

SECTION '2' – Applications meriting special consideration

**Application No :** 14/04624/FULL1

**Ward:**  
**Cray Valley West**

**Address :** Kemnal Technology College Sevenoaks  
Way Sidcup DA14 5AA

**OS Grid Ref:** E: 546921 N: 170230

**Applicant :** Mrs Tracy Cullen

**Objections :** YES

**Description of Development:**

Creation of 3G artificial turf sports pitch with 4.5m high perimeter ball-stop fencing, 8 x 15m high floodlights, hard surfacing for pedestrian access, and storage equipment container.

Key designations:

Areas of Archaeological Significance  
Biggin Hill Safeguarding Birds  
Biggin Hill Safeguarding Area  
Biggin Hill Safeguarding Area  
Local Cycle Network  
London City Airport Safeguarding  
London City Airport Safeguarding  
London City Airport Safeguarding Birds  
Open Space Deficiency

Urban Open Space

**Proposal**

It is proposed to construct a new 100m x 64m outdoor 3G artificial turf sports pitch on playing fields within the northern part of the site for use by both school students during school time, and the local community during the evening and at weekends. The proposals would offer a variety of football pitches and training areas within the same enclosed playing space, and the scheme is supported by the Football Association.

The proposals would include the erection of 4.5m high perimeter ball-stop fencing, 15m high floodlights, paths for pedestrian access and viewing, and a storage equipment container to the south of the pitch adjacent to the school buildings. An area of natural bunding is also proposed between the pitch and a line of trees situated along the northern boundary with properties in The Green.

The hours of use originally submitted were 09.00-22.00 hours Mondays to Fridays, 09.00-21.00 hours on Saturdays, and 10.00-20.00 hours on Sundays. However, the opening hours on Saturdays have been amended to 09.00-16.00, and on Sundays to 10.00-14.00.

The proposals originally proposed access to the site for parking from The Avenue only which can accommodate 153 spaces, but the scheme has been revised to allow use of the parking area accessed from Sevenoaks Way outside school hours which would make a further 40 spaces available.

## **Location**

Kemnal Technology College is located to the west of Sevenoaks Way close to the junction with the A20, and occupies a site area of 0.82ha. It is bounded to the west by The Avenue, to the south by properties in Valley Road, and to the north by the A20 and Nos.1-11 The Green. Kemnal Lodge in The Avenue also backs onto the north-western part of the site.

The site currently has vehicular access from both Sevenoaks Way and The Avenue which serve two separate parking areas.

The site is designated as Urban Open Space within the UDP, and the original school buildings are Statutorily Listed.

## **Comments from Local Residents**

Letters of objection have been received from neighbouring properties, and from a number of residents' associations and the local Neighbourhood Watch. The main points raised are summarised as follows:

- noise and disturbance to neighbouring properties during the evenings and at weekends
- noise from players and supporters during matches and training
- light pollution from floodlights which are located too close to neighbouring properties
- loss of green open space, contrary to Policy G8 of the UDP (Urban Open Space)
- increased traffic and congestion along Sevenoaks Way
- The Avenue is already heavily parked and would become even more congested
- inadequate on-site parking provision
- how would coaches park?
- access to the site for parking should be from Sevenoaks Way only
- neighbours have not been properly consulted by the school
- visual distraction to motorists on the nearby A20
- increased pressure on the sewer system
- the pitch, floodlights and fencing would be an eyesore
- detrimental impact on local wildlife, including bats

- a smaller pitch should be proposed which would reduce traffic and levels of noise and disturbance
- the pitch would not necessarily be used by residents in the local area
- increased litter in neighbouring gardens
- tree screen adjacent to The Green is inadequate to protect properties
- pitch should not be used outside school hours
- number of parking spaces available on the site has been overestimated
- other alternative sites should be considered.

Further letters re-iterating objections were received from local residents in relation to the revised opening hours and increased parking provision. The reduction in the weekend opening hours are not considered to sufficiently overcome residents' concerns, and the use of the Sevenoaks Way access for parking could exacerbate traffic congestion in the area. The additional 40 car parking spaces provided off Sevenoaks Way are already in use by school staff and visitors and therefore should not be taken into account.

Letters have also been received from local residents who consider that the proposals would be a great asset to the school and to the wider community.

### **Comments from Consultees**

The Council's Highway Engineer is satisfied that sufficient car parking would be provided on-site to meet the needs of the development, and no highways objections are raised to the use of either vehicular access to the site to reach the parking areas. In order to prevent excessive parking demand, a condition is suggested which should restrict any non-school use of the pitch during school hours.

The Council's Environmental Health Officer considers that whilst there may be a small amount of light spillage from the floodlights, this would be mitigated to some extent by the existing trees, and that overall the proposals would not result in an unacceptable loss of amenity to local residents.

No drainage objections are seen to the proposals in principle, and Thames Water has no concerns.

The London Borough of Bexley was consulted on the application, and no objections were raised by them.

The site lies within an Area of Archaeological Significance, and English Heritage therefore recommends a condition requiring the submission of details of an archaeological evaluation of the site.

Any comments received from Sport England will be reported verbally at the meeting.

### **Planning Considerations**

The application falls to be determined in accordance with the following policies of the Unitary Development Plan:

- G8 Urban Open Space
- C8 Dual Community Use of Educational Facilities
- T3 Parking
- T18 Road Safety
- ER10 Light Pollution
- NE5 Protected Species
- BE1 Design of New Development
- BE8 Statutory Listed Buildings

## **Conclusions**

The main issues in this case are the impact of the proposals on the visual amenities and open nature of this area of Urban Open Space, the pressure for parking in surrounding roads, the amenities of nearby residential properties, and the setting of the Statutorily Listed school building.

