- T2 Assessment of Transport Effects
- T3 Parking
- T18 Road Safety
- BE1 Design of New Development
- BE7 Railings, Boundary Walls and Other Means of Enclosure
- NE3 Development and Nature Conservation Sites
- NE7 Development and Trees
- L1 Outdoor Recreation and Leisure
- G2 Metropolitan Open Land.

In strategic terms the most relevant London Plan policies are:

- 2A.1 Sustainability criteria
- 3A.18 Protection and enhancement of social infrastructure and community facilities
- 3C.23 Parking strategy
- 3D.6 The Olympic and Paralympic games and sports facilities
- 3D.8 Realising the value of open space and green infrastructure
- 3D.10 Metropolitan Open Land
- 4B.1 Design principles for a compact city
- 4B.8 Respect local context and communities.

The site is designated Metropolitan Open Land and Policy G2 states that the construction of new buildings within MOL will be inappropriate unless they are for specified purposes, including essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreation. The policy further states that permission will not be given for inappropriate development unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated that clearly outweigh the harm by inappropriateness or any other harm. It goes on to state that the openness and visual amenity of the MOL shall not be injured by any proposals for development within or conspicuous from the MOL which might be visually detrimental by reasons of scale, siting, materials or design.

As part of the application process, it was necessary for the Council to give a Screening Opinion as to whether an Environmental Impact Assessment was required. The proposal constitutes Schedule 2 development within the meaning of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999. After taking into account the selection criteria in Schedule 3 of the Regulations and the terms of the European Directive, it was considered that the proposed development would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size and location. This opinion was expressed taking into account all relevant factors including the information submitted with the application, advice from technical consultees, the scale/characteristics of the existing and proposed development on the site. The applicants have been advised accordingly.

Conclusions

The principle of the return of this part of the site to sporting use has essentially been established through the grant of planning permission for the relocation of the overspill car parking. The main issues to be considered in this case are as follows:

- impact of the proposal on the character and visual amenities of the area, including impact on the openness of MOL
- whether the proposed changing room block is appropriate development in MOL
- whether very special circumstances have been demonstrated to justify inappropriate development in MOL

- impact of the proposal on the residential amenities of nearby occupants and the amenities of the two nearby schools
- highways implications of the proposal.

The five-a-side sports pitches and changing room block will be located over 80m from the nearest residential property. It can be considered that there will be no undue harm to the amenities of local residents or those of the Langley Park schools.

The proposed five-a-side pitches, fencing and floodlights will replace an existing hard surface, fencing and floodlights. The 1.3m high timber kickboards may have slightly more impact on openness than the existing wire mesh fence, whilst the removal of car parking will improve openness. Given that the impact of the pitches, fencing and floodlighting is comparable to the existing situation the five-a-side facility can be considered acceptable in openness terms. In view of the negligible impact on openness it can be considered that the community and sporting benefits represent very special circumstances to justify inappropriate development in MOL.

The existing changing facilities on the site would appear to be inadequate for the number of football pitches, particularly given the requirements for league games to kick off simultaneously. It may therefore be considered that a new changing room would represent an essential facility for outdoor sport and recreation and can be considered appropriate development in MOL. The siting of the building will have a degree of impact on the openness of MOL and it would be preferable if it were sited closer to existing buildings. However, the siting is necessitated by the Kent County Football League rules and it can be recognised that the progress of Eden Park Rangers Football Club is in the local community interest. The impact on openness may be considered acceptable given the size of the building and in view of the justification for the siting provided by the applicant.

Background papers referred to during the production of this report comprise all correspondence on files refs. 08/03343 and 09/02760, excluding exempt information.

RECOMMENDATION: PERMISSION

Subject to the following conditions:

- | | | |
|---|-----------------|--|
| 1 | ACA01
ACA01R | Commencement of development within 3 yrs
A01 Reason 3 years |
| 2 | ACA04
ACA04R | Landscaping Scheme - full app no details
Reason A04 |
| 3 | ACA08
ACA08R | Boundary enclosures - implementation
Reason A08 |
| 4 | ACH22
ACH22R | Bicycle Parking
Reason H22 |
| 5 | ACH27
ACH27R | Arrangements for construction period
Reason H27 |

- 6 ACH30 Travel Plan
ACH30R Reason H30
- 7 ACI21 Secured By Design
ACI21R I21 reason
- 8 ACJ23 Details of floodlights
ACJ23R J23 Reason
- 9 The development hereby permitted shall not be used until the permanent car parking spaces permitted under planning application reference 08/03343 are available for use.

Reason: In order to ensure adequate car parking provision and to comply with Policy T3 of the Unitary Development Plan.

- 10 The floodlights shall only be used between 0830 hours and 2300 hours.

Reason: In order to comply with Policy BE1 of the Unitary Development Plan and in the interests of the residential amenities of the area.

Reasons for permission:

In granting permission the Local Planning Authority had regard to the following policies of the Unitary Development Plan and the London Plan:

- T1 Transport Demand
- T2 Assessment of Transport Effects
- T3 Parking
- T18 Road Safety
- BE1 Design of New Development
- BE7 Railings, Boundary Walls and Other Means of Enclosure
- NE3 Development and Nature Conservation Sites
- NE7 Development and Trees
- L1 Outdoor Recreation and Leisure
- G2 Metropolitan Open Land.

London Plan

- 2A.1 Sustainability criteria
- 3A.18 Protection and enhancement of social infrastructure and community facilities
- 3C.23 Parking strategy
- 3D.6 The Olympic and Paralympic games and sports facilities
- 3D.8 Realising the value of open space and green infrastructure
- 3D.10 Metropolitan Open Land
- 4B.1 Design principles for a compact city
- 4B.8 Respect local context and communities.

The development is considered to be satisfactory in relation to the following:

- (a) the relationship of the development to adjacent property
- (b) the character of the development in the surrounding area

- (c) the impact of the proposal on the openness and visual amenities of the Metropolitan Open Land
- (d) the impact on the amenities of the occupiers of adjacent and nearby properties
- (e) the design policies of the development plan
- (f) the transport policies of the development plan

and having regard to all other matters raised.

Reference: 09/02760/FULL1

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