

DECISION DATE 7 September 2007	APPLICATION NO. 07/00726/HYB A12	PLANNING COMMITTEE: 8 October 2007
DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED OUTLINE APPLICATION FOR REDEVELOPMENT OF EXISTING LAND TO INCLUDE 19 DWELLINGS, INCLUDING RESERVED MATTERS APPLICATION FOR RUGBY CLUBHOUSE, SQUASHCOURTS, GROUNDMANS STORE AND ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING		SITE ADDRESS VALE OF LUNE R U F C POWDERHOUSE LANE LANCASTER LANCASHIRE LA1 2TT
APPLICANT: Vale Of Lune R U F C Powder House Lane Lancaster Lancashire LA1 2TT		AGENT: JMP Architects Ltd

REASON FOR DELAY

Awaiting revised proposals from applicant and consultation responses.

PARISH NOTIFICATION

N/A

LAND USE ALLOCATION/DEPARTURE

Lancaster District Local Plan - The rugby pitches are allocated as Outdoor Playing Space which Policy R1 applies whilst the club house area is allocated as Urban Green Space to which Policy E29 applies.

CONSULTATIONS

County Highways - No objections subject to conditions relating to the detail and provision of the roads and parking and cycle storage areas.

Environmental Health Officer - No objections subject to conditions relating to hours of construction, flood and security lighting and contamination.

United Utilities - No objections subject to surface water discharge to soakaway and only foul discharge to sewer.

Police - No objections - recommends "Secured by Design for New Homes".

Leisure - Observations awaited.

Strategic Housing - Observations awaited.

OTHER OBSERVATIONS RECEIVED

Three letters have been received objecting to the proposals on the following grounds:-

- Impact on the outlook, view and sunlight of adjacent properties on Pendle Road;
- Impact on and proximity to rear of properties on Ingleborough Road and raised ground levels;
- Loss of privacy to Powder House Cottage and increased noise nuisance and disturbance from the proposed parking areas to the side and rear and from the increased use of the access road;
Concern about drainage, increased parking on Ingleborough Road and noise from the residential access rumble strip.

REPORT

The Site and its Surroundings

This site is located at the southern most tip of the North Lancashire Green Belt adjacent to the rear (north) of properties fronting Ingleborough Road, Pendle Road and Powder House Lane. It is a large rectangular shaped site containing a club house at its southern end, a first pitch, with car parking and a small stand along its western side and two second pitches across its northern half. To the east of the site are open fields rising steeply over a small hill/ridge which runs north/south along that side of the site. To the north lies the crematorium and its open, landscaped grounds, while the west side is bounded by Powder House Lane and its roadside hedges with an even larger area of open and flat sports fields beyond. Halfway along the sites frontage to Powder House Lane lies a small bungalow whose small curtilage projects into the side of the site. Although this site and that on the opposite side of Powder House Lane, project into the Green Belt both geographically and visually, they do not actually form part of its designated area.

The Proposal

This proposal does not involve the loss of any area of the site designated in the Local Plan or presently used as Outdoor Playing Space.

It does however, seek a full planning permission for the replacement of the existing club house facility, and the existing stand, with a new combined facility at the western end of the first pitch centre line together with the relocation/re-arrangement of the parking and access facilities along the western and northern sides of the first pitch, together with outline consent for the siting of two squash courts and a groundsman's hut on the land between pitches 1 and 2.

The application also seeks, in its revised form, outline permission (with only external appearance and landscaping reserved) for the re-development of the southern end of the site with 19 dwelling houses all accessed from the existing Powder House Lane access.

Policy Considerations

The major area of the site which is to be retained as the rugby ground falls to be considered in the light of Policy R1 of the Lancaster District Local Plan which states that:-

"The areas identified on the Local Plan proposals map as outdoor playing space 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 re-development of a small part of the site or alternative provision of equivalent community benefit is made available".

The area of the site currently occupied by the existing club house and car parking falls to be considered under Policy E29 of the plan which states that:-

"The areas identified on the Local Plan proposals map as Urban Greenspace will be protected from development and where appropriate enhanced. Exceptionally, essential education or community related development or the limited expansion of existing uses will be permitted".

In this case the area allocated as Urban Green Space is not at all green, being almost entirely covered by the building and hard surface car park area. It does however afford some limited views from the neighbouring dwellings, around the extensive club house building and across the green rugby pitches.

It is considered that this is an anomaly in the Plan and that the whole site should more appropriately be considered as a single entity under Policy R1 of the Plan.

The residential element of the proposal, which is necessary to provide approximately 1/3 of the funding for the new facilities, must also be considered in the light of SPG16 of the Plan. In this case, the southern end of the site is a previously developed site in a sustainable location within the major urban area of the District. Its re-development would provide clear local benefits by the removal of the present tired and architecturally poor club house complex and facilitating its replacement by a well designed modern facility in a more appropriate location within the site. As such the proposed residential development would aid local regeneration and can be regarded as a Category A site and proposal.

