

Name of Applicant	Proposal	Expiry Date	Plan Ref.
Mr Richard Thorndike on behalf of Alvechurch FC / The Hayes Sports Partnership	Reconfiguration of existing playing fields to provide new club house and stand, match pitch and floodlights, with three further grass pitches and one all weather pitch, plus associated car parking and landscaping	31.07.2018	17/01363/FUL
Partnership	Land at corner of Redhill Road and Redditch Road, West Heath, Birmingham, B38 9EJ		

RECOMMENDATION: That planning permission be delegated to the Head of Planning and Regeneration to GRANT planning permission subject to the satisfactory completion of a planning obligation (Unilateral Undertaking) to ensure that shuttle bus arrangements are provided

Consultations

Alvechurch Parish Council Consulted 29.11.2017

No objections. The Parish Council consider that exceptional circumstances have been demonstrated to support this application in the green belt.

Highways - Bromsgrove Consulted 29.11.2017

Comments summarised as follows:

Worcestershire County Council Highways Authority has now withdrawn their previous objections to the scheme. The Highway Authority had previously raised concerns that persons who reside in Alvechurch who presently have easy access to the football club will not in the future which will result in them transferring from a walking trip to a vehicle trips. Since the objection was presented the applicant has undertaken additional work to address this matter and ensure that a reasonable alternative was available which would prevent this additional car travel. In mitigation for absence of pedestrian access a shuttle bus service is to be provided in perpetuity at nominal cost, this will provide connections from Alvechurch railway station, the village centre and then travel along the A441 through Hopwood and finally to the application site. The applicant agrees that this will be beneficial and the Highway Authority considers that it provides a new sustainable transport opportunity. The applicant is providing a unilateral undertaking to ensure that this will be delivered.

The applicant has also provided explanation of the car parking provision, which Worcestershire County Council has assessed. The provision is considered to be acceptable, a total of 142 spaces are provided for day to day use of which 7 are designed as accessible spaces, additionally 79 spaces are available as an overflow and 20 spaces are provided off Redditch Road. Provision has also been made for coaches and bicycles. It is necessary to require conditions to detail the specification of the cycle shelter, and also to provide for electric vehicle charging and motorcycle provisions which are absent from the proposals. The applicant is advised that a 22kw electric vehicle charging unit should be presented to discharge a recommended condition.

The arrangements for access to the site by vehicle and pedestrians is a consideration for Birmingham City Council as the appropriate Highway Authority, at it is not a matter that Worcestershire County Council can make comment on or recommend conditions for.

The Highway Authority concludes that there would not be a severe impact on the highway network and therefore there are no justifiable grounds on which an objection could be maintained subject to the completion of an appropriate legal agreement to ensure that a shuttle bus is provided. Conditions pertaining to the following matters are recommended: conformity with submitted details; provision of electric vehicle charging points; motorcycle and cycle parking provision; provision of a travel and match day management plan.

Worcestershire Regulatory Services Consulted 29.11.2017

Comments summarised as follows:

The submitted information relating to the proposed external lighting is acceptable. Specifically the proposed pitch floodlighting is oriented and angled such that light spill is minimised at the nearest sensitive receptor(s) on the other side of the Redditch Road. The proposed floodlights have the option to have side baffles fitted, if required, to further minimise any light spill. No objections are raised to the application.

Parks & Green Space Development Officer Consulted 29.11.2017

Comments summarised as follows:

The recommendations for enhancement made within the ecology report (to provide bat and bird boxes) are acceptable and are in line with the provisions of the NPPF which should ensure that developments result in a 'net gain' for biodiversity: enhancement of the local ecology.

As great Crested Newts have been identified very close by in the nearby ponds (within 500m) the provision of 3 suitable hibernacula piles within the periphery of the woodland verges would provide additional over wintering opportunities thus enhancing the habitat for GCN. The construction, location and minimum size should be agreed with an ecologist and the authority. A condition to this effect would be acceptable.

It is considered that increased light spill on retained habitats will have the potential to disturb protected species at the site; particularly bats which are nocturnal species and will make use of the peripheral habitats at the site. It is recommended that a post-construction lighting strategy, sensitive to wildlife (including Bats) be implemented to minimise the adverse environmental effects of the flood lighting. This should be to be developed in collaboration with a suitably qualified ecologist to ensure that the lighting is operated and maintained to minimise adverse effects.

Drainage Engineers Internal Planning Consultation Consulted 29.11.2017

Comments summarised as follows:

The principle of the scheme with respect to flood risk and drainage is likely to be acceptable, given that the site is at low risk of flooding. However, further information should be submitted to demonstrate the acceptability of the scheme from a drainage perspective. I am happy for this information to be provided via a condition attached to any permission granted and the below condition is suggested.

No works or development shall take place until a scheme for foul and surface water drainage, along with a maintenance plan for this drainage scheme, has been submitted

to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include the results of an assessment into the potential of disposing of surface water by means of a sustainable drainage system (SuDS) and shall provide an appropriate level of runoff treatment. The approved scheme shall be completed prior to the first use of the development hereby approved.

Reason: In order to ensure satisfactory drainage conditions that will not create or exacerbate flood risk on site or within the surrounding local area.

Birmingham City Council Consulted 29.11.2017

Comments summarised as follows:

Planning Department response:

The proposal lies within the Green Belt. The proposed use for football facilities is not inappropriate in the Green Belt (see NPPF para.89). It preserves the openness of the Green Belt, and to some extent may secure that, and does not conflict with the purposes of the Green Belt. The proposed clubhouse and spectator facilities have been placed in a way that maximises the use of the topography of the site, to minimise the impact. The adjacent land is already in use for football related facilities, which arguably have a greater physical impact than this proposal. The principle of outdoor sport uses (particularly football) within the Green Belt in this vicinity is already established.

Highway Engineer response:

The access location is considered to be acceptable in principle.

Public Consultation

7 Neighbour letters sent out on 1.12.2017 expired 22.12.2017

Site Notice posted on 1.12.2017 expired 22.12.2017

Press Notice published on 8.12.2017 expired 22.12.2017

15 representations received:

14 objections summarised as follows:

- Proposed floodlighting would impact detrimentally upon amenity.
- Additional noise created by the development will harm existing residential amenities enjoyed by nearby residents.
- Increased traffic is likely to harm highway safety.

1 letter received in support

Relevant Policies

Bromsgrove District Plan

BDP1 Sustainable Development Principles

BDP4 Green Belt

BDP12 Sustainable Communities

BDP16 Sustainable Transport

BDP19 High Quality Design

BDP21 Natural Environment

BDP23 Water Management

BDP24 Green Infrastructure

Others

NPPF National Planning Policy Framework
NPPG National Planning Practice Guidance

Relevant Planning History

12/0983	The formation of a 3G artificial training pitch and associated fencing.	Approved	20.03.2013
12/0627	Siting of Four Portacabin pre-fabricated buildings - Renewal of B/2010/0647	Approved	19.10.2012
10/0647	The siting of four Portakabin pre-fabricated buildings at Wast Hills Training Ground	Approved	16.09.2010
B/2008/0282	Single storey extension providing entrance lobby and reception areas.	Approved	22.05.2008
B/2003/1555	Re-development of changing rooms and extension to gym	Approved	20.12.2005
B/2000/1030	Provision of an all-weather sports pitch and erection of temporary covering.	Approved	31.05.2001

Assessment of Proposal

Site Description

The application site stands on the corner of Redditch Road and Redhill Road to the north-west and north-east respectively and presently comprises existing playing fields with three grass football pitches, as well as a small changing room and car park accessed from Redditch Road. West of Redditch Road stands suburban housing comprising the urban area of Birmingham. East of Redhill Road lies Wast Hills Golf Club. The land is owned by Birmingham City Council.

The site lies within the administrative area of Bromsgrove District Council, but on the boundary with that of Birmingham, which runs along both Redditch and Redhill Road. The south-western part of the site is raised approximately 3m above the remainder of the site.

Buildings and pitches comprising Birmingham City Football Club's training facility lie to the south-east. The remaining boundaries are with farmland, and comprise hedgerows and banks of trees.

Proposal

The proposal is to provide the following:

- A floodlit adult 3G football pitch;
- A new clubhouse with changing and social and teaching facilities, also available for hire for use by the general public;
- A floodlit 3rd Generation Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) for senior, junior and youth matches,
- Three further grass pitches, and;
- Car-parking for 145 cars, including 7 spaces for drivers with disabilities, and two coaches, as well as parking for 30 bicycles, served from a new access off Redhill Road.
- A new pedestrian access point from Redditch Road and positioned in the vicinity of the nearest bus stop providing a safe pedestrian route through the site.

The applicant, Alvechurch Football Club needs to move in order to secure a sustainable long-term home for the Club. They lease their current ground in Alvechurch which ends in 2018. The applicant states that the new facilities are required to meet the requirements of the Football League relating to their league position, investment not being possible without having a long-term land arrangement and to meet the demand for teams of all ages and abilities, both male and female.

Subject to planning permission being obtained, Alvechurch FC will continue to play at their existing ground, Lye Meadow, until the new facilities are completed.

The applicant comments that the Club's senior first team currently plays in the Northern Premier League Division One South. The proposals are considered to 'future proof' the ground enabling the Club to have facilities that can achieve the next step up Ground Grading level if the on the field success continues, requiring floodlighting; perimeter fencing around the main pitch and a solid ground enclosure around the boundary of the main pitch and spectating areas; covered standing and seated spectator accommodation; changing facilities for players and for match officials; turnstile entrance to the senior pitch area; and social/ refreshment facilities.

The proposed clubhouse building is proposed to have a multi-purpose main lounge/social room which can be used for general opening to support the matchday and training events in addition to being available for private hire for social or corporate functions.

The applicant comments that it is envisaged that the facilities will be used to host courses and events in addition to social use to support the football activities. The main social room is to be designed as a multipurpose room, capable of being divided in two to create a member's bar area and second area which can be used for exercise classes other sporting uses such as table tennis or for functions and meetings. A boardroom/office is also provided, which can be used for smaller meetings, creating a building which is as flexible and accessible as possible.

The 3G pitch is likely to be in use between the hours of 09:00 and 22:30 hours on match days, with it and other pitches available for use between 09:00 and 22:00 hours Monday-Sunday. The clubroom would be available for community use between 07:00-midnight, 7 days a week.

In addition to a Planning statement, the following documents have been submitted to support the application:

- Design and Access Statement
- Ecological Assessment
- Lighting Proposal
- Travel Plan
- Transport Assessment

Green Belt

The site is situated entirely within the Green Belt.

The NPPF confirms that protecting Green Belt land is a core planning principle. It comments under Paragraph 79 that: *'The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.'*

Paragraph 87 of the NPPF sets out that *'...inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances'*. Paragraph 88 then goes on to state that *'...local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.'*

Paragraph 81 states that local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, such as to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation. Under Paragraph 89, the NPPF states that the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt is inappropriate, other than certain stated exceptions. These include: *"provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it"*

Policy BDP4 (Green Belt) of the Bromsgrove District Plan confirms that the development of new buildings in the Green Belt is considered to be inappropriate, except in certain circumstances stated in the Policy, which reflects National Policy.

In this case, there is no change in the use of the land, which is already acknowledged to be in recreational use. The existing buildings on site measure 391sqm, whilst the proposed buildings would measure 715sqm.

Openness, as referred to above is not defined within the NPPF. However, it has generally been taken to mean 'the absence of development'. The proposal would change this by introducing further built development into the site. Having regard to all elements of the proposal, it is considered, and the applicant concedes that the development would reduce the openness of the Green Belt, thereby meaning that the proposals comprise inappropriate development in the Green Belt; consequently, very special circumstances must be shown for the proposal to be acceptable as set out under NPPF paragraph 88 above, which to re-iterate, comments that:

"Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations."

There are five purposes of the Green Belt, which are set out in Para 80 of the NPPF which are:

- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

As this site does already fall within the extent of the existing established playing fields development, it is not considered that the proposal would conflict with any of these purposes.

Overall however, although the proposal is considered to constitute the provision of an appropriate facility for outdoor sport and recreation, the additional floorspace created, together with the associated infrastructure such as the floodlights would reduce openness and thus, it is considered that the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. In accordance with Paragraph 88 of the NPPF this harm is afforded substantial weight.

The very special circumstances as advanced by the applicant and which are considered to exist in this case are set out in summary below and have been set out in detail within the applicants Planning Statement:

The future of Alvechurch FC

As stated earlier in this report, the lease on the existing ground ends in 2018, meaning that the club need to find a new ground. In addition, the club need to provide specific facilities to meet the requirements of the Football League relating to their league position, including a stand for a minimum of 500 covered spectators, including for 250 of which must be seated, a clubhouse, specific changing facilities, floodlights. It is not possible to secure this investment without securing a permanent home for the club.

Alternative sites

The club have been searching for alternative accommodation since 2012. Despite this long search, given the necessary requirements, it has not been possible to identify any suitable site that is not in the Green Belt. As Paragraph 2.1 of the adopted Bromsgrove District Plan states, *"Although the Town is located only 22km (14 miles) from the centre of*

Birmingham, the District is predominately rural with approximately 90% of the land designated as Green Belt”.

A number of potential alternatives of an appropriate size have been considered, and the club considered a number of sites, usually farmland around Alvechurch itself and the neighbouring areas of Bromsgrove, Barnt Green, Tardebigge, Finstall, Burcot, Hopwood, Rowney Green and Blackwell; however, all of these were allocated Green Belt land. Compared to other Green Belt locations, the proposed site is not considered to be a particularly isolated one and is sited between the Birmingham urban area, and contained by Birmingham City FC’s training ground. As such, it would also provide other benefits in terms of participation not possible from other locations.

Underprovision of sports pitches in South West Birmingham

Given the location of the site on the border of the two authorities, the applicant has held discussions with Birmingham City Council, who have considered the potential for the provision of an appropriate site within the adjacent Northfield, Selly Oak and Edgbaston constituencies, even though this would take the club out of Bromsgrove itself.

All three Birmingham districts have quantitative provision that is below the minimum 1.2 hectares per 1,000 population standard. In the case of the four Northfield Wards closest to the Hayes, provision is below a third of the minimum target, Longbridge 0.23ha, Northfield 0.39, Weoley 0.37 and Kings Norton 0.38ha per 1,000 population.

Similarly, three of Selly Oak’s wards are considerably below the minimum target (Bournville 0.80, Brandwood 0.30 and Selly Oak 0.67), whilst Billesley is just shy of the minimum at 1.19ha per 1,000 population. The relevant figures for Edgbaston Wards are Bartley Green 0.68, Edgbaston 1.07, Harborne 0.40 and Quinton 0.26ha per 1,000 population.

The current Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) provides more detailed analysis. This identifies deficiencies in provision, either in quantitative terms or qualitative or both in terms of pitch sports in all three districts. In particular, Northfield Constituency was identified as having severe deficiencies with regard to football. None of the Constituencies were identified as having surplus provision.

Since the publication of that PPS, the only pitches released for development have been small, largely land locked sites in established residential areas, none of which due to size or location are suitable for the size and type of use the Football Club needs; furthermore, these releases are conditional upon securing compensatory qualitative improvements. As part of the partial development of Ravenhurst Playing Fields, for example, investment into football pitch provision at Senneley’s Park in Bartley Green Ward is earmarked in line with the PPS to meet identified demand. The proposal would therefore help meet this requirement, and is the only way the requirement can realistically be met.

Increase in participation

The proposal would provide a sustainable community sports hub with facilities for involvement in sports for all ages and abilities, as well as a home for Alvechurch FC which fulfils the current FA ground grading requirements.

The Football Club is working with The Hayes Sports Partnership to benefit community use through delivery of the following programme:

Teamworx aims to help and support young children, mainly aged 8 and 9 who are identified by their respective schools as being on the cusp of exclusion / in need of Early Intervention and help with lack of confidence, social skills etc. The program teaches the children team-working, improves confidence and discipline amongst other social skills and hopefully improves their well-being.

Headway is a charity based within Bromsgrove, who aim to improve life after brain injury. Provision of specialist coaches at no cost to the charity to deliver a basic soccer skills programme to clients of Headway who have suffered serious brain injuries. The programme runs weekly on Thursdays between 1-2pm.

St Thomas Aquinas Catholic School. To assist the existing school sports programme Hayes Sports Partnership currently offers a 2-hour enhanced soccer skills programme to yr8 & 9 students. This involves a fully compliant UEFA Level 'B' coach from HSP running a course for 16 students on site. The programme has been well received and has led to a request from the school to run a 16-18yr old education programme in conjunction with the delivery of football.

South Birmingham Sports Hub. Alvechurch FC has agreed to become the South Birmingham FA Club Hub for the FA. The partnership has the potential to transform community football club infrastructure whilst supporting education and community football delivery in the local area. As well as a growth in women's football, this will include 16-25 adults in the community opportunities; a student volunteering and workforce programme.

Football for People with Disabilities: Birmingham FA have approached HSP to deliver a full programme of football for people of all ages with disabilities and to start teams in all forms of the game: 5,7,9 and 11-a-side. Due to the specialist requirements of the programme this requires an All Weather facility.

Midland Mencap: To mirror the existing soccer skills programme currently offered to Headway, HSP have agreed free venue hire and soccer skills training together with weekly fixtures for Midlands Mencap clients.

Cofton Primary School: HSP are in discussion to offer basic soccer skills training at The Hayes

The proposals are considered to provide a number of benefits, the scale of which, cumulatively are considered to amount to the very special circumstances needed to justify the development in the Green Belt.

Open Space

The proposal is considered to meet the requirements of Policy BDP 12 (Sustainable Communities), which states that the Council will seek to ensure community facilities are provided to meet local needs by, inter alia:

- a) Supporting the provision of new facilities for which a need is identified in locations accessible to the community served;
- b) Supporting improvements to existing facilities enabling them to adapt to change
- c) Resisting the loss of existing facilities unless it can be demonstrated that:
 - i) There is no realistic prospect of the use continuing for operational and/or viable purposes;
 - ii) The service or facility can be provided effectively in an alternative manner or on a different site;

The NPPF at Paragraph 74 requires that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless various tests are met. The proposal meets the tests as set out below:

*“the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location”; and
“the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.”*

Highways

Policy BDP1: Sustainable Development Principles taken from the Bromsgrove District Plan requires that in considering new development, regard will be had to:

Accessibility to public transport options and the ability of the local and strategic road networks to accommodate additional traffic”.

A Transport Assessment and Travel Plan have been prepared for the proposal. This has provided guidance regarding parking requirements, as well as the design of the new access, taking account of swept path analysis for coaches, with visibility splays being set based on observed vehicle speeds.

The TA considers the site will be busiest on weekends, particularly on match days, and during evenings, with the busiest times in the car park being the overlap between sessions; however, this consideration is generally only expected to last for around 15 minutes. Most of these periods are therefore outside the network peak hour and there will be limited impact on network capacity from the reassigned traffic. On this basis, it is unlikely that the new facility will cause any significant impact upon the local highway network.

Paragraph 32 of the NPPF states that development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe; the reports conclude this will not be the case with the current proposals.

The TA also notes that the existing ground is in a more isolated location, with relocation providing more opportunities for sustainable transport choices, bus, cycle and by foot. These proposals include a new pedestrian access from Redditch Road in the vicinity of the nearest bus stop.

The Travel Plan seeks to promote the use of non-car travel modes particularly through the dissemination of information regarding local bus services, walk and cycle routes. The Travel Plan recommends that a Travel Plan Co-ordinator be appointed and responsible for implementing and administering the plan. A condition to this effect is recommended.

Worcestershire County Council Highways Authority have now withdrawn their previous objections to the scheme which were based upon sustainability and reliance on the private motor car to access the facility, as referred to earlier in this report.

A shuttle bus service is to be provided in perpetuity providing connections from Alvechurch railway station, the village centre and then travel along the A441 through Hopwood and finally to the application site.

A unilateral undertaking has been prepared to ensure that this will be delivered.

Car parking provision is considered to be acceptable. A total of 142 spaces are provided for day to day use of which 7 are designed as accessible spaces, additionally 79 spaces are available as an overflow and 20 spaces are provided off Redditch Road. Provision has also been made for coaches and bicycles. Recommended conditions would detail the specification of the cycle shelter, and also to provide for electric vehicle charging and motorcycle provisions.

Ecology

An Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey has been carried out. This notes that whilst the majority of habitats at the site are of negligible to low ecological importance the majority of the amenity grassland and peripheral habitats will be retained, ensuring habitat continuity for a variety of species during the construction and operation.

The report states that no further surveys are required in respect of bats, badgers, great crested newts or terrestrial invertebrates. It sets out requirements for dealing with breeding birds, and in respect of lighting, particularly along the periphery of the site, to minimise effects on bats. Proposals are included for the retention and protection of trees on site during construction. Enhancement for biodiversity is also recommended through landscape planting, comprising predominantly native species, and the provision of bat and bird boxes. Conditions are recommended for inclusion which would adequately deal with the matters identified in line with the provisions of the NPPF and the Bromsgrove District Plan which reinforces this approach through taking appropriate steps to maintain the favourable conservation status of populations of protected species; designing in wildlife, and delivering enhancement commensurate with their scale, which contributes towards the achievement of a coherent and resilient ecological network.

Drainage and Flooding

North Worcestershire Water Management (Drainage Engineers) have raised no objection to the principle of the development subject to the imposition of a suitably worded planning condition which would require the applicant to utilise a sustainable drainage strategy.

Design

The Design of the development is considered to respect the sensitive green belt location and would also meet the requirements of Policy BDP1 and BDP19.

The proposed development has taken into account the orientation of the pitches, whilst bearing in mind the shape of the land available and works required to address existing constraints. The stand/clubhouse would be located on the south west of the pitch, taking advantage of the bank to reduce the impact of the new building. New parking facilities are to be provided in the north-eastern side of the pitch, accessed from Redhill Road.

The position and form of the building in particular have been carefully designed to reduce the impact on openness and are positioned to best utilise the site contours with a simple roof form and materials chosen to reduce the perceived scale and reduce the impact on the surroundings. The proposed stand and facilities would only be seen as a two storey

development from the north as it would be built into the existing bank that runs through the site.

The new clubhouse and stand would consist of a Lower Floor / Pitch Level area measuring 413 sqm comprising:

- Changing rooms & WC's
- Official's areas
- Physio area
- First aid area
- Snack shops
- Spectator WC's
- Plant & cellar

The Upper Floor & Spectator area measuring 554 sqm would incorporate the following

- Standing and seated spectator area
- Club room and bar
- Boardroom / Office
- WC's

A small palette of materials consisting of rainscreen cladding, render and glass emphasises the notion of a non complicated and honest building, whilst giving an overall impression of lightness. This is reinforced with the design of the roof which would appear to 'float' above the mass of the building below.

The Design and Access Statement further explains that building efficiency will be investigated fully, including the potential for combined heat and power, and rain water harvesting, as well as the benefits of modern methods of construction, including sourcing materials locally and regionally wherever possible.

Residential Amenity impact

Policy BDP1: Sustainable Development Principles requires that in considering new development, regard will be had to:

"e) Compatibility with adjoining uses and the impact on residential amenity"

The proposed location of the development on the site is considered to ensure that effects on residential amenity, from such as noise and lighting, are minimised, taking into consideration the distance between the site and nearest residents. The proposal is considered to be compatible with the existing training ground and golf course adjacent to the site.

The application is accompanied by a lighting scheme to ensure that floodlights do not have an adverse effect upon neighbouring properties, as well as the wider countryside. Worcestershire Regulatory Services have been consulted on the application and have not raised any objection. It is considered that the proposals would not have a detrimental impact on amenity.

It is noted that Alvechurch Parish Council have raised no objections to the application.

Conclusion

The NPPF sets out that for the applicants' circumstances, and any other benefits of a proposal to amount of very special circumstances they must clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and any other harm.

In this case it has been determined that the proposal would reduce the openness of the Green Belt, and as such would be considered to be inappropriate development. Inappropriate development is harmful to the Green Belt, and should carry substantial weight. The level of harm that is attributed to the harm that the proposal would cause to the Green Belt is therefore substantial.

The applicant has put forward a robust case, which is considered to carry substantial weight in favour of the application and which, in this case is considered to amount to the very special circumstances needed to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt.

The application is considered to represent an appropriate mechanism to secure the future of Alvechurch FC, providing modern facilities with a wider community benefit and which would help to secure the long-term future of the club. The applicant has demonstrated that despite a long search, there are no none-Green Belt sites that can provide for these facilities, which are the minimum required to meet FA requirements for the club.

The proposals are likely to provide substantial benefits to the local population, which is presently far short of the required playing field provision, and which is unlikely to be met otherwise. Worcestershire Highways Authority have considered the sustainable credentials of the scheme and raise no objections subject to the completion of a planning obligation to ensure the provision of a shuttle bus facility as referred to earlier in this report.

The facilities are considered to be designed appropriately and would provide access via means of private car, shuttle bus and non-motorised means. The proposals would not give rise to any adverse impacts to surrounding residential properties or the highway network. An ecological assessment shows that the proposals would not have a detrimental effect on protected species, and can support biodiversity subject to the imposition of relevant conditions.

RECOMMENDATION:

That having regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations, authority be delegated to the Head of Planning and Regeneration to GRANT planning permission subject to:

- a) The satisfactory completion of a planning obligation (Unilateral Undertaking) to ensure that the shuttle bus arrangements detailed in the Mayer Brown technical note 21/05/2018 Rev A are provided and**
- b) The conditions set out below:**

Conditions:

- 1) The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of the grant of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with the requirements of Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans and drawings:

relevant plan references to be inserted here

Reason: To provide certainty to the extent of the development hereby approved in the interests of proper planning.

- 3) Prior to their first installation, details of the form, colour and finish of the materials to be used externally on the walls and roofs shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the development is satisfactory in appearance, to safeguard the visual amenities of the area

- 4) No site clearance, demolition, excavation or development shall take place until full details of tree protection measures (in accordance with BS5837:2012) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details thus approved shall be fully implemented throughout the course of development.

Reason: To prevent damage to, and preserve the tree(s) in the interests of visual amenity

- 5) No development shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscape works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include proposed boundary treatment and other means of enclosure, hard surfacing materials, new planting, trees and shrubs to be retained, together with measures to be taken for their protection while building works are in progress.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenity of the area

- 6) All hard and soft landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The works shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme agreed in writing by the local planning authority. Any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar sizes or species unless the local planning authority gives written approval to any variation.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenity of the area

- 7) No works or development shall take place until a scheme for foul and surface water drainage, along with a maintenance plan for this drainage scheme, has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include the results of an assessment into the potential of disposing of surface water by means of a sustainable drainage system (SuDS) and shall provide an appropriate level of runoff treatment. The approved scheme shall be completed prior to the first use of the development hereby approved.

Reason: In order to ensure satisfactory drainage conditions that will not create or exacerbate flood risk on site or within the surrounding local area.

- 8) Prior to commencement of the development hereby approved, a scheme for the provision of bat roost and bird nesting opportunities within the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. In addition, a scheme for the provision of 3 hibernacula piles to provide suitable habitat for Great Crested Newts shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be implemented by suitably qualified personnel to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority prior to the first use of the development approved.

Reason: In the interests of biodiversity and in accordance with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 9) Notwithstanding the details submitted the Development hereby approved shall not be brought into use until a post-construction lighting strategy, sensitive to wildlife (including bats) to be developed in collaboration with a suitably qualified ecologist has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. On implementation, the approved scheme shall be operated and maintained to minimise adverse impacts in perpetuity.

Reason: In the interests of biodiversity and in accordance with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 10) A Construction Environmental Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of development. This shall include but not be limited to the following:-
 - a) Measures to ensure that vehicles leaving the site do not deposit mud or other detritus on the public highway;
 - b) Details of site operative parking areas, material storage areas and the location of site operatives facilities (offices, toilets etc);
 - c) The hours that delivery vehicles will be permitted to arrive and depart, and arrangements for unloading and manoeuvring.
 - d) measures to minimise dust from construction

(e) measures to suppress construction noise

The measures set out in the approved Plan shall be carried out and complied with in full during the construction of the development hereby approved.

Reason: To ensure the provision of adequate on-site facilities and in the interests of highway safety.

11) The Development hereby approved shall not be brought into use until the access, parking and turning facilities have been provided as shown on drawing 3211/SK/002 Rev G.

Reason: To ensure conformity with submitted details.

12) Notwithstanding the details submitted the Development hereby approved shall not be brought into use until 5 electric vehicle charging spaces have been provided in accordance with a specification which shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority and thereafter such spaces and power points shall be kept available and maintained for the use of electric vehicles as approved.

Reason: To promote sustainable access.

13) Notwithstanding the details submitted the Development hereby approved shall not be brought into use until 10 secure motorcycle parking spaces have been provided in a location to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority and thereafter shall be kept available for motorcycle parking as approved.

Reason: To provide safe and suitable access for all

14) Notwithstanding the details submitted the Development hereby approved shall not be brought into use until sheltered and secure cycle parking to comply with the Council's adopted highway design guide has been provided in accordance with details which shall first be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and thereafter the approved cycle parking shall be kept available for the parking of bicycles only.

Reason: To comply with the Council's parking standards.

15) The Development hereby approved shall not be brought into use until the applicant has submitted a travel plan in writing to the Local Planning Authority that promotes sustainable forms of access to the development site and this has been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This plan will thereafter be implemented and updated in agreement with Worcestershire County Councils Travel plan co-ordinator and thereafter implemented as updated.

Reason: To reduce vehicle movements and promote sustainable access.

16) The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until a match day management plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, the plan shall address any event where additional parking or bus provision is necessary due to a shortfall in capacity or any other site constraints which limits access. The development shall operate in accordance with that plan.

Reason: To manage transport demands and maintain Highway Safety

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