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| Agenda Item A14 | Committee Date 25 th July 2016 | Application Number 16/00552/FUL |
| Application Site Salt Ayre Sports Centre Doris Henderson Way Heaton With Oxcliffe Lancaster | Proposal Erection of an extension, alterations to the main entrance and construction of a jump tower with a briefing cabin | |
| Name of Applicant Lancaster City Council | Name of Agent Alistair Ewing | |
| Decision Target Date 3 August 2016 | Reason For Delay None | |
| Case Officer | Mr Andrew Clement | |
| Departure | No | |
| Summary of Recommendation | Approval subject to conditions | |

(i) **Procedural Matters**

This form of development would normally be dealt with under the Scheme of Delegation. However, Lancaster City Council are the applicants, and as such the application must be determined by the Planning Committee.

1.0 The Site and its Surroundings

1.1 The application site relates to Salt Ayre Sports Centre, owned by Lancaster City Council. The site is located south of Morecambe Road and approximately 40 metres south of the nearest dwellinghouse in Scale Hall Farm residential area. Vehicle access to the site is off Ovangle Road and is shared with the Waste Recycling Centre and ASDA delivery access. The sports centre is to the east of Salt Ayre Landfill site, immediately south of the Lancaster to Morecambe Greenway green corridor, the Lancaster-Morecambe cycle and pedestrian route, and directly north of the River Lune. Salt Ayre is a purpose built sports, fitness and recreation facility, and as such it is a designated Outdoor Sports Facility, with existing provision for three grass sports pitches, a floodlit artificial grass pitch, a floodlit athletics track, a 0.8 mile cycle track circuit, 295 space car park and approximately 5,738sqm of internal leisure space.

2.0 The Proposal

2.1 The application proposes a series of inter-related developments to enhance the leisure facilities at the Sports Centre. They include:

- A single storey extension within the courtyard between the existing sports hall and swimming pool, to create a new community hub, fitness area and spa with a separate pedestrian entrance;
- Alterations to the existing main entrance, with a total increase of 556.5sqm of internal floor space proposed to the main building; and,
- The construction of a jump tower, with the tower structure measuring 17.7 metres tall, with a floor area of 7.7 metres by 6 metres. The jump tower is to be located in the centre of an existing artificial grass pitch, with a rubber-crumb matting and an ancillary 9.4 metre by 6.535

metre single storey Briefing Cabin (also located within the existing pitch). The floodlights are retained but the sports pitch use would cease.

3.0 Site History

3.1 The site has a long planning history dating back to 1993 with the construction of an eight lane floodlit athletics track through permission 93/00071/DPA. Various other sporting developments have been granted planning permission, the vast majority between 1993 and 2000, although not all have been developed.

| Application Number | Proposal | Decision |
|---------------------|--|------------------|
| 93/00071/DPA | Construction of an eight lane floodlit athletics track | Permitted |
| 94/01116/DPA | Erection of second phase of sports centre development comprising swimming pool, projectile hall, minor hall, health suite, caretaker's flat and ancillary accommodation. | Permitted |
| 95/00896/FUL | Erection of new club house | Permitted |

4.0 Consultation Responses

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

| Consultee | Response |
|-----------------------------|--|
| County Highways | No objection |
| Environmental Health | No observation received within the statutory timescales. |
| Public Realm Officer | No observation received within the statutory timescales. |
| Sport England | Initially submitted a holding objection, but following further information from the applicant, Sport England do not object , as the proposal would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the loss of the playing field. |

5.0 Neighbour Representations

5.1 No observations received.

6.0 Principal National and Development Plan Policies

6.1 National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework indicates that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (**paragraph 14**). The following paragraphs of the NPPF are relevant to the determination of this proposal:

Paragraph 17. Core planning principles

Section 1. Building a strong, competitive economy

Section 7. Requiring Good Design

Section 8. Promoting healthy communities

6.2 Development Management DPD

DM4: The Protection of Cultural Assets

DM12: Leisure Facilities & Attractions

DM21: Walking & Cycling

DM22: Vehicle Parking Provision

DM26: Open Space, Sports & Recreation Facilities

DM35: Key Design Principles

DM49: Local Services

6.3 Lancaster District Core Strategy and Local Plan – saved policies

TO2 (Tourism Opportunity)

SC1 (Sustainable development)

ER6 (Developing Tourism)
SC5 (Good Design)
E1 (Environmental Capital)

7.0 **Comment and Analysis**

7.1 The key considerations arising from the proposal are:

- Principle of the Development;
- Scale, Design and Landscape Impact;
- Protection of Recreational Open Space;
- Residential Amenity;
- Highways and Parking;

7.2 Principle of the Development

7.2.1 The proposal, as described in paragraph 2.1, forms part of a reported £5million renovation of the sports facilities, with internal alterations to the sports centre, such as a refurbished reception, café and sports hall, indoor play provision and indoor climbing facilities. These internal alterations do not require planning permission, and therefore do not form part of this application.

