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| Agenda Item A8 | Committee Date 22 July 2019 | Application Number 19/00688/FUL |
| Application Site Salt Ayre Sports Centre Doris Henderson Way Heaton With Oxcliffe Lancaster | | Proposal Change of use of car park and public space to the front of the sports centre to children's playground, outdoor activity area and mini golf area |
| Name of Applicant Stuart Glover | | Name of Agent |
| Decision Target Date 25 July 2019 | | Reason For Delay None |
| Case Officer | | Mr Andrew Clement |
| Departure | | None |
| Summary of Recommendation | | Approval |

(i) **Procedural Matters**

This form of development would normally be dealt with under the Scheme of Delegation. However, Lancaster City Council is the applicant and landowner, 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 development site is approximately 35 metres south of the nearest dwellinghouse in the residential area of Scale Hall Farm, and is located south of Morecambe Road. 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. The site has existing provision for three grass sports pitches, a jump tower recently developed through permission 17/01094/VCN, a floodlit athletics track, a 0.8 mile cycle track circuit, 295 space car park and approximately 6,356sq.m of internal leisure space. A subsequent consent was granted for a single storey extension, seated area and playground through permission 18/00484/FUL, which has been partially completed.

2.0 The Proposal

2.1 This application proposes the change of use of car park and landscaping/public space to the front of the sports centre to children's playground, outdoor activity area and mini golf area. To facilitate the proposed uses, a variety of works will be undertaken, the majority of which benefit from permitted development and do not require planning permission. Boundary fencing will be erected around the site, at a height of 1.5m to 2m, with equipment and infrastructure all under 4m high, and associated engineering works to facility this. The proposed mini golf area is to cover approximately 750sq.m of enclosed external area, with approximately 525sq.m of hardsurfaced play space and a 925sq.m playground. The proposed playground is slightly larger than that previously permitted through

18/00484/FUL, whilst the mini golf and hardsurfaced play area are outside of the area of this previous consent. The site as existing forms landscaping and car parking for 20 parking spaces as part of the wider designated open space for Salt Ayre Lane Sports Ground.

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. More recently planning permission was granted for the erection of an extension, alterations to the café, main entrance and construction of a jump tower with a briefing cabin.

| 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 |
| 16/00552/FUL | Erection of an extension, alterations to the main entrance and construction of a jump tower with a briefing cabin | Permitted |
| 18/00484/FUL | Erection of a single storey extension and bin store and creation of a seated area and children's playground/outdoor activity area to the front | Permitted |

4.0 Consultation Responses

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

| Consultee | Response |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Public Realm Officer | No observation received |
| County Highways | No objection |
| Environmental Health | No observation received |

5.0 Neighbour Representations

5.1 No observations received.

6.0 Principal National and Development Plan Policies

6.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

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 11). The following sections of the NPPF are relevant to the determination of this proposal:

Paragraphs 8 and 11 – Sustainable Development
 Section 6. Building a strong, competitive economy
 Section 8. Promoting healthy and safe communities
 Section 12. Achieving well-designed places

6.2 Development Management DPD
 DM4: The Protection of Cultural Assets
 DM21: Walking and 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

SC1: Sustainable Development

SC5: Good Design

6.4 Local Planning Policy Overview – Current Position

On 15 May 2018, and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended), Lancaster City Council submitted the following documents to the Secretary of State (Planning Inspectorate) for examination:

- (i) The Strategic Policies and Land Allocations DPD; and,
- (ii) (A Review of) The Development Management DPD

The Examination Hearing Sessions commenced on 9 April 2019

The Strategic Policies and Land Allocations DPD will replace the remaining policies of the Lancaster District Core Strategy (2008) and the residual 'saved' land allocation policies from the 2004 District Local Plan.

The Review of the Development Management DPD updates the policies that are contained within the current document, which was adopted in December 2014. As it is part of the development plan the current document is already material in terms of decision-making.

