

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

Committee	Full Planning Committee - 19/11/2013	Item No: 5.7
Report Originator	D Law Development Officer	Application No: KET/2013/0593
Wards Affected	St. Peters	
Location	Athletics Track, Thurston Drive, Kettering	
Proposal	Full Application: 8 no. Floodlights	
Applicant	Ms P Bellamy Kettering Borough Council,	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To describe the above proposals
- To identify and report on the issues arising from it
- To state a recommendation on the application

2. RECOMMENDATION

THE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL MANAGER RECOMMENDS that this application be APPROVED subject to the following Condition(s):-

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this planning permission.

REASON: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and to prevent an accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions.

2. The floodlighting shall not be in operation before 10 a.m. or after 10 p.m. on any day and measures to ensure that floodlights are turned off at this time shall be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, prior to the use of the lighting commencing and retained thereafter.

REASON: In the interest of residential amenity in accordance with policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy.

3. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the approved plans and details submitted with the application.

REASON: To ensure an appropriate form of development in accordance with policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy

Officers Report for KET/2013/0593

This application is reported for Committee decision because the applicant or agent is a member of KBC staff or their spouse/partner.

3.0 Information

Relevant Planning History

None relevant

Site Description

Officer's site inspection was carried out on 23/10/2013

The Kettering Athletics track is adjacent to the former leisure village complex on Thurston Drive and Lake Avenue. It is a sports facility built in 1991 comprising a running track and other facilities for the pursuit of sporting excellence such as long jump pits, hammer throwing etc. On the southern and western boundaries, there is a sharp rise up to the fencing that gives the impression of the track ebbing into a bowl. There are residential areas to the north and west

Proposed Development

8 x 15m column floodlights to be sited equally around the 400m running track

The installation of the floodlights will enable increased capacity of members of the Kettering Harriers to train and host events in the evenings in the autumn and winter months. The columns will be steel of a mid-hinge design that enables maintenance of the asymmetric reflectors located in die cast aluminium housing.

Any Constraints Affecting the Site

Protected Open Space – outdoor sports facility ID 633

4.0 Consultation and Customer Impact

Environmental Health

No objection to the application subject to the following condition being applied, should consent be given.

Floodlights – hours of use

The floodlighting shall not be in operation after 10 p.m. on any night and measures to ensure that floodlights are turned off at this time shall be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, prior to the use of the lighting commencing and retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interest of residential amenity

Sport England

No objection subject to the lighting specification being checked as meeting the appropriate level required (for) either community or club

Northants Highways

No objection

Neighbours

2 objections based on the potential for increase in anti-social behaviour, noise and adverse affect on amenity

5.0 Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Paragraph 17 – Core planning principles

Policy 8, paragraph 70 – Promoting healthy communities

Paragraph 74 – open space protection

Development Plan Policies

North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy (CSS)

Policy 13 - General sustainable development principles

6.0 Financial/Resource Implications

None

7.0 Planning Considerations

The key issues for consideration in this application are:-

1. Principle of development
2. Character and Appearance
3. Residential amenity
4. Protected open space
5. Highway matters

1. Principle of development

The NPPF states that the social role of the planning system should create ‘a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community’s needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being. The NPPF now requires that plan-making and decision-taking by local planning authorities and others should:

- take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs. (Paragraph 17)
- always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. (Paragraph 17)
- plan positively for the provision of and use of shared space and community facilities (such as sports venue)to enhance the sustainability of communities and to ensure that established

facilities are able to develop and modernise in a way that is sustainable and retained for the benefit of the community (Policy 8, paragraph 70)

This approach is reinforced by policy 13 of the CSS that states development should:

- a) incorporate flexible designs for buildings enabling them to be adapted to future needs
- c) maintain the and improve the provision of accessible community services
- h) be of a high standard of design, architecture and landscaping
- j) be designed to promote healthier lifestyles and for people to be active outside their homes and places of work.

The installation of floodlights at an existing sport facility is considered to accord with the above policy criteria therefore the principle of development is supported.

Kettering Borough Council has formally adopted a sports facilities strategy for 2011 – 2021. This strategy forms part of the evidence base for providing sports facilities in order to feed information into planning documents, provide evidence to support sports clubs with their applications for funding and to help the Council secure developer and partner contribution. An action plan of sports facility needs is contained within the strategy and a recommendation (1.1) is for:

‘Install improved floodlighting and CCTV at Kettering athletics track and pitch’

This was identified as a priority as in order to enable the club to extend its operational hours and therefore accept new members, catering for the proposed growth in the borough. Therefore the application satisfies a priority action of the adopted sports facilities strategy by improving an existing important sports facility.