7.2.2 Subject to the issues discussed later in this report, the principle of the development to refurbish the existing sports centre and upgrade the facilities is acceptable, and the proposal is compatible with policies DM4, DM12, DM49 and NPPF Sections 1 and 8.

7.3 Scale, Design and Landscape Impact

7.3.1 The proposed developments to the main sports centre building will extend the building floorspace by 538sqm for the single storey extension, plus 18.5sqm for the entrance refurbishment. Despite the scale of the increase in floor area, the proposals will appear modest due to; (i) the minor increase in area of the entrance under an existing canopy, and (ii) the infill location of the single storey extension between the existing sports hall and swimming pool. This ensures that the extensions to the main sports hall will not project beyond the existing building line, and will appear inconspicuous in relation to the existing building.

7.3.2 The proposed single storey infill extension will measure 16.9 metres across by 32.8 metres deep, with an eaves height of 3.9 metres and ridge height 4.55 metres. The development will be constructed with a base of dark blue engineering brick, feature bands of red facing brickwork breaking up the predominantly smooth faced colour brick, with dark grey doors, windows frames and fascia under a goosewing grey steel sheet roof. These materials and design match the existing north facing elevation of the existing wall within the infill area, and due to this visually contained location and matching materials, it is considered that the proposed extension will integrate with the existing sports hall and raises no design or scale concerns.

7.3.3 A modest extension of 18.5sqm to the existing entrance is proposed under the existing roof canopy, with a further projection of the existing canopy roof by 0.75 metres. The entrance is located in a prominent location within the site, although it is visually contained from public areas, facing into the existing carpark and vehicle lanes. The main alterations regarding the refurbishment of the main entrance are the materials proposed, namely timber clad panel and fascia board, aluminium columns in dark ochre colour, basalt black real stone clad entrance surround, with dark grey powder coated aluminium windows, accessible door and revolving door, and planting troughs either side of the new doorways. These material contrast with those of the existing entrance of red brick and blue powder coated window and door frames. However, the proposed is designed to create a more noticeable statement entrance, whilst improving accessibility and energy conservation. Given that the proposed development is to use higher quality materials to those existing, and the modest extension of the building under the existing canopy and further projection of the canopy by 0.75 metres, the refurbished main entrance will be an improvement on the existing entrance, and the scale and design will not detract from the building or surrounding area.

7.3.4 The jump tower continues the theme of high quality materials, as this will be constructed and finished in natural timber, which will help the proposal assimilate with the surrounding trees and vegetation. However, due to the scale of the jump tower, measuring 17.7 metres tall with an 8 metre by 8 metre

roof, this element of the application is the most conspicuous development proposed from both within and outside the application site. To provide context to the scale of the structure, the height is similar to that of a four storey building, and the main sports centre is approximately three storeys tall. The jump tower is proposed to be sited on the existing artificial grass pitch, and will use the existing floodlighting, (but no additional lighting or changes to illumination direction or hours of illumination). A single storey Briefing Cabin, measuring 9.4 metres by 6.535 metres at 2.815 metres tall, will be constructed in western red cedar timber cladding, under a light grey membrane flat roof. This development will also be located on the existing artificial grass pitch, which is situated on land approximately 1 metre higher than the main building due to the topography.

7.3.5 As the proposed development is taller than the existing buildings, floodlights and trees within the site, the jump tower will be noticeable within the application site, and is likely to be visible from certain aspects outside the site, such as along St Georges Quay to the south and east, and from certain higher topographies in the surrounding area. However, as the jump tower location is approximately 320 metres from the nearest listed building, and over a kilometre east of the Lancaster Conservation Area and nearest Scheduled Ancient Monument, there is clearly sufficient separation distances to ensure that the heritage assets are protected and will be unaffected by the proposal. Furthermore, due to the surrounding vegetation across the application site and lining the cycle path, combined with the natural timber finish of the structure, it is not considered that development will appear prominent or have a detrimental landscape impact.

7.3.6 Due to the high quality of materials proposed, existing landscaping and visually contained location of developments, the proposal is considered to have an acceptable landscape and visual impact, despite the significant scale of some elements of the proposal. The development is considered to be consistent with Policy DM35 and NPPF Section 7.

7.4 Protection of Recreational Open Space

7.4.1 As the proposed development results in the loss of one artificial grass sports pitch to facilitate the jump tower development, Sport England requested further information to justify that the development outweighs the detriment caused by the loss of the sports pitch, and to demonstrate that the pitch no longer meets an existing or future need. Sport England raised a holding objection to the application although this objection was withdrawn on 4th July 2016. Further information to satisfy Sport England's concerns was submitted regarding the modest income now derived from the artificial grass pitch. Additionally, confirmation was provided that no sports team have an existing or future planned use of the facility, and emails from previous users have verified that they have found alternative sports facilities in the area to meet their need.

7.4.2 The existing artificial grass pitch is therefore currently underused, and would require significant investment to provide a suitable playing surface. Since it was first installed, other artificial sport pitches using more modern technology have been provided in the district, notably at Heysham Community Sports Centre, Globe Arena, Lancaster and Morecambe College, University of Cumbria (Bowerham Site) and at Lancaster University.

7.4.3 Given that the proposed development estimates a much greater usage of the sport and leisure facilities (estimated at over 40,000 visits for the new facilities in the first year, and a further 11,000 visits by 5 years following redevelopment), it is anticipated that there will be an increase of participation in physical activity. Weighed against the loss of an underused sports pitch in poor condition, the development is considered to provide better sports and recreation provision than currently existing, in support of with policy DM26.

7.4.4 Sport England have acknowledged that the Council are undertaking a Playing Pitch Strategy at the present time. They have recommended that this Strategy considers all pitch sports and future needs arising from increased population/housing growth. These comments will be separately considered during compilation of the Playing Pitch Strategy.

7.5 Residential Amenity

7.5.1 The proposed single storey extension is located approximately 40 metres south of the nearest residential dwelling. The Lancaster to Morecambe Greenway green corridor, cycle and pedestrian route is located between the proposed development and nearest residential properties, which provides an existing visual and acoustic barrier of two lines of trees, protecting the residential

amenity of the properties to the north. Whilst Environmental Health have not commented, the proximity of the single storey extension to the residential area means that an hours of construction condition is necessary.

7.5.2 Although the proposed jump tower is a tall development and will be visible from within and outside the application site, the nearest residential dwellinghouse is approximately 180 metres to the north, and thus the structure is not considered to detract from the residential amenity of the area. Furthermore, the proposed use as a jump tower and climbing facility is not considered to have a greater noise impact than the existing sports pitch use of this land, and therefore subject to a condition restricting the hours of construction and hours of floodlight use, the proposed development is not seen to have any adverse or detrimental implications upon the residential amenity of the area.

7.6 Highways and Parking

7.6.1 No changes are proposed to the existing access and parking arrangements, with vehicles entering the site along Doris Henderson Way off Ovangle Road, and has a parking provision of 295 vehicle spaces. The site is accessible on foot and by bicycle due to the close proximity to the Lancaster to Morecambe Greenway, and via public transport with bus stops at the adjacent ASDA site and along Morecambe Road.

7.6.2 Planners have assessed the maximum car parking standards for leisure use. The increase in gross floor area of the buildings proposed is 617.929sqm, which in addition to the existing internal floor space of approximately 5,738sqm, this results in a total proposed gross floor area of approximately 6,356sqm. For a leisure/gymnasium use outside of the city, town or neighbourhood centre, a maximum of 1 car parking space should be provided per 22sqm of gross floor area. Therefore, the maximum vehicle parking provision for the leisure/gymnasium use of the site as proposed is rounded up to 289 car parking space, six below the existing provision. County Highways raise no objection, and therefore the proposal is considered to not have a detrimental impact upon the public highway and provides acceptable parking provision, compatible with policies DM21 and DM22.

8.0 Planning Obligations

8.1 There are no planning obligations to consider as part of this application.

9.0 Conclusions

9.1 It is considered that the proposed development will have no detrimental impact on highways or residential amenity subject to construction and floodlight hours. The proposal will replace an under-utilised sports pitch with an improved sports and recreation provision. Although the proposed development will be visible from within and outside the application site, due to the existing vegetation and high quality materials proposed, it is considered that the development will have an acceptable landscape and visual impact, and is sufficiently separated from the nearest heritage assets. Therefore the application can be supported.

Recommendation

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

1. Standard 3 year timescale
2. Development to be carried out in accordance to approved plans
3. Amended plan condition – Jump tower dimensions, material and lighting
4. Materials to match – brickwork of extension
5. Hours of construction 8-6 Mon-Fri, 8-2 Sat
6. Floodlight Hours - 08:00 to 22:00

Article 35, Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015

In accordance with the above legislation, Lancaster City Council has made the recommendation in a positive and proactive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development, working proactively with the applicant to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. The recommendation has been made having had regard to the impact of development, and in particular to the relevant policies contained in the Development Plan, as presented in full in the officer report, and to all

relevant material planning considerations, including the National Planning Policy Framework, National Planning Practice Guidance and relevant Supplementary Planning Documents/ Guidance.

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