



**PLANNING COMMITTEE:** 9 February 2010  
**DIRECTORATE:** Planning and Regeneration  
**HEAD OF PLANNING:** Susan Bridge

**N/2009/1065**                      **Installation of all weather pitch with perimeter fencing, eight no. 15m floodlighting columns. Alterations and remodelling of existing bunding to facilitate relocation of athletics track and sport pitches**  
**Thomas Beckett Roman Catholic Upper School, Kettering Road North**

**WARD:** Parklands

**APPLICANT:** Northants County Council  
**AGENT:** PHP Architects

**REFERRED BY:** Head of Planning  
**REASON:** Major application

**DEPARTURE:** No

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**APPLICATION FOR CONSULTATION BY WNDC:**

**1. RECOMMENDATION**

1.1 That this Council would wish to see the following matters taken into account:

- The restriction to the hours of use of the pitches proposed by way of condition to protect the amenity of neighbouring properties
- The applicant should provide details to demonstrate that they have properly assessed and will meet the recommended light levels set out in document "Guide on the Limitation of the Effects of Obtrusive Light from Outdoor Lighting Installations" to prevent light spillage to neighbouring properties.
- That the applicant provide additional details by way of a Tree Survey identifying whether there would be an acceptable impact on nearby protected trees.

## **2. THE PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 A full planning application has been made to West Northants Development Corporation for the installation of an all weather sports pitch, re-modelling of a landscaped bund, 8 no. 15m high floodlights and new 3 metre high perimeter fencing.
- 2.2 The proposed pitches would be used predominantly by the school although there would be some use anticipated by local sports clubs including Gregory Celtic Football Club and Parklands Junior Football Club. It is also expected that there would be some weekend use of the proposed pitch although at weekends this would end by 4pm and during the week the vast majority of use will end by 9pm.

## **3. SITE DESCRIPTION**

- 3.1 The site is approximately 3.1 hectares in area and currently comprises a mown grass area and a hard-standing car park. It forms part of the overall sports facilities associated with the school.
- 3.2 Thomas Becket School is a Secondary School situated on a single site located to the north of Northampton town centre. The school site is accessed from Beckett Way, which is a residential road serving the surrounding 1930's residential development. The main school building is located in the south-western part of the site. The general topography of the site is relatively flat and there is an existing mature tree belt bordering the site and school playing fields. The site is identified in the Northampton Local Plan as a school site.

## **4. PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 A planning application was submitted to WNDC in 2008 and was later withdrawn following concerns from the Local Planning Authority. This proposal (LPA ref N/2008/1183) was for installation of 6 all weather football pitches, with floodlighting, cricket practice netting, floodlighting , parking and new pavillon and changing rooms.
- 4.2 The current application is for a smaller scale of development than that cited above and is geared more towards the primary use by the school whilst the 2008 application was a more community based venture targetting a greater degree of use by outside organisations.

## **5. PLANNING POLICY**

### **5.1 Development Plan**

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires a planning application to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise. The current Development Plan comprises of the East

Midlands Regional Plan, the saved policies of the Northamptonshire County Structure Plan and Northampton Local Plan 1997.

**5.2 National Policies:**

PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development  
PPG17 - Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation  
PPG24 - Planning and Noise

**5.3 East Midlands Regional Plan 2009**

Policy 2 – Promoting Better Design

**5.4 Northampton Borough Local Plan**

E11 – Hedgerows and Trees  
E20 – New Development  
E40 – Crime and Vandalism  
L1 – Existing Recreational Facilities  
L2 – Community Use of Existing Schools and Colleges

**5.5 Supplementary Planning Guidance**

Northamptonshire County Parking Standards SPG 2003  
Planning out Crime in Northamptonshire SPG 2004

**6. CONSULTATIONS/REPRESENTATIONS**

**6.1 Public Protection (NBC):** No objections in principle. Only concern may be the proposed floodlighting and the potential to give rise to nuisance or a deterioration of amenity of neighbours due to glare and light trespass. In order to avoid this it is recommended that the light levels due to the installation at any nearby sensitive premises should be below the levels recommended in relevant guidance. The applicant should demonstrate they they can meet these targets prior to granting of planning permission.