2. Character and Appearance

With regard to the character and appearance of the proposal, these are considered against Section 7 of the NPPF which sets out the importance of good design. CSS Policy 13 (h) requires new development to be of a high standard of design, architecture and landscaping, respect and enhance the character of its surroundings and be in accordance with the environmental character of the area. The character of the area is that of an outdoor sports facility as part of the wider leisure complex that includes an all weather astro-turf pitch with floodlights, large car park and the Kettering Conference centre. The floodlights would not look out of place or adversely affect the character of the area. The introduction of 8 x 15m high grey galvanised steel columns would be comparable to the existing floodlights on the adjacent all weather pitch and, although taller, the 8m floodlights of the car park and highway. They would not be an incongruous addition to the

landscape of the wider leisure complex.

It is considered that the installation of the 8 floodlights would not have a detrimental visual impact upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area therefore according with the design principles of section 7 of the NPPF and policy 13 of the CSS.

3. Residential amenity

Paragraph 17 of the NPPF states that planning should always seek a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupiers of land and buildings. Policy 13 (l) of the CSS states that development should not result in an unacceptable impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties or the wider area, by reason of noise, vibration, smell, light or other pollution, loss of light or overlooking.

There are residential areas within the vicinity to the north and east of the track. The dwellings are at distances of over 30 m and over 60m and are separated by Lake Avenue or Thurston Drive respectively and all benefit from mature vegetative screening. Due to the nature of the proposal and distance from the residential dwellings the potential negative impacts from the development would be limited to noise and light pollution.

Two objections were received from nearby residents on Torvill Crescent, north east of the site concerning the potential for an increase in anti-social behaviour resulting from the installation of the floodlights. They highlight the current issues of drunken youths accessing the 'grounds' at all hours. This is a criminal activity in the form of trespass and outside the remit of planning legislation. The condition requested by KBC's Environmental Health department would contain any additional use of the track into socially acceptable hours. The submitted application form states that the hours of use would not exceed 22.00 hours.

In terms of noise, there is potential for an increase in noise due to the extended hours the sports facility could be in use. However, there are a number of similar uses and outdoor sports facilities in the vicinity which co-exist with surrounding residential development. It is considered that an increase in use of an ancillary sports facility to the existing activities on the site would not unduly intensify noise levels to the detriment of neighbouring amenity. There is also a sufficient distance and landscaping to protect residential amenity between the dwellings and the proposed tracks

In terms of light, the 15 metre columns which will support the floodlights are proposed to surround and light the running track. The applicants have submitted a supporting Technical Recommendation statement with the application which demonstrates that the lighting proposed would be directed toward the track thereby minimising light pollution to nearby dwellings. The report states that the lighting level average per column

would have a maximum of 73.3 cd/m²; that all floodlights are mounted horizontally parallel with the ground to minimise glare; that, due to the orientation of the floodlights and accurately focussed beams, lighting levels would drop off markedly outside of the lit area; and that the limited light spill would have no greater impact on the neighbouring households than the existing nearby car park lighting.

There are numerous existing 8 metre light columns which illuminate the car parks and access roads to the centre and the adjacent astro turf pitch is floodlit with 16m high columns. The assertions made in the supporting statement regarding minimal overspill beyond the immediate footprint of the existing facility are accepted and it is not considered that the proposed lights would have a detrimental impact on the amenity of nearby residents, subject to the orientation of the lights and their careful positioning which ensures that the lamps are not permitted to throw light towards the homes. Additionally, light emissions from the floodlights would be limited to the hours specified above, which can be imposed as a condition on any grant of consent, thereby protecting residential amenity during unsociable hours. In addition, the proposal accords with the recommendations of The Campaign for Dark Skies.

Sports England have given a No objection consultation response subject to the lighting specification being checked as meeting the appropriate level required (for) either community or club. The submitted Project description document states that the scheme has been specifically designed to illuminate stadia and sports field applications thereby satisfying this criterion.

As a result, the proposed scheme is acceptable and conforms to policy 13(l) of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy which requires that development should not result in an unacceptable impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties.

4. Protected open space

The site has been identified through the PPG17 Open Space study as protected Open space and categorised as an outdoor sports facility. Paragraph 74 of the NPPF and policy 13 (g) of the CSS are protective of open space. The proposal does not result in any loss of open space and is in fact improving the existing facility thereby according with the above policies.

5. Highways

Criterion (n) of CSS Policy 13 states that development should not have an adverse impact on the highway network and will not prejudice highway safety. The Highways Agency have raised no objection and the Highway Authority consider the proposal to be acceptable from a Highways perspective subject to careful positioning of the lights which ensures that the lamps are not permitted to throw light towards drivers on the nearby Lake Avenue and Thurston Drive. The applicants have submitted a Technical Recommendation with the application which

demonstrates that the lighting proposed is directional and will minimise light pollution on to nearby roads. Therefore criterion (n) of Policy 13 is considered to have been satisfied.

Conclusion

The proposal conforms to policies in the Development Plan, will raise no adverse impacts in respect of design and character and residential or visual amenity and is therefore recommended for approval.

Background

Papers

Title of Document:

Date:

Contact Officer:

D Law, Development Officer on 01536 534316

Previous Reports/Minutes

Ref:

Date: