

Agenda Item A14	Committee Date 28 September 2009	Application Number 09/00776/FUL
Application Site Land at Mossgate Park Heysham Mossgate Road Heysham Lancashire Mossgate Park Heysham Lancashire	Proposal Relocation of two bowling greens with associated landscaping	
Name of Applicant Rushcliffe (Heysham) Ltd	Name of Agent Mr Lindsay Oram	
Decision Target Date 28 September 2009	Reason For Delay N/A	
Case Officer	Mr Andrew Drummond	
Departure	No	
Summary of Recommendation	Approval	

1.0 The Site and its Surroundings

- 1.1 The 0.419 hectare site is located in an area of green space found in the predominantly residential area of Heysham. There are no buildings on the site at present and with the exception of the fencing that surrounds the Youth and Community Facility and the rear fences of the residential properties on Douglas Drive, no boundary treatments define the site.
- 1.2 It is a sloped site with a natural grass covering. The site drops about 1.7m from west to east and by approximately 0.6m from north to south.
- 1.3 The site is accessed off Middleton Way by way of Emmaus Road which wraps round the existing playground and the southern of the 2 bowling greens. A track runs uphill from Emmaus Road in an easterly direction between Heysham Youth and Community Centre and Heysham Free Methodist Church.
- 1.4 The semi-detached houses on Douglas Drive are located to the north of the site with Heysham Youth and Community Centre to the west. The other 2 boundaries are not currently defined, but rather are a continuation of the site's natural grassed state.
- 1.5 Middleton Way forms part of the Primary Bus Corridor whilst the existing tennis courts and bowling green are allocated as Outdoor Playing Spaces along with the Youth and Community Centre. The space fronting Middleton Way is also designated as Urban Greenspace. The site itself is not subject to any other designations.

2.0 The Proposal

- 2.1 It is proposed to relocate the 2 bowling greens adjacent to Middleton Way onto the land east of the existing Heysham Youth and Community Centre. This would change the site from a semi-natural state to an outdoor playing surface.

- 2.2 The bowling greens would both measure 38.4m by 38.4m and would be surrounded by a 0.3m sand gully and a paved path on all 4 sides. The greens would be separated by a 2.4m paved path. The corners of the greens would be set 0.25m below the height of the greens' central point.
- 2.3 The access arrangements are generally set out in the associated planning application for the erection of a Medical Centre on the site of the current bowling greens (09/00668/FUL). For clarity, it is proposed that both the track and Emmaus Road will be upgraded to provide access from the main highway and bus route of Middleton Way. Disabled access would be provided by way of a series of ramps in the south west corner of the site, accessed by way of a gate in the metal security fencing that surrounds the Youth and Community Centre.
- 2.4 Due to the site levels, it is proposed to use retaining walls on the north and west sides of the greens. These would be planted to create a landscaped feature. They may also be utilised on the south side, subject to finished levels. The site would utilise the existing fencing to the north and west to enclose the site. It is proposed to use fencing on the 2 remaining sides.

3.0 Site History

- 3.1 A number of relevant applications relating to this site have previously been received by the Local Planning Authority. These include:

Application Number	Proposal	Decision
08/01238/FUL	Erection of a medical centre, indoor sports centre with associated accommodation, flood lit outdoor sports pitch and associated car parking.	Withdrawn
09/00668/FUL	Erection of a medical centre, indoor sports centre with associated accommodation, flood lit outdoor sports pitch and associated car parking	Application Submitted – Yet to be brought to Planning Committee

4.0 Consultation Responses

- 4.1 The following responses have been received from statutory and internal consultees:

Consultees	Response
Sport England	Given the level of new investment into new sports and the absence of any impact on any existing facilities, Sport England supports the proposal. However, this support is conditional on the 2 new bowling greens being available for use prior to the loss of the existing 2 bowling greens. Future management and maintenance arrangements should be secured by use of an appropriately worded condition. The bowling greens should be constructed in accordance with Sport England's technical design guidance note "Natural Tuft for Sport"; again this can be conditioned.
Tree Officer	No objection, but requests a landscape scheme to be submitted and agreed in writing and to include a maintenance regime for a 10-year period post planting (to include weed control, support systems - stakes & ties, watering regime, formative pruning, and replacement of failing trees/plants). Any agreed removal of trees must be mitigated with a replacement tree planting proposal of 3:1 (3x new trees for each tree proposed for removal).
Environmental Health	No objection subject to conditioning lighting and hours of construction to protect residents' amenity.
Cultural Services	The facilities will provide a much needed boost to the health and well-being of Heysham and the wider community via a seamless multi-agency framework of sport, health, children's centre and community services and facilities (comments on the current application and the wider scheme).

5.0 Neighbour Representations

- 5.1 No correspondence has been received at the time of compiling this report. Any comments subsequently received will be reported verbally.

6.0 Principal Development Plan Policies

6.1 National Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and Guidance notes (PPG)

PPS1 (Delivering Sustainable Development) - provides generic advice for all new built development. Sites should be capable of optimising the full site boundary and should deliver an appropriate mix of uses, green and other public spaces, safe and accessible environments and visually pleasing architecture.

PPG17 (Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation) - seeks to protect, enhance and provide new open space and sport facilities by assessing existing supply and demand, and making planning decisions based on that robust assessment.