The site is designated as Urban Open Space, and Policy G8 of the UDP allows built development where it is related to the existing use of the site, or where it is small-scale and supports the outdoor recreational use of the site. The scale, siting and size of the proposal should not impair the open nature of the site.

The site is currently in use as school playing fields, and the proposed use would still be for outdoor recreational purposes, but would be used by the wider community as well as the school. The open nature of the site may be affected to a certain degree by the 4.5m high ballstop fencing and the 15m high floodlighting columns, but taken within the overall context of this large area of playing fields, and the position of the pitch to the rear of the school buildings and adjacent to the A20, the proposals are not considered to unduly affect the open nature of the site nor have a detrimental impact on the visual amenities of the area generally.

Policy C8 of the UDP encourages proposals which bring about the beneficial and efficient use of educational land and buildings for and by the community provided that the privacy and amenities of adjoining properties are adequately safeguarded, and that the proposal would not have an unsatisfactory impact on on-street parking or highway safety.

The pitch would lie close to properties in The Green which back onto the site, and would be visible from properties in The Avenue which face the site. The proposals are to use the pitch until 22.00 hours on Mondays to Fridays, between 09.00-16.00 on Saturdays, and between 10.00-14.00 on Sundays. Although there would be an increase in the level of activity on this site outside normal school times, the additional usage on weekday evenings and during the daytime at weekends is not considered to be unduly harmful to the amenities of nearby residents to warrant a refusal. The existing playing fields could currently be used during the weekend without the need for planning permission, and the floodlights are only likely to be required during weekday evenings.

The use of the floodlights is not considered by the Council's Environmental Health Officer to cause undue light spillage to neighbouring properties, and there is an existing tree screen to the nearest properties in The Green. Furthermore, an area of bunding is proposed between the pitch and the tree screen which should help to reduce any noise from the use of the pitch.

With regard to residents' concerns about increased pressure on on-street parking in the area, the Council's Highway Engineer considers that sufficient parking would be provided on-site for the users of the pitch, such that it would not put undue pressure on parking in surrounding roads. Furthermore, the use of either of the existing parking areas which would be accessed from The Avenue or Sevenoaks Way by users of the pitch is not considered to cause any significant traffic congestion nor be harmful to road safety.

The original school buildings are Statutorily Listed, but the proposals are confined to the rear, and not considered to have a detrimental impact on the setting of the Listed Building.

In relation to residents' concerns about the impact of the proposals on bats in the area, a condition can be imposed which would require the floodlighting to be designed so as to minimise the impact on bats.

In conclusion, the benefits of the scheme to the school and the wider community are considered to outweigh any additional harm to neighbouring properties caused by the increased activity on the site outside school hours.

Background papers referred to during production of this report comprise all correspondence on the file ref(s) set out in the Planning History section above, excluding exempt information.

## **RECOMMENDATION: PERMISSION**

Subject to the following conditions:

- |   |        |   |     |
|---|--------|---|-----|
| 1 | ACA01  | Commencement of development within 3 yrs  |     |
|   | ACA01R | A01 Reason 3 years  |     |
| 2 | ACD02  | Surface water drainage - no det. submitt  |     |
|   | AED02R | Reason D02  |     |
| 3 | ACH27  | Arrangements for construction period  |     |
|   | ACH27R | Reason H27  |     |
| 4 | ACK01  | Compliance with submitted plan  |     |
|   | ACK05R | K05 reason  |     |
| 5 | ACK08  | Archaeological access   |     |
|   | ACK08R | K08 reason  |     |
| 6 |        | The sports pitch hereby permitted shall not be used before 09.00 hours and after 22.00 hours on Mondays to Fridays, nor before 09.00 hours and after 16.00 hours on Saturdays, nor before 10.00 hours and after 14.00 hours on Sundays. |     |
|   | ACJ06R | J06 reason (1 insert)   | BE1 |

- 7 There shall be no non-school use of the sports pitch hereby permitted during normal school hours.  
ACH02R Reason H02
- 8 The floodlights hereby permitted shall be installed in accordance with the approved details and permanently retained as such thereafter. They shall be switched off outside the permitted opening times of the sports pitch.  
ACJ23R J23 Reason
- 9 Details of the proposed bund to be constructed to the north of the sports pitch hereby permitted shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and shall be implemented before the sports pitch is first used.  
ACA07R Reason A07
- 10 The floodlighting hereby permitted shall be designed to minimise where possible the impact on biodiversity, and particularly bats, in accordance with current or other appropriate guidance  
[http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/bats\\_and\\_lighting.html](http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/bats_and_lighting.html).

**Reason:** In order to comply with Policy NE5 of the Unitary Development Plan and in the interest of any protected species present at the site.

**Application:**14/04624/FULL1

**Address:** Kemnal Technology College Sevenoaks Way Sidcup DA14 5AA

**Proposal:** Creation of 3G artificial turf sports pitch with 4.5m high perimeter ball-stop fencing, 8 x 15m high floodlights, hard surfacing for pedestrian access, and storage equipment container.



"This plan is provided to identify the location of the site and should not be used to identify the extent of the application site"

© Crown copyright and database rights 2013. Ordnance Survey 100017661.