**6.2 Planning Policy (NBC):** No objections. On the basis that the proposed use is part of the school's own facility to meet its needs but also has some scope to be used by the community.

**6.5 Access Officer (NBC):** No comments

**6.4 Outdoor Environment Manager (NBC):** No comments

**6.5 Arboricultural Officer (NBC):** The applicant should submit a plan showing the location of proposed surfaces with trees plotted on and their corresponding Root Protection Areas. Any incursions into this restricted zones should be accounted for by way of specialist no dig methods and porous surface specification.

## 7. APPRAISAL

### Policy context

- 7.1 PPS1 encourages the achievement of sustainable development and good design in the planning of new development while PPG24 encourages Local Planning Authorities to consider carefully whether proposals for new noise-sensitive development would be incompatible with existing activities. The PPG states that the impact of noise can be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- 7.2 PPG17 "Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation" states that Local Planning Authorities in assessing sports facilities should avoid any significant loss of amenity to neighbouring properties.
- 7.3 The Northampton Local Plan also contains relevant policies for this type of development including E20, which encourages good design and development to reflect the character of its surroundings.

### Impact on amenity and living conditions of neighbouring properties

- 7.4 The site located within a predominantly residential area, to the north is a green corridor of open space, to the west are allotments and to the east in an industrial area. To the south of the site is Lorraine Crescent, which is an established residential area and to the north are modern residential properties located on Howards Way, Moulton Park.
- 7.5 Given the separation distance to neighbouring residential properties it is considered that the noise and disturbance generated from the use of the pitches would be acceptable subject to limiting hours of use. Although the use of the proposed pitches would sometimes continue to 9pm, with reference to the Council's Environmental Health Officer (paragraph 6.1) it is considered that this is acceptable. Overall the Borough Environmental Health Officer comments that there would be no objections in principle provided that the applicant demonstrates that they can meet light levels as detailed in the document "Guide on the Limitation of the Effects of Obtrusive Light from Outdoor Lighting Installations" for the floodlighting proposed.
- 7.6 It is considered that the proposed development would be less intense than the previous submission in 2008 (ref N/2008/1183) given the reduced scale of development proposed.

### Impact on Trees

- 7.7 Along the western boundary of the site with the allotments is lined with mature trees contained within a Tree Preservation Order. The applicant has not submitted a detailed tree survey. The Borough Arboricultural Officer has advised that the applicant should provide a plan showing root protection areas of existing trees and any incursions

into the restricted zones should be accounted for by a “no dig” method of construction and porous surface specifications.

#### Parking provision and access

- 7.8 Access to the development would be gained through the existing school access off Becket Way. The school site has approximately 130 existing car parking spaces provided in front of the main building.
- 7.9 It is considered that there would be sufficient off road parking at the site and given that some of the use of the pitches would be in the evening thereby avoiding conflict with the educational use of the site and associated demand on parking spaces. The applicant has also provided a detailed Travel Plan with their submission detailing how they intend to encourage more sustainable means of travelling to the site which is to be monitored annually along with the number of car trips to and from the site recorded and analysed.
- 7.10 Nonetheless, it is recommended that WNDC liaise with the Highway Authority on the issue of parking and access at the site and obtain its approval prior to determining the application.

#### Visual amenity

- 7.11 In visual terms the proposed sports pitches and associated structures would be acceptable and would not detract unduly from the appearance and character of the area and are individually and collectively the kind of development one would expect to see at a modern educational establishment.
- 7.12 The proposed alterations to the existing bund would be acceptable in visual terms and would be unlikely to result in any adverse visual impact on nearby residential properties.

### **8. CONCLUSION**

- 8.1 The proposed development is considered acceptable in principle subject to the hours of use and lighting levels being adequately controlled and additional work to demonstrate that the development would not harm the neighbouring protected trees.

### **9 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 9.1 N/2009/1065

### **10 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 None

## **11 SUMMARY AND LINKS TO CORPORATE PLAN**

11.1 In reaching the attached recommendations regard has been given to securing the objectives, visions and priorities outlined in the Corporate Plan together with those associated Frameworks and Strategies.

<b>Position:</b>	<b>Name/Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Author:</b>	Jonathan Moore	18 Jan 2010
<b>Development Control Manager Agreed:</b>	Gareth Jones	23 Jan 2010