6.2 Regional Spatial Strategy - adopted September 2008

Policy **L1** (Health, Sport, Recreation, Cultural and Education Services Provision) - ensure that there is provision for all members of the community (including older people, disabled people and the black & minority ethnic population) for sport, recreation and cultural facilities. The facilities should ensure that accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling is a central consideration.

6.3 Lancaster District Local Plan - adopted April 2004 (saved policies)

Policy **R1** (Outdoor Playing Space) - areas designated as outdoor playing spaces will be protected from development. Exceptionally where there is clear justification for development which would result in the loss of such space, this will be permitted only where sport and recreation facilities can best be retained and enhanced through the redevelopment of a small part of the site or alternative provision of equivalent community benefit is made available.

Policy **R4** (New Outdoor Playing Space) - new outdoor playing space will be permitted where the facility will meet demands generated locally, the site is located within or adjacent to a main urban area and the proposal would not result in a significant adverse impact on the appearance and character of the area, nature conservation interests or the amenity of nearby residents.

Policy **R21** (Access for People with Disabilities) - development proposals should provide access for people with disabilities.

6.4 Lancaster District Core Strategy - adopted July 2008

Policy **SC5** (Achieving Quality in Design) - new development must reflect and enhance the positive characteristics of its surroundings, resulting in an improved appearance, quality landscape and enhanced public realm.

Policy **SC6** (Crime and Community Safety) - developments should be pedestrian friendly, incorporate Secure by Design principles, avoid car dominated environments, deliver safe high quality public realm and open spaces, and achieve greater use of pedestrian and cycle networks.

Policy **SC8** (Recreation and Open Space) - existing sport facilities should be retained unless identified as no longer capable of meeting identified needs through the Open Space and Recreation Study. New provision for formal and informal provision in line with needs identified in the Study.

7.0 Comment and Analysis

7.1 Recreation

The proposal is appropriate in policy terms. 2 bowling greens would be lost on Middleton Way, but they would be replaced on this nearby site off Emmaus Road. Therefore the application complies with national and local planning policies on recreation. The proposed bowling facilities are supported by Sport England, subject to suitable standards and maintenance being met. Both the quality and ongoing management of the greens can be conditioned accordingly, the result of which would be two new greens that would exceed the quality of the existing two.

7.2 Design and Landscaping/Boundary Treatments

The submitted scheme includes some landscaping around the 2 bowling greens. In addition to the paved pathways that surround both greens, the application proposes to use retaining walls to deal with the site's topography whilst providing planting areas. At least 2 sides (west and north) of the application site would include this feature with a further planted retaining wall potentially possible on the south side. It is proposed to utilise the existing fences to the north and west as boundary treatments, leaving the remaining 2 sides open.

7.3 Security

The existing bowling greens benefit greatly from natural surveillance through the day and night, which originates from their position alongside Middleton Way. However, the relocated facilities are not significantly overlooked by neighbouring uses. The Youth and Community Centre will not always be open, and the same is true of the church. The view from the properties on Douglas Drive is restricted by fencing and vegetation and the proposed sports centre will also have limited opening hours. It is therefore important that the greens are secure whilst remaining accessible to users. Due to the restricted natural surveillance that the relocated greens would enjoy, it is essential that an appropriate boundary treatment is agreed to provide the necessary security. This will hopefully assist with the greens' ongoing maintenance as it will be aimed at preventing misuse of the new facilities. This can be conditioned if planning permission is granted.

7.4 Access

As mentioned above, access for users must be taken into consideration. Though a series of ramps have been shown in the south-west corner of the site to provide access for people with limited mobility, it is unclear if this ramp originates from the Youth and Community Centre (i.e. is only available for users of this centre and not the wider public). A comprehensive solution needs to be drawn up and agreed with the Council's Access Officer in this regard, and again this can be conditioned if Members are minded to grant planning permission.

The submission advises that bowlers will be able to use the toilet, shower and changing facilities at the indoor sports centre that is proposed on the adjacent site (09/00668/FUL), if approved. Likewise car parking facilities for the bowling greens are proposed as part of the wider development scheme and will be shared with the sports centre. Though the greens are reliant on the infrastructure of the larger sports scheme, the larger application is still pending. If planning permission is not granted for the larger sports development, or the larger scheme is approved but there is a delay in its delivery, it is still imperative that access to the bowling greens is provided. Therefore a safe footpath arrangement must be established from Middleton Way before the greens can be made opened for use and the footpath must be available continuously thereafter.

8.0 Conclusions

- 8.1 That the application is approved for the reasons set out above subject to the conditions listed in the recommendation.

Recommendation

That Planning Permission **BE GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard planning permission timescale
2. Development to accord with plans
3. Constructed in accordance with Sport England's technical design guidance note "Natural Tuft for Sport"
4. Management and maintenance arrangements - details to be agreed
5. Submission of surfacing materials (paths)
6. Submission of Details - Boundary Treatment
7. Implementation of Approved Landscaping Scheme
8. Hours of construction - 0800-1800 Monday to Friday and 0800-1400 Saturday
9. Disabled access arrangements - details to be agreed
10. Footpath access from Middleton Way (available prior to the bowling greens coming into use and

available continuously thereafter) - details to be agreed

11. Existing bowling greens to remain in situ and available for use until the new facilities have been completed and come into use

Human Rights Act

This recommendation has been reached after consideration of the provisions of The Human Rights Act. Unless otherwise stated in this report, the issues arising do not appear to be of such magnitude to override the responsibility of the City Council to regulate land use for the benefit of the community as a whole, in accordance with national law.

Background Papers

None.