Given the current stage of both DPDs, it is considered that significant weight can be attributed to the policies contained therein subject to the extent to which there are unresolved objections to the relevant policies and their consistency with the National Planning Policy Framework.

7.0 Comment and Analysis

7.1 The key considerations arising from the proposal are:

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

7.2 Principle of the Development

7.2.1 The proposal forms part of a wider renovation of the sports facilities at Salt Ayre following the implemented of those permitted through 18/00484/FUL, 16/00552/FUL and subsequent variations. The internal café area has already been refurbished and extended through the previous permission, with an external picnic benched area and replacement bin storage area recently developed. The approved playground area has not yet been implemented, and this proposal seeks to expand this play area.

7.2.2 The site is an established fitness and leisure facility, and the proposed additional play equipment and mini golf area will complement and correspond with the existing use of the site. Subject to the issues discussed later in this report, the principle of the development to refurbish and expand upon the existing sports centre facilities is acceptable, and the proposal is compatible with policies DM4, DM49 and NPPF Sections 6 and 8.

7.3 Scale, Design and Landscape Impact

7.3.1 Externally the application proposes to position a playground, play zone and mini golf facilities across an area of existing parking and landscaping. All existing trees are to be retained, which will soften the appearance of the development to facilitate these uses. Planning permission is not required for benches, bins, picnic benches and other equipment provided by the local authority, and fencing up to 2 metres in height around the proposed mini golf area and play zone also benefits from permitted development rights, as the boundaries are not adjacent to a public highway. The play equipment and mini golf facilities are not included as part of this proposal, as some are indicative at this stage. The elevation and top-down plans of the play equipment submitted within the specification documents are all below 4 metres in height or 200 cubic metres in capacity, in accordance with the General

Permitted Development Order Schedule 2, Part 12, Class A, therefore not requiring planning permission. Anything exceeding these criteria would require a subsequent separate planning application.

7.3.2 The proposed playground, hardsurfaced play area and mini golf area with indicative equipment over the previously lawned area to the front of the sports centre raises no concern regarding scale and landscape impact. These areas are visually contained within the site, and will be viewed in the context of the existing sports centre, hardsurfaced parking areas and jump tower. Due to the modest scale and visually contained location of development, the proposal is considered to have an acceptable landscape and visual impact. The development is consistent with Policy DM35 and NPPF Section 12.

7.4 Residential Amenity

7.4.1 The proposed developments is located approximately 35 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. This provides an existing visual and acoustic barrier of two lines of trees, protecting the residential amenity of the properties to the north. The mini golf area proposes opening hours of 8am to 8pm, and the external playground is very unlikely to be used beyond these times, particularly given the level of human surveillance in the area from sport centre clients and employees. Whilst Environmental Health has not commented, given the existing use of the site and the fact that a playground previously occupied a nearby site on the north side of the green corridor immediately adjacent to dwellings in the area, the proposal is considered to have no detrimental impact upon residential amenity.

7.5 Highways and Parking

7.5.1 The proposed play zone is to be located within an existing parking area to the north of the proposed extension, resulting in the loss of twenty parking spaces and a turning head from this area. The site has an existing parking provision of 295 vehicle spaces. 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 approximately 6,356sq.m floorspace is rounded up to 289 car parking space, six below the existing provision. The proposed development would take the parking provision to below the maximum parking provision, down to 275 vehicle spaces.

7.5.2 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. The County Highways consultation response returned no adverse comment, and the proposal resulting in the loss of twenty vehicle parking spaces is considered to have no severe impact upon parking or the public highway, 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 The proposed development will expand and improve upon the recreational and leisure facilities at the sports centre site. Due to the visual containment of the site and modest scale, it is considered that the development will have an acceptable landscape and visual impact, with no detrimental impact on highways, parking or residential amenity. 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. Protection/retention of existing trees

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.

Background Papers

None.