The Proposals in Detail

The application seeks a full permission for a new club house/stand. This would be a two storey building 44.7m long by 18.2m wide. It would have a more pitched roof 6.5m high at the rear of the building and 8.2m high at the front (facing the pitch). The building has a contemporary design with an exposed steel frame in dark grey and dark grey rendered walls with a combination of timber and grey UPVC cladding panels and a light grey standing seam roof with white structural supports for the overhangs at each end. The fixed window frames would be black aluminium while the doors and sliding windows would be timber framed.

The existing car park between the pitch and Powder House Lane would be formally laid out around the new building to create 68 spaces with access only from the southern (existing) access and exit only via the upgraded access to the north of Powder House Cottage. A further 45 spaces would be provided in a grass covered overflow car park between pitches 1 and 2. This proposal will intensify the use of the existing access and parking areas surrounding Powder House Cottage to some extent but this property has few windows facing the site and is presently heavily screened from it. The hedge to the north of the exit onto Powder House Lane will need to be reset behind the visibility splay for a distance of 70m.

These facilities will be constructed and brought into use before the existing club house and surrounding parking areas are demolished and cleared for contractual reasons relating to the many third party users of the site and its facilities.

No details of the proposed squash courts or the groundsman's store are provided other than their siting in between pitches 1 and 2, at either end of the overflow parking area. These are logical and reasonable locations in relation to the other uses on the site and the remaining spaces available for such buildings and uses and in these positions will have little detrimental impact on their surroundings. Both buildings would be the subject of further detailed reserved matters applications.

The application also seeks an outline approval for the erection of 19 residential units. However this is a tight and awkwardly shaped site, whose development could have a significant impact on both the playing pitch and the surrounding residential development. Full details have therefore been submitted of the access road, the layout and siting of the dwellings together with their internal layouts and window positions. This has enabled some of the space standards between the proposed dwellings and the garden sizes adjacent to the pitch to be reduced slightly in order to achieve an appropriate layout while

maximising the development potential of the site and maintaining full standard spacing to existing neighbouring properties.

The layout comprises a terrace of 11 no. 2 ½ storey, 3 bedroom houses backing onto the southern end of the pitch, with integral garages and lounges on the first floor. A further terrace of 5 similar units would cross the head of the new cul-de-sac, aligned with the centre of Pendle Road and be set into the hillside with terraced gardens. A pair of 2 storey semi-detached 3 bedroomed houses would face the centre of the main terrace and back onto the existing houses fronting Ingleborough Road, with reduced ground floor levels to reduce their visual impact. A further single detached house would be set in the existing site access from Ingleborough Road and with access taken from that road.

Floor layout plans with room functions and window positions for all of these dwellings have been submitted to secure the viability of the site layout and it would therefore only remain for the external appearance of the buildings and landscaping of the housing site to be approved at the reserved matters stage.

Comments and Conclusion

The revised proposals have addressed the issues of planning detail raised in the representations by neighbours and as a result the number of units has fallen from 20 to 19.

The scheme has been developed in conjunction with and will be part funded by the National Sports Federation and will provide much improved rugby facilities for a wide range of local community users. The existing facilities, built in 1951 are now in poor condition structurally and no longer meet minimum requirements, particularly for mini, junior and ladies teams, with very poor and ill equipped changing facilities. This combined with poor drainage of the pitches, prevents the club from providing the appropriate coaching and training, particularly for young people and restricts the use of the ground by the local collages and university all of whom currently use the clubs facilities for games and training. This proposal is therefore crucial to the regeneration of the club and the continued development of the use of the site as a sports/recreation facility.

It is considered therefore, that in their revised form these proposals can be supported.

HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

This application has to be considered in relation to the provisions of the Human Rights Act, in particular Article 8 (privacy/family life) and Article 1 of the First Protocol (protection of property). Having regard to the principles of proportionality, it has been concluded that there are no issues arising from the proposal which appear 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.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That OUTLINE PERMISSION BE GRANTED subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard outline permission.
2. Amended plan condition.
3. Development in accordance with approved plans.
4. Submission of reserved matters (external appearance and landscaping in respect of the residential development and all matters except siting in respect of the squash courts and groundsman's store)
5. Samples of all materials to be agreed.
6. Provision of adequate highway facilities.
7. Speed reduction markings to Powder House Lane.
8. Visibility splay to north at site exit.
9. Provision and retention of garage and parking spaces.
10. Details of car parking layout.

11. Provision and retention of cycle storage.
12. Details of floodlighting to be agreed.
13. Removal of Permitted Development Rights.
14. Hours of construction.
15. Only foul water sewerage – surface water to be via soakaways.
16. Desk top contamination study.
17. No development to commence until new clubhouse and car park/access is operational.